

WSLA Records Another Successful Legislative Session

It was an eventful 2011 Legislative Session for Wyoming liquor retailers. One of the most important pieces of legislation to help Wyoming businesses passed, and all harmful moves to our industry failed.



*Representative Dave Zwonitzer
(R-Cheyenne), House sponsor of HB 147
(Excise Tax – Vendor Compensation)*

Most important was the passage of House Bill 147 (Excise Tax – Vendor Compensation)... sponsored by Representative Dave Zwonitzer and Senator Ray Peterson... that allows retailers to be compensated for the costs of the preparation and submission of sales tax at 1.95% for monthly sales tax due under \$6,250 and 1% for returns over \$6,250. The monthly cap for compensation is \$1,000 a month, which means that our retailers will be compensated up to \$12,000 a year. This bill will take effect January 1, 2012. Updates on how it will

work will be upcoming in newsletters as well as from the Department of Revenue.

Wyoming businesses incur additional costs with the preparation and submission of sales tax. The sales tax collected by Wyoming businesses is unusual in the sense that the Wyoming Department of Revenue doesn't calculate the tax or deal with the risk of any miscalculation at the retail level. Furthermore, 28 states already give their retailers a Vendor's Compensation. One of the unsuccessful attempts in the last 20 years was by now U.S. Senator Mike Enzi when he served in the Wyoming Legislature.

This problem is made even worse with the increased use of credit cards. The fee from credit card companies can run up to 5%; Wyoming retailers are being forced to cover the sales tax on this amount as well. All retailers, large and small, should be reimbursed for the significant costs they incur in collecting and remitting state and local sales tax.

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Enzi, Barrasso Stand Firm With Wyoming Businesses On Swipe Fee Reform

In what is perhaps the most important legislation for small business in years, Wyoming's U.S. Senators Enzi and Barrasso are sticking with our businesses against a new assault from the big banks and credit card companies to reform the ever-increasing fees from their monopoly of swipe fees.

Swipe fees, or interchange fees, are paid every time a consumer purchases a product or service with a credit card or debit card. These fees are a percentage of each transaction that credit card companies and their member banks collect from businesses that accepts credit cards or debit cards. In our increasingly cashless society - they add up quickly.

Fortunately, Congress recognized the need to reform debit card swipe fees and overwhelmingly voted to include reasonable reforms in the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010. Specifically, they voted to include an amendment offered by Senator Durbin that will ensure debit swipe fees are 'reasonable and proportional' to the actual cost of processing transactions. This interchange fee reform passed with strong bipartisan support, and it enjoys the support of millions of small business owners across the country.

The fact of the matter is that these excessive and out of control swipe fees are severely handicapping small business across the country. Since 2001 swipe fees have

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[spring2011]

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Wyoming State Liquor Association Officers and Board, 2010-2011

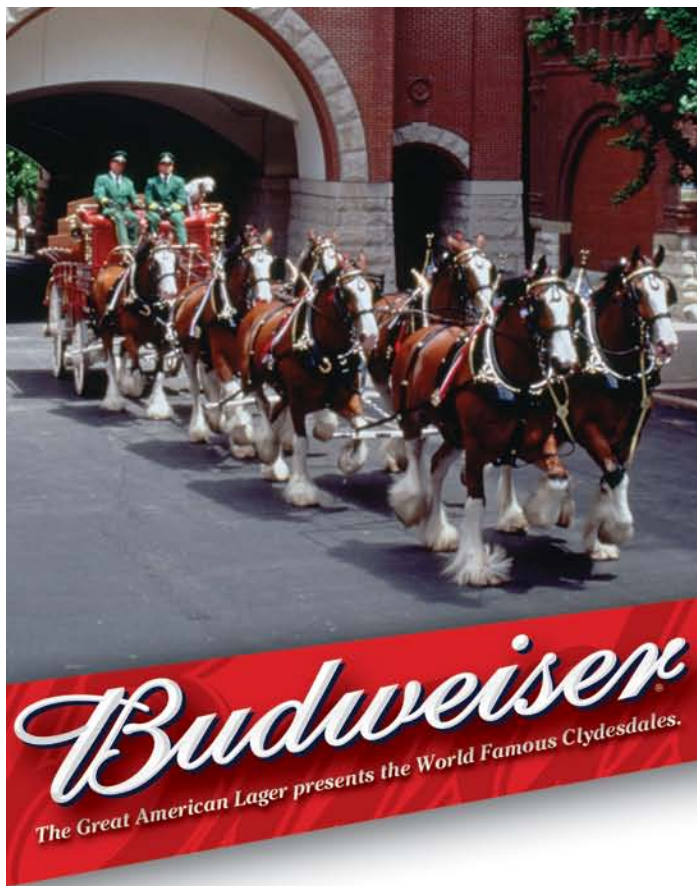
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President's Corner

By Trudy McCracken, Wyoming State Liquor Association President



*Trudy McCracken, WSLA President
and owner of Snowy Range Sports
Bar in Laramie*

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results. - Andrew Carnegie

Well, we finished another successful Legislative Session for the Wyoming State Liquor Association, as well as working on a number of national issues, including Swipe Fee Reform. You can catch up on these and others, if you haven't already, in the rest of the newsletter.

We spend a lot of time talking about how the WSLA works to stave off negative legislation, since we are in an industry that is constantly under attack. However, this year, we have had the opportunity to focus more on issues that won't just protect the success of your business, they will put money back into your pocket.

Wyoming Supreme Court to Decide the Future of Liquor Retailers... Again

For the second time in a decade, the future of Wyoming liquor retailers, or at least their insurance rates and legal liability, weigh in the balance of a Wyoming Supreme Court decision. In spite of a District Court dismissal of a lawsuit against Doug and Dennie Freier, owners of the Stockman's Bar in Basin and the Smokehouse Saloon in Greybull, the trial attorneys are at it again with another run at the Supreme Court.

The lawsuit was originally filed by the Florida relatives of a Ten Sleep couple killed by a drunk driver, and described in depth in the last WSLA newsletter. Cheyenne lawyer Pat Crank, a former state attorney general who represents the Florida relatives, said he believes it's time for the state's high court to take another look at the constitutionality of the laws that protect Wyoming's liquor retailers from runaway lawsuits, so he has appealed the District Court decision by taking it to the Supreme Court.

When District Judge Steven Cranfill dismissed the lawsuit last year, he ruled that "the role of this court is to interpret, and not to make policy." He also noted the Wyoming Supreme Court ruled in 2003 that bar owners who legally serve alcohol aren't responsible for their patrons' actions.

Crank, however, claims much has changed since 2003 in regard to society's tolerance of drunken driving. "The Legislature has strengthened a number of DUI laws," Crank said. "There have just

As outlined elsewhere, the WSLA's priority legislative issue... House Bill 147 (Excise Tax – Vendor Compensation)... is not only going to be give fair compensation for your work on collecting sales tax, but put up to \$12,000 a year back into your business.

Even more meaningful to your bottom line is Swipe Fee Reform. The WSLA has been working on this issue on a national level for over four years now, and we will hopefully see its full implementation this year. What does that mean to your bottom line? An average reduction in all debit card transactions of over 30 cents. Multiply that by your total number of debit card transactions, and we're talking serious money here.

The WSLA doesn't just protect your business... we improve your bottom line. The cost of membership seems pretty small when compared even to these two issues, of which the WSLA and our national affiliate, the American Beverage Licensees, have played a vital, if not essential, role.

In the next week or so, those of you who are not members of the WSLA will be getting a membership application in the mail. I strongly encourage you to join; not just out of responsibility to the success of our industry, or protecting our businesses, but as a participant in an organization that will help your business directly become more profitable.]

been significant societal changes with regard to recognition of the danger posed by drinking and driving, and the horrible harm it causes."

Ryan P. Healy, the Sheridan lawyer representing the Freiers, said "the law in Wyoming is very well established, and it's very clear that my clients are just simply immune from liability, and we're relieved that the district court upheld the law."

Mike Moser of the Wyoming State Liquor Association, said the law puts responsibility in the hands of the individual who chooses to abuse alcohol. It should be up to the state Legislature to decide whether to change the law, Moser said, "rather than trial attorneys looking to expand their business."

Overtaking the current law would mean higher insurance premiums for 1,250 Wyoming businesses that sell alcohol, Moser said. "Any time a business has to pay more, it's passed on to the consumer," Moser said. "So the consumer would ultimately be the one paying the price for this. That is, if the business survives the higher cost if these laws are changed."

The Wyoming Supreme Court appeal will likely take months. Everyone in our industry, or anyone who purchases our products, would be well advised to cross their fingers that the Supreme Court ruling echoes the 2003 Court case.]

Successful Legislative Session (continued from page 1)



Three of our Senate Champions on HB 147 (Excise Tax – Vendor Compensation)... Left to right, Mike Moser, WSLA Executive Director; Senator Ray Peterson (R-Cowley), the Senate sponsor of HB 147; Senator Drew Perkins (R-Casper); and Senator John Schiffer (R-Kaycee).

The Wyoming State Liquor Association worked long and hard on this bill, as many of you noticed by the Legislative Alerts we sent out as well as calls and e-mails. This bill was also supported by many of our fellow business associations including the Wyoming Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, Wyoming Retail Association, Wyoming Taxpayers Association, Rocky Mountain Food Industry Association, Wyoming Chambers of Commerce Partnership, and the Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association.

A bill that the WSLA opposed died in its first Committee hearing. Senate File 12 (County authority – smoking bans) would have authorized counties to prohibit smoking in public places and gave local public health departments the authority to adopt regulations prohibiting smoking in public places.

House Bill 3 (Liquor license transfers) clarifies existing Wyoming law on sales tax hold for liquor licensees. HB 3 further defined the restrictions on liquor licensees failing to pay state sales tax in their ability to transfer liquor licenses. This bill doesn't do anything that wasn't already being implemented by a law passed in the 1996 Legislative Session, it just makes it clear that a liquor license can't be transferred until the sales tax due is paid. WSLA supported this bill, and it was signed by the Governor into law effective immediately.

The WSLA reached a compromise with other groups with House Bill 98 (Bar and grill liquor licenses), which allows for a slight increase in the number of bar and grill liquor licenses available to municipalities and counties. HB 98 allocates a new bar and grill license to be issued to larger municipalities per 7,500 person increase in population and gives other municipalities below 27,500 in population one additional license. WSLA didn't oppose this bill as long as no further increases are made, which there weren't. HB 98 was signed by the Governor and will go into effect July 1, 2011.

The failure of a Wyoming lottery, however, came as a disappointment to many. House Bill 186 (sponsored by Representatives Dave Zwonitzer, Del McOmie, Mary Throne and Dan Zwonitzer) would

have given Wyomingites the powerball and lottery as well as annual profits to the state of \$10 to \$12 million. The bill would have created a semi-autonomous Wyoming Lottery Corporation. The WSLA supported this bill, which was narrowly defeated in the House of Representatives on Committee of the Whole.

House Bill 131 (Tips sharing), although only affecting a small number of our retailers, would have allowed tips sharing (or tip pooling) by hospitality businesses that allows them to "share" a portion of their tips with other employees who help them provide service to guests such as bartenders, bussers, food runners, etc. Current Wyoming law allows tipped employees to set up and participate in a voluntary tips sharing arrangement now as long as all employees agree to it, but the employer has no involvement in the process. WSLA supported this bill, along with other hospitality groups, but the bill didn't make it.

Several bills... House Bill 180 (Liquor licenses-cultural event permit) and House Bill 234 (Alcohol permits-catering permits)... attempted to allow cultural events and civic centers to have a new type of liquor license, or allow additional catering permits for those venues. The WSLA worked with the interested parties to find a compromise, which we never reached, and so these two bills didn't make the House Floor.

Perhaps the best news about the 2011 Session was that the WSLA worked mostly on passing good legislation, instead of stopping harmful legislation, for the first time in recent memory. The WSLA office mailed around 2,000 Legislative Alerts, and made numerous personal contacts, to work with our members across the state. The successes of the Session would have been impossible were it not for the calls, e-mails and other contacts that our members initiated over those months. Especially with the passage of House Bill 147 (Excise Tax – Vendor Compensation), those efforts will pay dividends for years to come.]

New York Outdoor Smoking Ban Begins



We've all seen smoking ban proposals affecting businesses... but New York has taken a new step in smoking bans. It's not just indoor smoking anymore.

The law, which Mayor Michael Bloomberg signed in February after it was passed by the New York City Council, will make smoking illegal in New York City's 1,700 parks and on the city's 14 miles of public beaches. Smoking will also be prohibited in pedestrian plazas like Times Square.

Not all New Yorkers are embracing the ban. New York City C.L.A.S.H. (Citizens Lobbying Against Smoker Harassment), a

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WSLA and Allies Win Teton County Smoking Ban Lawsuit

Almost two years ago, the Wyoming State Liquor Association joined a coalition of other business associations, including the Wyoming Trucking Association and Wyoming Contractors Association, against Teton County Health District rules to enact a full smoking ban in Teton County enacted in May, 2009.

Teton County's air rule would have banned smoking in all places of employment, bars, restaurants and sports arenas. Smoking would not be able to take place within 20 feet of any public establishment, outdoor serving areas of restaurants, seating areas in outdoor arenas and ski lifts.

The rule would have also made a person who smokes in an area where smoking is prohibited subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to one year for each day on which the violation occurs. The same penalty applies for business owners and managers. However, all clubs in Teton County were exempt.

Earlier this year, District Judge Timothy Day ruled that Teton County's health board exceeded its authority when it enacted the public smoking ban. Day also concluded the board's actions violated the separation of powers provision of the Wyoming Constitution.

In his ruling, Day wrote that the correlation between second-hand smoke and disease was a "matter beyond reasonable controversy." But, he added, the case turned on the authority of the board to

adopt a smoking ban, rather than the health effects of smoking.

"The District Board of Health has exceeded the rulemaking authority granted to a district board of health in (state statute) by enacting rules beyond the scope of an area regulated by the state Department of Health and without clear direction from the Wyoming Legislature," Day said in the ruling. "In any event, the enactment of a rule that creates a new criminal offense in the absence of appropriate authority is a legislative act and in clear violation of the Wyoming Constitution."

"In the case of the Smokefree Air Rule, a local, unelected board is, in effect, legislating a new criminal offense in the absence of an explicit standard from either the state Department of Health or the Wyoming Legislature, and it does so with no oversight from any elected official or body," the ruling states. "This impermissibly circumvents the legislative process, and it precludes public participation and the checks and balances in the legislative process."

Coincidentally, the WSLA worked during the 2011 Legislative Session to stop a bill that would have given county commissions and local health boards the power to enact public smoking bans. Over the last 12 years, the WSLA has successfully opposed past attempts to adopt a statewide public smoking ban. Also, the Jackson City Council had turned down a smoking ban proposal.

Since every liquor establishment in Teton County was already smoke-free except The Virginian, many felt that the process of going smoke-free was happening on its own without government stepping in.

Mike Moser, executive director of the Wyoming State Liquor Association, praised the ruling. "I'm relieved," Moser said. "And I agree with it. Elected officials are the ones to make this kind of decision." The crux of the lawsuit was whether boards of health could broaden their authority, Moser said.

"It wasn't just about a smoking ban in Teton County," Moser said. "It was about how far boards of health can go in making rules regulating workplace safety."

Despite ruling, some saw the judgment as the first step in a drawn-out legal challenge. Dr. David Shlim, chairman of the Teton County board of health, called the ruling "a shame" and said it likely would be appealed. However, no such move was made, and the deadline for a Wyoming Supreme Court appeal has expired.

The fight to keep our businesses free from government mandates continue on other fronts. Since the ruling, anti-smoking groups in counties and cities across Wyoming... including Teton and Natrona County... have pledged increased efforts to pressure elected officials to pass municipal and state-wide smoking bans. The WSLA and our allies won a major battle, but we're far from winning the war.]

New York (continued from page 4)

grass-roots organization, is staging a "smoke in the park" to call for repeal or to simply demonstrate anger, according to the group's website.

The ban will be enforced by the city's parks department, and if violators are caught, they could be fined \$50.

New York follows in the footsteps of 105 municipalities that have banned smoking on public beaches, according to data from the

advocacy group Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights. In states including California, Texas, Illinois, Minnesota and New Jersey, 507 municipalities impose laws that prohibit city parks, or specifically named city parks, to allow smoking.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are only seven states that have no indoor smoking restrictions, although some of their cities do; Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, West Virginia and Wyoming.]

Swipe Fee Reform (continued from page 1)



The WSLA and other business owners go to D.C.: Left to right, Mike Moser, WSLA Executive Director; Senator Ray Peterson (R-Cowley), Office Shop, Inc.; U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY); Rob Monroe, Nate's Flowers and Gifts; WSLA Past President Mike Reid, Poplar Wine and Spirits; and WSLA Board member Island Richards, Kelly's Convenience Center and Kelly's Sunset.

tripled with Americans paying more than \$48 billion in these fees in 2008. This 300 percent increase in swipe fees equates to a tremendous expense for small business owners who have to make tough decisions... and leads to grave consequences for merchants and consumers.

The Federal Reserve is working on rules that will guide implementation of these reforms, and the Durbin Amendment. The initial implementation of the Durbin Amendment will be in June, and go into full effect later this year, and would cap the debit card fees from an average of 44 cents to between 7 and 12 cents... while it still only costs these companies around 4 cents to process debit cards. These amounts would still allow for a profit margin anywhere between 75 - 200%, which is more than any retailer would dream of charging!

But the banks and credit card companies are fighting reform every step of the way. For the big banks that collect billions from small businesses in excess fees, the plan is simple, Step one is delay, Step two is kill it. And the attempts to delay it are embodied in two bills; the Debit Interchange Fee Study Act (S. 575) in the Senate, which would delay implementation by two years, and the Consumers Payment System Protection Act (H.R. 1081) in the House, which would delay it a year. However, the real threat is S. 575.

The Wyoming State Liquor Association is working to maintain the implementation of the Durbin Amendment by urging their Senators to oppose these delays, including WSLA Board members flying to Washington D.C. to thank Senators Enzi and Barrasso for their continued support for swipe fee reform.

To counter, the Big Wall Street Banks and their credit card colleagues are spending over a quarter of a million dollars a day to lobby to get this vital reform delayed. These are not our local Wyoming banks... the Reforms excludes banks with less than \$10 billion in assets. Last year, America's six largest banks paid over \$143 billion in bonuses and compensation. These are the same banks whose actions brought the U.S. economy to its knees a couple years ago and were bailed out with our tax money.

The fight isn't over yet. When it comes to swipe fee reform, Congress got it right last year. I hope that you will join us in thanking our Wyoming Congressmen for sticking with Wyoming businesses in the face of opposition from out-of-state interests that are taking millions of overcharged debit card fees and putting it in their pockets. That money belongs in Wyoming... with our businesses and savings for our customers.]

National Alcohol Sales Expected to Increase in 2011

On-Premise retailers across the country are expected to see a modest boost in alcoholic beverage sales in 2011, according to research from the consulting firm Technomic Inc. Overall restaurant and bar alcohol sales are forecast to increase a nominal 1.9% in 2011.

"The past several years were brutal for the alcohol category in bars and restaurants" as "consumers were trading down to value offerings or simply not ordering alcohol at all," David Henkes of Technomic said.

"While a positive forecast is good news for bars and restaurants, the fact is that we're comparing 2011 to a very weak year in 2010," he continued. "There are still some longer-term structural issues in the economy, including unemployment, that tell us that the improvement in alcohol sales won't be as robust as it has been after previous downturns."

Technomic is predicting that cocktails will see the greatest sales growth in 2011 among alcoholic beverage categories, with an increase of 2.3% in 2011 versus 2010's forecasted growth of 0.7%. Trends that are expected to increase sales in 2011 include "skinny" or lower calorie drinks, premium and high-cachet gins and bourbons and "retro cocktails," among other concepts.

Beer sales, which were flat in 2010, are expected to climb by 1.6% in 2011, supported by continued strength among craft and micro-brewery specialty products, Technomic indicated.

In addition, wine sales, which were down 10.8% in 2009, are expected to grow by 1.4% in 2011. Wine sales, Technomic officials said, are "being depressed by a move towards more wines-by-the-glass and lower-priced value wines."]

Is there Marijuana in Liquor Retailing's Future?

There might be in Washington, for starters. At least that's what Representative Mary Lou Dickerson (D-Seattle) wants to do, as well as her thirteen co-sponsors, when they introduced House Bill 1550 in the Washington State House of Representatives this year. And in a first for a major U.S. newspaper, the Seattle Times published an editorial that endorsed legalization and called for passage of the bill.

HB 1550 would permit marijuana to be sold in state liquor stores, permit citizens to grow marijuana at home for personal use, set an age limit of 21, and charge the State Liquor Board with licensing growers, distributors, and sellers throughout the state.

The bill also would legalize all marijuana drug paraphernalia and permit cities and counties to end legalization in their jurisdictions via a petition initiative process. Thirty percent of voters would have to sign the petition and a majority would have to pass it in the next general election to prevent legalization from continuing in their city, town, or county.

Rep. Dickerson says that legalizing marijuana could generate \$400 million per biennium for the state. "Subjecting cannabis to a licensed, regulated system would not only improve public health and safety, it would generate hundreds of millions of dollars for health care at a time when Washington's budget is being decimated," said Dr. William Robertson, founder of the Washington Poison Control Center.

Under the bill, cannabis would be sold through state liquor stores

with growers applying for a license through the Liquor Control Board. The LCB, according to a press release, has a 96 percent success rate in preventing alcohol sales to minors. "Drug cartels and black-market dealers have made it easier for kids to get cannabis than alcohol," Dickerson said. "The Liquor Control Board has a proven track record of shielding kids from its products. I'm confident our bill will break the back of cannabis crime-syndicate profits and make it possible to preserve vital health services across Washington in these very difficult budget times."

This isn't the first time this bill has been tried. In 2010, Dickerson submitted a similar bill, HB 2401, which failed. However, they're trying it from two directions this time. State Senator Margarita Prentice, D-Renton, also says she will present a companion bill in the Senate. "I've never smoked a joint in my life," she says, "but we're making millionaires out the world's worst people."

Although many say these bills are unlikely to pass, and if it does the governor is likely to veto, there has been a much less restrictive ballot initiative that has already been filed for the 2012 elections. And voters may legalize marijuana in other states in 2012.

This may seem a bit comical, but considering if marijuana is legalized... as it very well might be in some states considering the budget problems and the general social direction... the most logical place to sell it would be in establishments that already sell age restricted products, and that would be liquor retailers. Would you like a little Cannabis with that Crown Royal? Pot with your Port? Or Gin with your Joint?]



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U.S. Wine Consumption Passes France's

By Ryan Flinn

The United States passed France as the world's largest wine-consuming nation for the first time, lifted by its larger population and an interest in wine-and-cheese culture among young Americans. Wine shipments to the United States climbed 2 percent to 329.7 million cases last year, according to Gomberg, Fredrikson & Associates, a wine-industry consulting firm in Woodside. That compares with 320.6 million for France.

While the French still eclipse Americans in per-capita consumption, the U.S. wine industry is benefiting from a population of almost 311 million people - five times the size of France's - and more young people becoming interested in the drink. Marketers also are using social media to reach a new generation of consumers, said Jon Fredrikson, the firm's president.

"Wine is really gaining traction in the U.S. - it's becoming an accepted part of everyday life," Fredrikson said. "That's a radical change over the past two decades."

The retail value of U.S. wine sales rose 4 percent to \$30 billion in 2010, according to Gomberg, Fredrikson. California's output accounted for 61 percent of the volume. The state's worldwide wine shipments climbed 2 percent to 241.8 million cases.

"With the U.S. being the biggest, it means we're a target for everyone in America and around the world that produces wine," Fredrikson said. "Everyone wants to be here."

The history of wine in France stretches back thousands of years, fostered by prime growing conditions and its popularity among all different social classes. The French drank about 14 gallons per

person on average in 2008, the latest year with figures available from the Wine Institute, a trade group in San Francisco. That compares with 2.6 gallons for Americans.

Chardonnay was the best-selling varietal in the United States last year, with \$2.03 billion in revenue, according to Nielsen Co., followed by Cabernet Sauvignon with \$1.38 billion. The market for bottles priced at \$20 or more grew the most last year, gaining 11 percent over 2009, though the biggest category of wine sales was the \$3-to-\$5.99 range, Nielsen said.

The fastest-growing varietals were Pinot Noir, Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc, which all rose more than 9 percent, according to Nielsen. In terms of imports, wines from Argentina and New Zealand had the biggest gains, at more than 24 percent.

"If you look back 10 years ago, the on-ramp into the wine industry was white Zinfandel. Now it's really not so much that case," said Dale Stratton, vice president of strategic insights for Constellation Brands Inc., the world's biggest maker of wine costing more than \$5 a bottle.

The millennial generation - people in their 20s and 30s - reaches for more traditional varietals and pricier bottles, he said.

"There's no question that the millennial consumer is participating in the category at a much greater level than previous generations," Stratton said. "The consumer is very much bringing wine into more occasions, and they are participating in the wine category in a more frequent basis."]

New Wyoming Driver's License & Identification Cards!



Above: Sample of the front of the new adult driver's license. Right: Sample of the front of the new minor's driver's license.

The WSLA office has been getting a number of questions regarding the new Wyoming driver's licenses and identification cards. As in the prior licenses (but not the oldest ones), if the person is under 21 when the license was issued, it is vertical... if over 21, it is horizontal. The dates that the person turns 18 and 21 (for tobacco and alcohol sales, respectively) are in a red band on the "Under 21" vertical license, as you can see in the sample.

Also, as in the last licenses, these new ones all have bar codes for I.D. readers. The Wyoming Department of Transportation gives the individual a photocopy of their license when the new ones are being issued, but still also stamps "VOID" on the old license for identification purposes. Although it might be OK to take the photocopy of the license as a primary ID for tobacco and alcohol sales, we recommend that the individual also presents their old "VOID" license as well as the photocopy to ensure that we aren't taking any fakes. Look at the photocopy to ensure that it is still within the 60 day window for the new license, and check the old voided license to make sure they match up. Better safe than sorry.]

WATCH FOR THESE NEW ITEMS

Jose Cuervo Tradicional Silver Tequila	750ml	#87416
Godiva Chocolate Vodka	750ml	#41954
Godiva Chocolate Raspberry Vodka	750ml	#41951
Ketel One Oranje Vodka	750ml	#35543
Rökk Vodka	750ml	#35571
Rökk Raspberry Vodka	750ml	#35622
Seagram's 7 Stone Cherry Whiskey	750ml	#27562



AVAILABLE MAY 1ST

Please Drink Responsibly

Wyoming... Control State 101

As you've likely seen in the news, a number of alcohol "control states" such as Virginia, Washington and New Hampshire have considered "privatizing" their distribution and sale of alcohol, which is currently under state control. Wyoming is referred to as a "control state" in the sense that our wholesale sale and distribution of wine and spirits are state-controlled, but in many cases, that's where the similarities end.

How it all began

After the end of Prohibition in 1933, many states curtailed where and when alcohol could be sold. Before the temperance movement started their anti-alcohol crusades, most alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption were often sold just like any other item of commerce in stores or in saloons/bars.

After Prohibition, states went all over the place in how they dealt with the sale of alcohol. Some states still held on to Prohibition to a lesser or greater extent. Among those states that did not choose to maintain complete prohibition, some chose to establish government monopolies over the sale of alcoholic beverages within their borders. That was the beginning of the "control state".

So what's a control state?

The term "control state" is popular but misleading in that all states control and regulate the sale of alcohol to some degree. In this sense, every state is a "control state," whereas only 19, including Wyoming, are monopoly states.

However, the extent to which this monopoly extends differs from state to state. Out of the 18 states that regulate alcohol wholesaling, only nine (Alabama, Idaho, New Hampshire, Oregon, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, and Utah) run retail liquor establishments. The others either permit licensed private stores to sell liquor (like Wyoming) or contract the management and operations of the store to private firms, usually for a commission. In all of these control states, some form of low-alcoholic beverages are available in private retail outlets for off-premise consumption. Most of these states require private retail outlets to have a license issued by the particular state, although in Wyoming, the licenses are issued by the city or county. Similar licensure procedures apply for acquiring an on-premise license in those states who are "privatized" (like Wyoming) at the retail level.

Use of the term "alcoholic beverage control" by a state does not make it a "control" (or monopoly) state. A number of states use the term "Alcoholic Beverage Control" to refer to state agencies that regulate alcohol sales, yet many of these states are completely privatized. Most of those states, however, still restrict the number of retail outlets in an area, although the outlets within those limits are free to compete.

Why is Wyoming different from the others?

Wyoming is a bit of a combination of a full "control state" and a privatized state, in the sense that only the wholesale tier, and then only the sale of wine and spirits, are state controlled. Also, all wholesale malt beverage sales are privatized. Of the 18 wholesale control states, only three... Wyoming, Mississippi and West Virginia... follow this model.

Beginning in the 1960s onward, many control states loosened their monopoly of beverage sales. States like West Virginia sold all of their state liquor stores to private owners, while others like Vermont permit private store owners to sell alcohol on behalf of the state for a commission.

Much of the discussion of the cost of being a "control state" that is fueling the debates across the country focus on what West Virginia and Vermont already have done. Although state control over the wholesale of wine and spirits are largely successful, profitable to the states and popular with retailers, state controlled package liquor stores (which we obviously don't have) contribute largely to the privatization debate, since they can be considered to reduce selection, fix prices and compete with the private sector.

Although the debate will continue to rage for some time to come over the increased privatization with the "control state" model, we in Wyoming are fortunate to have the version that seems to work the best... for our customers, for the taxpayers and our businesses.]

Alcohol Trivia!

The word "toast," meaning a wish of good health, started in ancient Rome, where a piece of toasted bread was dropped into wine.

In English pubs drinks are served in pints and quarts. In old England, bartenders would advise unruly customers to mind their own pints and quarts. It's the origin of "mind your P's and Q's."

In 1799, a whiskey distillery started by George Washington at Mount Vernon was producing 11,000 gallons of whiskey in 1799, making it the largest in America at the time. Martha Washington enjoyed her own daily toddys. In the 1790s; "happy hour" began at 3:00 p.m. and cocktails continued until dinner.

President Thomas Jefferson was the U.S.A.'s first wine expert.

Adolf Hitler was one of the world's best known teetotalers; his adversaries, Sir Winston Churchill, was one of the world's best known heavy drinkers, and Franklin Roosevelt certainly had his share as well.

Favorite cocktails of former Presidents are reported to include:
- Gin and tonic (Gerald Ford) - Martini (Herbert Hoover)
- Rum and coke (Richard Nixon) - Bourbon (Harry Truman)
- Scotch or brandy (Franklin Roosevelt)

Abraham Lincoln's 1833 liquor store license is on display in the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey History in Bardstown, Kentucky.

Does prohibition of alcohol reduce violence? We can use the examples of countries that ban alcohol to disprove that one... Iran, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan under the Taliban. Also, the Soviet Bolsheviks (Communists) quickly imposed national prohibition following the Russian Revolution.

In old England, a whistle was baked into the rim or handle of ceramic cups used by pub patrons. When they wanted a refill, they used the whistle to get service. So when people went drinking, they would "wet their whistle."

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