MUNICIPAL

LIQUOR STORE

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



<u>Lakeville Liquor Wins</u> <u>National Retailer of the Year</u> **Award**

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ON THE COVER

Lakeville Liquors has been named a Retailer of the Year 2017 by a national magazine, the first time the prestigious recognition has been given to a municipal liquor system.

Beverage Dynamics, a national retail magazine for liquor stores across the U.S., annually selects 15 of the industry's best retailers to be recognized as Retailer of the Year.

"They selected us based on our uniqueness for giving back to the community," said Brenda Visnovec, Lakeville liquor operations manager.

Pictured on the cover are (L to R) Beverage Dynamics Managing editor, Kyle Schwartz, Brenda Visnovec, and Lakeville Liquor Assistant Manager, Karen Wells

Read more on Page 6.













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MMBA President's Message



GARY BUYSSE
President

Acquisition and consolidation has become an integral part of corporate growth strategy in the late twentieth and twenty first century.

E.J. Gallo has diversified their portfolio by purchasing properties in appellations both nationally and internationally.

Heineken recently completed the purchase of Lagunitas, a California craft brewery. Heineken International owns 165 breweries across the planet and employs over 76,000 people.

BeamGlobal acquired 2Gingers from Irish and Local entrepreneur Kieran Folliard and was acquired by Suntory of Japan two years later.

Clooney, Gerber and Meldman just completed the sale of Casamigos Tequila to Diageo for \$700M with potential additional incentives of 300M if the brand reaches forecasted sales projections over the next decade.

Constellation Brands was recently rejected in its attempt to purchase Jack Daniels from the Brown family who has owned controlling interest in the distillery since its inception in 1870.

Closer to home, a national convenience store chain liquidated a municipal liquor store in greater Minnesota. The store was ripe for sale due to its poor management and consistent under performance.

The manager of this particular location was unconcerned about the possibility

of the city losing its enterprise fund due to her impending retirement.

The elected officials were pleased to rid themselves of a long standing dilemma and move on with the task of running a city, not perseverating about a liquor department.

Big box grocery will be attempting to acquire our stores, successful or not. They see the potential that some administrators and elected officials fail to notice, negatively impacting your community forever.

If you aren't seeing the big picture now

it's time to start; winter isn't coming, it's here.

The three tier system occurs in other unregulated industries unchallenged l.

Try to buy a Carrier air conditioner without going through a registered Carrier dealer. Many consumer products are unavailable direct from the manufacturer.

Our three tiers may be challenged in the future; impossible for some to retain neutrality.

This issue needs further discussion.



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Lakeville Liquor Wins National Retailer of the Year Award

by Laura Ade, Sun This Week

Lakeville Liquors has been named a Retailer of the Year 2017 by a national magazine, the first time the prestigious recognition has been given to a municipal liquor system.

Beverage Dynamics, a national retail magazine for liquor stores across the U.S., annually selects 15 of the industry's best retailers to be recognized as Retailer of the Year.

"They selected us based on our uniqueness for giving back to the community," said Brenda Visnovec, Lakeville liquor operations manager.

Lakeville's liquor operations were also recognized for the way they support other municipal liquor businesses around the state, providing everything from consulting and advice to employee handbooks.

"We do a lot of sharing of information, which is unique to the municipal liquor stores," Visnovec said. "Almost every city uses our employee manual because it's so extensive."

Visnovec was presented the award at the Beverage Alcohol Retailers Conference in Minneapolis June 14.

Visnovec said the city went through an extensive application process to be considered for the award.

"They wanted examples of where people are supporting other things and making it really something for others to strive for," Visnovec said. "On top of the actual retail sales, it's about how much we work out in the community."

Since 2012, fundraisers held at the three liquor stores have helped fund various community initiatives, including repaying a city-funded bridge

loan for construction of the Heritage Center and contributing to the Lion's Club Brew Battle and the annual Taste of Lakeville event, the major fundraiser of the Lakeville Rotary.

A dozen wines are sampled before the Taste event and the winners featured for sale at the city's liquor stores.

Fundraisers held at the city's three liquor stores have garnered tens of thousands in annual donations and have helped fund projects, including parks projects, which include the recent construction of the Land of Amazement 2.0 playground in Steve Michaud Park, the Yellow Ribbon's efforts at building ramps for disabled veterans and construction of the Ritter Dog Park.

Lakeville's liquor stores will be fundraising for Fire It Up for Public Safety in July, a campaign to provide water rescue equipment to the city.

Lakeville Liquors locations also raise donations for local food shelves, which Visnovec said amounts to about \$25,000 annually.

Visnovec said the Liquor Committee approves all community causes to which it will collect donations.

"There's a lot of great causes out there, but we just can't say OK we want to sponsor a softball team or something like that," Visnovec said. "It's got to go back into the community and benefit all."

She also credited the municipal liquor store employees for regularly volunteering their time and the extra effort they regularly contribute.

"We do a lot of philanthropy around here," she said.

"Sometimes when I come up with promotions, staff kind of look at me and roll their eyes and go, OK, how much blood do you want out of me this time," Visnovec said. "But they're all so good about it. This is a team that believes not only in the business and customer service, but also believes in the community,"

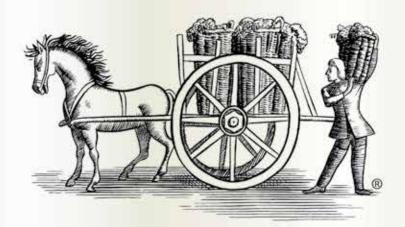
Visnovec said she was grateful to be recognized with such a prestigious award but still grappling with the realization Lakeville Liquors was selected for the honor.

"These are kind of known as the big guys," Visnovec said. "Total Wine has received this award, BevMo, Haskell's. For a store operation like ours, it's unique, but we have a great story. It's not just one person becoming a millionaire, it's the entire community benefiting from this."

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PROUDLY FEATURES



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Expanded Food Offerings Gives Hitterdal Liquor A Defining Edge

By Amy Felegy

Eight years ago, Hitterdal Municipal Liquor Store manager Shari Klemetson started filling customer's glasses and satisfying their food cravings.

Nearly a four hour drive northwest from the Twin Cities, the liquor facility nests amid fewer than 150 city residents.

By no means, however, does the small Clay County city and unassuming seven-by-nine foot kitchen restrict culinary variety.

Beginning solely as a liquor operation with minimal food options, an increase in selection brought both financial and holistic success.

Food variety, expanded weekly specials, and increased hours revamped Hitterdal's liquor facilty without a drop of paint, and Klemetson hopes others can do the same.

The menu began its debut during the operation's beginnings; first serving up iconic bar eats such as pizza and burgers, gradually adding options as more people frequented the establishment

"Food has become more of an essential, not just an add-on," Klemetson said.

The following months steadily gave way to bigger and better recipes,

transforming the liquor store's diverse flavor.

Grilled chicken, shrimp, eggrolls, and an enticing array of appetizers now flood Hitterdal's locale, accompanying the still-remaining burger-and-fry combo.

Upgrading the menu came hand-in-hand with adding weekly specials, including daytime bloody mary's and a wine club to heighten energy and increase foot traffic.

Both social and food options needed to grow when Klemetson noticed a drop in the town's regular customers.

"In order to keep day sales going, I had to introduce [more] food," she said.

And more food is precisely what ensued.

In Hitterdal, Thursday nights are synonymous with the messy dish every non-vegetarian savors: ribs.

Starting just three years ago, these weekly specials have brought in over a thousand dollars per day, inviting extra people, and napkins, to the store.

"People come in for rib night who I've never seen before.

As far as promotions, the rib night's been the best," Klemetson said.

Six years strong, the women's wine club has also prospered enormously, hosting

anywhere from 30 to 60 customers in a given night.

Klemetson hoped adding a newer menu and schedule would attract more than just the local crowd and increase business among those who stopped in.

This strategy proved itself successful.

She says it brought sales from around \$1,100 to \$6,000 a month and attracted residents outside of Hitterdal's one-mile outskirt.

But their good fortune does not end with more letters on the menu or mouth watering events every night.

Opening up shop mid-morning has distinguished hers from liquor stores in similar neighborhoods.

"Other bars aren't opening until four in the afternoon." she said.

Hitterdal's extra hours attract customers for daytime drinks and a filling lunch, too.

"People don't come to the bar just to sit here and drink anymore.

They're coming here because they know they can get a good burger and fries and a beer and they're happy with that."

With a ninth year of business to look forward to, Klemetson is now in the position to offer advice to other liquor stores not yet brimming with cuisine.

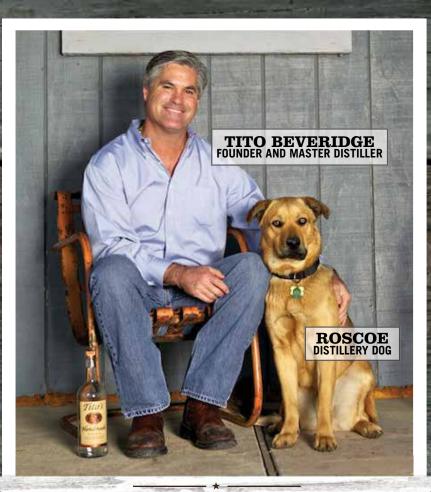
Multiplying meals and furthering business through unique specials give can give municipal liquor establishments a defining edge.

"You've got to step it up. You've got to try something new," says Klemetson.

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After enlightenment — chop wood, carry water.

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2017 MMBA Scholarship Winners!!



Easton Andreas

I plan to attend Alexandria Technical and Community College to pursue my Associate in Arts Degree.

My dreams for the future include determining what I am most passionate about, working hard, and finding success in the career I choose.

I want to be successful and be a positive influence for others.

When I was in second grade I was diagnosed with Asperger's, a mild form of autism. Even though some would consider this a disability,

I look at it as an opportunity.

There definitely were times in my life when school was challenging for me.

But, with perseverance and commitment, as well as great support from family, teachers and friends,

I became confident I could achieve whatever I set my mind to.

Volunteering has been important to me.

I have enjoyed reading scripture in

church and also an acolyte during my years in confirmation.

I was a member of the Leo Club for several years and acted as the Vice President of that group for one year.

We raised funds for many Causes, including our local Relay for Life event.

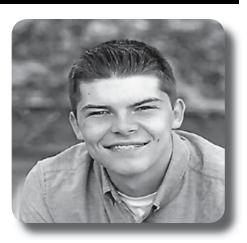
I also began bowling in a youth league and eventually decided bowling was what I wanted to pursue as a competitive sport. I have had great success in bowling and in July, 2016 I participated in a national youth bowling tournament in Indianapolis, IN with the best bowlers in the country.

Recently, I bowled my first 300 game to become the youngest bowler in my community to achieve that milestone. I feel work ethic is very important and for the past three years I have worked at Melody Lanes starting at the age of fifteen and at Cenex at the age of l6 managing two part time jobs while in school. I continue to work at both of these businesses. In the summer of 2016,

I worked at Minnesota Valley Cooperative (MVC) full time on the pole treating crew and plan to work there again the summer of 2017 to save for college.

I believe volunteering, participating in sports, and work have helped me learn how to work well with others, have fun, and reach for goals through hard work and commitment. I have learned if you give your best to whatever you are trying to achieve, you can succeed.

Easton's father Jeff is Fiesta City Liquor (Montevideo) manager



Brett Bjergo

My name is Brett Bjergo and I am a graduate of Cambridge-Isanti High School.

I have been an honor roll student for all four years of high school and have received three letter awards for this, as well.

Many of my classes were upper level college courses which have gathered me over 50 college credits by the time I graduated.

I have also enjoyed participating in a number of extracurricular activities which my school offered, including track, baseball, basketball, football, and Link Crew.

I plan to attend the University of Minnesota Duluth and earn a bachelor's degree in Biology and Environmental Science.

With this, I hope to find a career that can make a difference for wildlife and the environment.

I am very excited to attend college and I look forward to the opportunities that a degree will give me.

Brett's father Bryan works at Northbound Liquor (Cambridge)



Ellie Ims

"You get your shoes, Ellie" has been my dad's classic line to me in my life.

I have always been the one who wants to "go." It might be a quick trip to the store or something much more.

I have been a member of the Northfield Youth Choirs for twelve years, and this organization is one of a kind.

No matter the level of talent, everyone is welcome to sing. My choir has traveled across the world.

Performing at Carnegie Hall in New York ranks high, yet Canterbury Cathedral was excellent too.

I have also been helping as a teacher's assistant for a 3rd grade class at a local elementary school.

When volunteering, I help correct math assignments, read with the children and support them with any questions they have.

This amazing opportunity has helped me decide that I would love to be an elementary teacher.

I will be attending Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota.

I will be playing soccer and working hard to get my Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education.

When I graduate from college and receive my degree/ license

I plan on moving to northern Minnesota and working for a smaller school district.

My degree will allow me to teach kindergarten thru sixth grade.

My hope is to teach 3rd grade.

As a teacher I hope I can keep the momentum my dad gave me, "get your shoes, be active and work hard."

I'm proud of what I've accomplished and can't wait to see what's to come.

Ellie's mother Julie is a Sales Associate at Northfield Liquor Store



Moriah Johnson

Through extracurricular activities, advanced placement classes, aiding at the elementary school and my part time jobs at Larry's Super Market, the city skating rink, and a local cafe, I feel I have used my high school career to help shape me as the person I am today.

Being so involved in my school has given me many great opportunities I may not have had elsewhere.

National Honor Society has given me countless opportunities to volunteer in my community by helping with local blood drives, cleaning up road ditches, stuffing Easter eggs for the community Easter egg hunt, and even helping the Mason's with the child ID program.

Speech has given me the confidence to speak in front of large crowds, which

really helped when I would speak in front of the school for Student Lighthouse and getting to emcee the sweetheart coronation.

My extracurricular activities have structured my life and have taught me many different life skills.

After high school, I plan to go to the University of Minnesota Duluth to pursue a degree in Elementary Education and Special Education.

They have a specific program called Integrated Elementary and Special Education By the end of the course I can be certified for both elementary and special education teaching.

My time spent in high school has left me feeling confident in my choice of school and degree. In my life I want to share my passions with others, while ultimately helping them to discover what they love.

Moriah's mother Maggie is Pelican Rapids Liquors manager



Brennan Monson

My high school career was four fun years filled with learning, extracurricular activities and volunteerism.

I enjoy singing. I was in Concert Choir, the elite "Mannerchor" of Men and participate in Solo, Duet and Ensemble State Choral Competitions annually.

I have also earned varsity letters in

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OF REFRESHMENT

Peinen



football and basketball and am a part of the FFA Club. I am also very involved in the St. James Lutheran Church Youth Group and have donated many hours to help in any way needed.

Succeeding in high school is very important in a young adult's life. If you start your high school career out successfully, you learn to stay motivated. I believe that learned drive is what you need to keep yourself going through life.

My biggest goals in high school weren't the typical goals, like to be the best athlete or the smartest in the class.

My biggest goal has been to go to school and make others feel good about themselves. To make someone smile is still my favorite thing to do I have such a passion for it that it could very well lead me to my post high school selection of course study in college.

I have lived with challenges in learning (ADHD) my whole life and have found that kindness, time and compassion is key.

I have worked very hard to stay focused in mainstream high school classes despite my learning disabilities. I do the best I can each day.

I would like to study physical and massage therapy at Ridgewater College.

In my career, I would enjoy and putting a smile on someone's face every single day, while helping them feel good about themselves.

It would be my dream come true.

Brennan's mother Myra is Howard Lake Liquor manager



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Andi Nordby

During my high school career at Braham Area High School I was involved in many activities such as: volleyball, softball, baseball manager, trap shooting, and yearbook.

Outside of school I am involved in youth group through my church.

During the summer we went on a mission trip to Chicago. It was a wonderful experience Also during the summer I was a Braham ambassador candidate and won the Miss Congeniality award.

Over the last two years, I have taken college courses through my school, one of which allowed me to earn my CNA (certified nursing assistant) certificate. This helped me get my foot in the door into the medical field. With this certification I was able to get a job at Gracepointe Crossings in Cambridge on a work release program from school.

My plan is to attend Anoka Ramsey Community College/Cambridge Campus for two years of generals then transfer to St. Cloud State University to finish my degree in speech pathology. I'm interested in studying speech pathology, because I will be able to help people!

I am very excited for what the future holds!

Andi's mother Jacque is Home Town Liquor (Braham) manager

The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese





Christian Schmidt

Throughout high school I have been involved in sports and volunteering.

Playing sports has increased my leadership ability, volunteerism, and has given me confidence to succeed at school, on the field, in the gym, and in life. I have not only built lifelong friendships, I've gained trust from coaches, teachers, peers, and others in my community.

Through our local athletic association I have volunteered at youth football jamborees.

I also mentored and coached youth football players through our varsity football program at Champlin Park High School.

I have also volunteered at Feed My Starving Children and helped collect canned food items for a local food shelf.

Academically I hold a 3.18 GPA and earned a 24 on my ACT.

Being a first generation college student, I want to break out of the mold my grandparents and parents have formed.

I want to be more. I want to have more opportunities.

I want to offer more opportunities to my children. I want to earn a bachelor's degree, maybe beyond. I look forward to learning more and becoming more.

My involvement in the community has helped build integrity and given me confidence to succeed on the field, in the gym, at school, and home.

I have built lifelong friendships because of volunteering and being involved in the community and sports.

I think my experiences have helped form who I am and am sure these experiences will lead to more personal, academic, and career success in college and beyond.

Christians' father John is St. Francis Bottle Shop manager

How I Make Additional Profit for My Community

Hello everyone, I hope all is well.

MMBA members are always be looking for ways to generate additional revenue.

One of the ways I have found to do this is with joint purchasing.

Minnesota statute 340A.312 says joint purchasing is legal between two or more licensed retailers.

That means municipal and municipal, municipal and private operator, private operator and private operator, club and municipal, off sale and off sale, on sale and on sale, off sale and on sale etc.

Several stores in my area and I have been joint purchasing with great success.

In my experience, there are a few key factors in order to make this effort work.

Obviously, the first is to find a neighboring liquor operation who wants to work with you.

Second, it's best if you share the same sales representative with the wholesaler you are buying from.

Honestly, some sales reps are more willing to work with us on these efforts than others.

Those are the ones to do business with.

As we always say, help those who help you.

Then you need to decide what to order.

Some smaller MMBA members joint purchase staple items on a regular basis.

Others focus on items for special times of the year.

My results have been fantastic.

A recent joint purchase saved me almost \$20 off of a case of wine.

This deal was great for my gross profit and I was able to compete with the big box stores and offer a premium brand at a great price.

Times are changing faster now than ever before and we need to change with it.

We need to diversify and find better ways to make profits for our operations and this is one way we can do that.

This concept is basically what farmers did many years ago by forming co-ops.

The co-ops buy in larger quantities and offer it to the member at a better price than if they were to order it themselves.

If you are still not convinced, remember, joint buying can help save more money on items already being purchased.

For example, if one facility only buys 10 cases and the other usually only buys 12 cases, neither is getting the 25 case price.

But now, buy purchasing a bit more they get the 25 case price together!

The best part is neither is storing 25 cases in their already crowded back rooms.

I say that is a win-win for all!!

If you have any questions, or concerns on how to do this please contact me.

I hope everyone has a great weekend.

Chris Arnold

Bagley

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