

Official Publication of the  
Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association  
[www.municipalbev.com](http://www.municipalbev.com)



# Scenes from the 2025 MMBA Annual Conference



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# MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE

Volume 82, Number 1, 2025

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## On the Cover

Here's what a member said about the 2025 MMBA Annual Conference:

1. Thank you to everyone who made it to the conference. It was the greatest to see everyone. To those of you who couldn't come, we'll hopefully see you next year!
2. Awesome feedback on Boot Camp. Bet you didn't know it was going to be, "Hot Boot Camp!" We wanted to add extra pressure (KIDDING!)
3. Great classes and speakers again this year. I don't know about you, but any added knowledge I can get, especially for me in the THC category, is appreciated.
4. Thank you to all the Vendors who came. What an awesome turn out!



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## MMBA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**By Chris Arnold,  
Bagley**

Well for those of you that haven't heard the board decided to keep me on as President for another year. I am grateful for this and hope that I can continue to serve our wonderful organization. Also, I want to remind you if there's anything you ever need don't hesitate to call me or one of the board members for help.

Another year has come and gone, and the Annual Conference and Memorial Day are behind us. Let the summer madness begin!

As you will see from the photos in this edition, it was a successful conference. We had a lot of stores managers, staff members, liquor committee members, and city hall staff representing their cities. But let's not forget all the suppliers and vendors who were there to meet with our members. This year's trade show was the largest yet.

Many of you know every year I bring a different employee to the conference. This year was an especially great experience for Reuben. He really learned a lot. I can honestly say that it was worth every dime the training cost! Boot Camp, especially, made him a better assistant manager.

I want to quote one of my colleagues Steve Olson from Thief River Falls. He told me he's been coming to this event for many years and every year he learned something new to try at his store that generates more profit. He said the seminars are always filled with information and networking with old and new friends is so valuable. Being able to talk to people who work in the industry about issues or problems is priceless.

If you have not attended the annual conference this is a great time of the year to start planning for next year. I know I'm working on next year's budget in the next few months. That is a good time to put it into your training budget. I usually budget \$1,000 for it. That way I have a little leeway if something comes up or changes.

My grandfather always told me they can take everything away from you except one thing and that one thing is education. So, if you're not going to attend, you're going to miss out.

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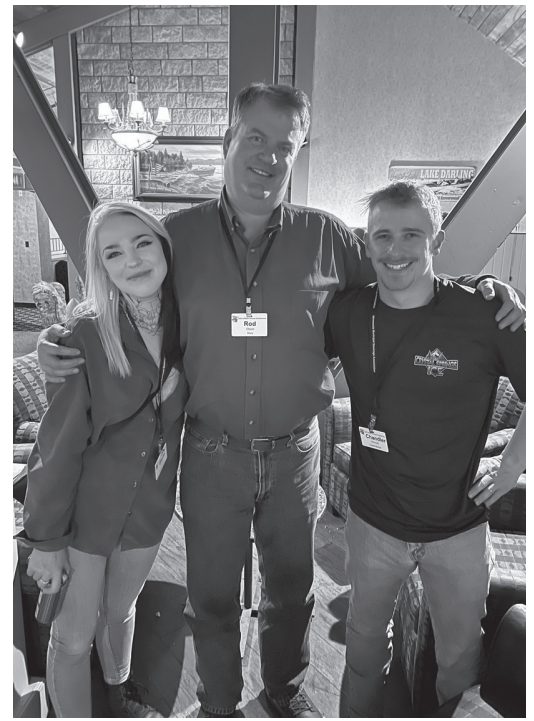


## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025











## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025




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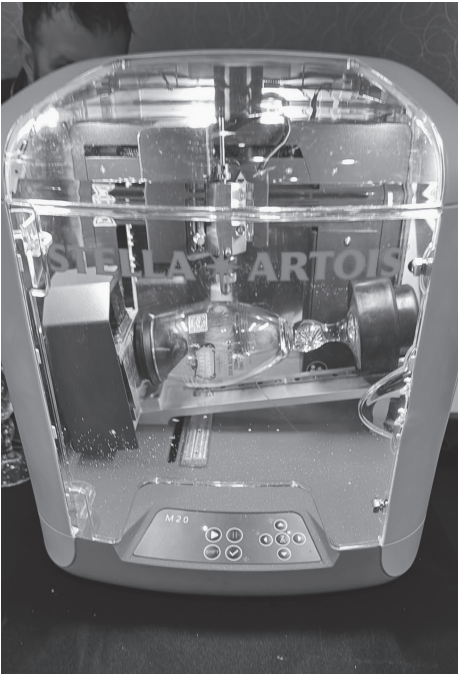


**For more information, contact  
Joe Johnson at 612.824.0745**



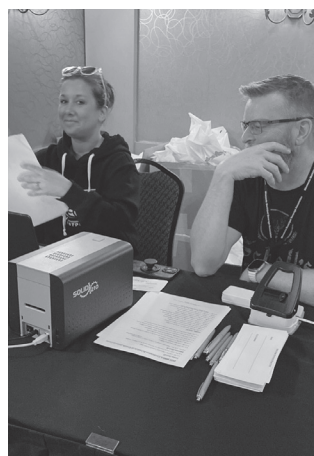


## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025





## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025



“NO FLAVORS. JUST  
VODKA-FLAVORED  
VODKA”

*Tito*



*Tito's*  
  
*Handmade*  
VODKA  
AUSTIN ★ TEXAS



## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025





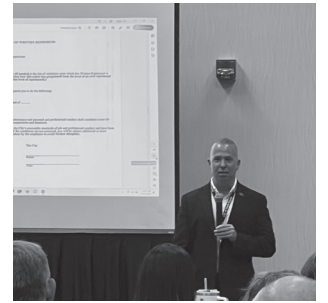
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**BREAKTHRU**  
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MINNESOTA



## SCENES FROM THE MMBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: APRIL 26 – 29, 2025





## CONGRATULATIONS 2025 MMBA FACILITY OF THE YEAR WINNERS!



**Best Innovation**  
Farmington



**Best Themed Promotion**  
Long Prairie



**Team of the Year**  
Sauk Rapids

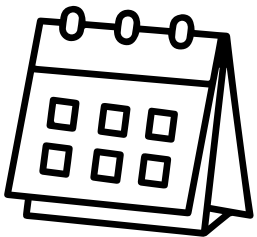


**Best Community Involvement**  
Vergas



**Best In-Store Experience  
and Design**  
Windom

In addition to a plaque, each winner receives \$300 to be used by the city for a specific community project



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

#### 2026 MMBA Annual Conference

April 25 – 28, 2026

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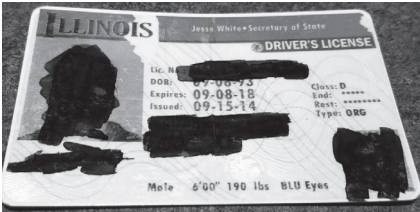
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## UNDERAGE DRINKERS OFTEN TRIPPED UP BY THEIR OWN FAKE IDS

**By John Reinan**  
Minnesota  
StarTribune

The doormen at Rounders Sports Bar & Grill in Mankato know a surprising number of state capitals. They can tell you about the major features of many American cities, too, and they're well-versed on the interstate highway system.

Last year, they used that knowledge to confiscate more than 500 fake ID cards. The state Department of Public Safety last week recognized Rounders for its aggressive work in weeding out underage drinkers.

"They're doing great," said Terry Kelley, a special agent with the department's Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division. Visiting the bar on a routine check-in, agents were amazed when the manager produced a box overflowing with fake IDs seized from underage would-be drinkers.

In the internet era, it's easier than ever to get a fake ID, Kelley said, making it even more important for bar owners and managers to train their staff members on how to spot them.

Many with phony identification will present IDs from other states, figuring they'll be less likely to be questioned. But Rounders has trained employees to quiz the ID holders on such things as state facts.

"Illinois is one state that's often used for fake IDs," Kelley said. "They'll ask, 'What is the state capital?' And the kids will say 'Chicago,' when it's Springfield."

Most surprising, Kelley said, is how often students using a fake ID can't give their correct age based on what the ID shows.

Ryan Tucker, general manager of Rounders, said his employees understand the importance of keeping underage drinkers out of the bar.

"I view it as part of my job, part of the door guy's job," he said. "It's just something that falls along with the business, to comply with the law." In a college town like Mankato, Tucker said, "the importance is a little bit more. We're definitely under the radar a little bit more."

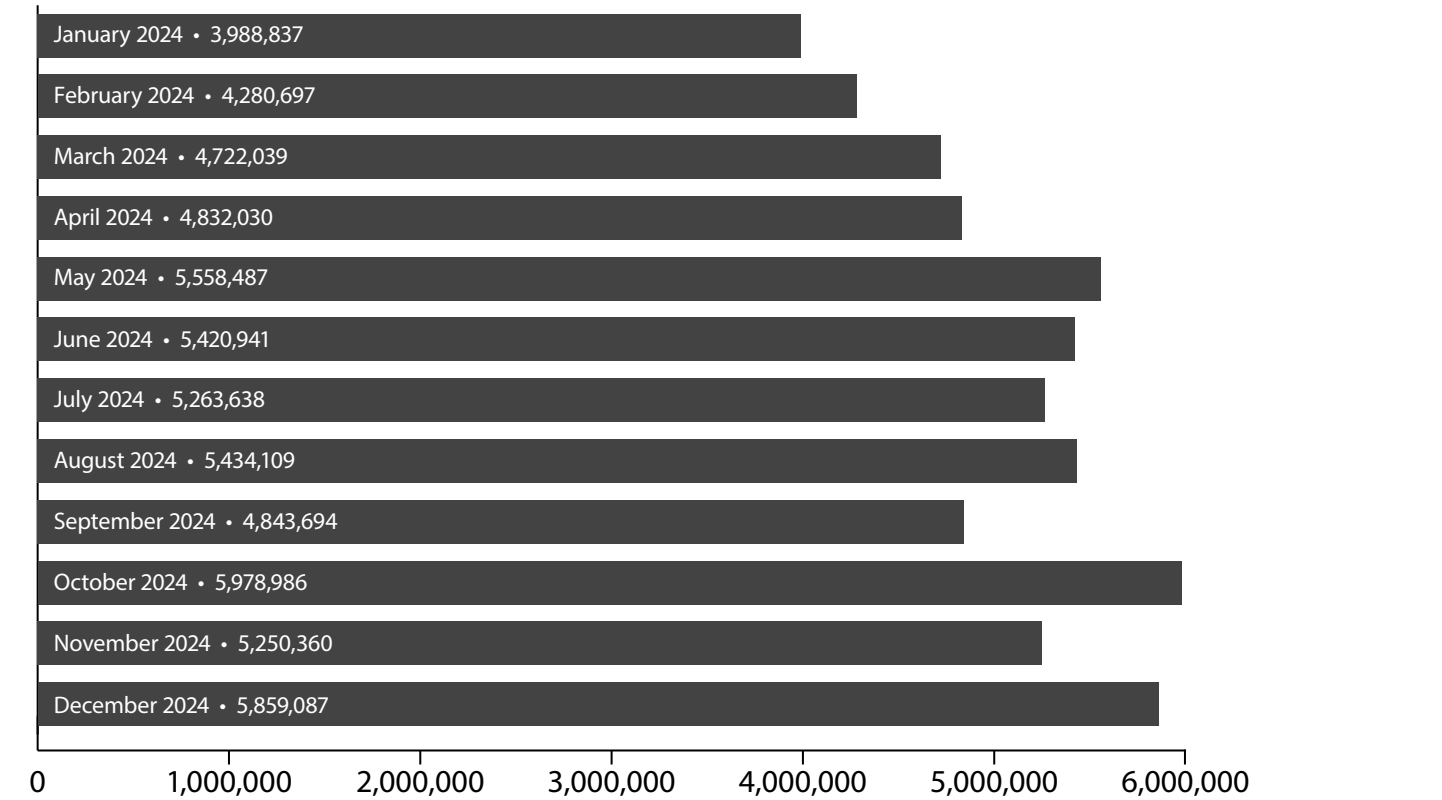
In a 2015 survey of Minnesota college students, 56 percent of those between ages 18 and 20 had had an alcoholic drink within the last month, while 27 percent reported having had five or more drinks in one sitting.

Underage drinking is also a serious concern on Minnesota roads, Kelley said. In the past five years, drivers between the ages of 13 and 20 were cited nearly 7,900 times for driving while intoxicated. Underage drunken drivers were involved in 30 fatal crashes resulting in 32 deaths.

"We know this is a big problem," Kelley said. "We ask bar employees not to look the other way."

## AMOUNT OF WINE SOLD IN MINNESOTA IN 2024

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has compiled figures on how many bottles of wine were sold per month across the state in 2024.







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### Round Lake Vineyards & Winery

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### WoodenHill Brewing

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Phone: (952) 484-7518  
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**PRAIRIE**  
— ORGANIC —  
SPIRITS

# VOTED BEST CRAFT VODKA DISTILLERY IN THE NATION



## A BETTER SPIRIT MADE IN MINNESOTA



ENJOY IN MODERATION ©2018 PRAIRIE ORGANIC VODKA, 40% ALC./VOL. (80 PROOF), PRAIRIE ORGANIC GIN, 40% ALC./VOL. (80 PROOF), PRAIRIE CUCUMBER-FLAVORED ORGANIC VODKA, 35% ALC./VOL. (70 PROOF). BOTTLED BY ED PHILLIPS & SONS, PRINCETON, MN USA. MADE IN THE USA. NIELSEN TOTAL US 52 WEEK DOLLAR SALES: 12-30-17