Change coming to Bureau of Liquor Licensing

Following the retirement of the principal leadership of the Bureau of Liquor Licensing and Inspections, Lt. David Bowler, and the long time Bureau Director, Jeff Austin, the timing was appropriate to examine all functions of the Bureau to determine if Public Safety was the proper agency to oversee the Bureau or could the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations handle these functions efficiently and effectively along with their other alcoholic beverage responsibilities.

That review has culminated in an agreement to move the Liquor Licensing and Inspections Unit and their eleven employees, formerly housed under Public Safety, to the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations, BABLO, next year.

Commenting on the process surrounding this change, the Director of the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations, Gerry Reid, said, “We worked with Major Chris Grotton and Commissioner John Morris of the Department of Public Safety as well as Commissioner Sam Willard at the Department of Administrative and Financial Services and Tim Poulin here at BABLO to review options. We agreed to strive toward an efficient, single point of contact for alcohol related issues for both the public and for licensees. And I believe we have met that objective.”

Employees of the Liquor Licensing and Inspections Unit, including Inspectors and Licensing personnel, will remain the same. Licensees should expect the process to be relatively seamless with an expected Bureau move from DPS to BABLO in July.

It is anticipated that other functions of the Bureau including conducting meetings of the Alcohol Industry Advisory Council to the Bureau of Liquor Licensing and the Seller Server Training Advisory Committee will continue as in prior practice.

Hot Tip
Best Practices for Banquet Service

This guidance is offered by Labor Attorney Robert Kline, Esq. for restaurants to follow when addressing banquet service charge notice and distribution:

1. Provide written notice acknowledged by each banquet server that you will be paying 50 percent of the current state minimum wage and applying the banquet service charges allocated to servers to meet (and exceed) the other 50 percent component.

2. Provide notice to all banquet function customers that a service charge is imposed. You should also detail how it is distributed among employees. And you must add specific notice that: “the service charge does not represent a tip for service employees.”

3. Although the house is permitted to retain a portion of any service charge, the best practice is to distribute all service charges among banquet servers and others who support banquet operations and whose contributions you wish to recognize.

State To Seek New Liquor Deal

In a presentation to the Legislative Appropriations Committee, entitled “Update on Maine Spirits Contract” Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations Director, Gerry Reid outlined a new concept designed to improve the profitability for everyone in the chain of Liquor Sales in Maine including an effort to stem the tide of Liquor purchases from New Hampshire in the process.

The proposal is designed to provide a better value to Maine consumers to motivate purchases in Maine; a better value to Maine Agency Stores and their on-premise customers (BARS and RESTAURANTS); and an improved financial return to the State General Fund...as sales increase.

Overview

The Bureau would enter into an RFP process to revise or replace any contract for managing the State’s wholesale liquor activities associated with distributing and...continued on page 4

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**Chairman’s Message:**
By Steve DiMillo, DiMillo’s On the Water - Portland

**FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS**

As I sit down to write my final column as the Chairman of the Maine Restaurant Association, I can’t help but to reflect on my tenure as chair, and all that has occurred over the last two years. Some of the issues that we’ve dealt with have ranged from local ordinances as the food truck debate and restaurant health inspections in Portland; to state legislation dealing with menu labeling, gift card reform, and merchant retailer notification legislation, to federal issues such as the Affordable Care Act, as well as the implementation of the Durbin Amendment. In Portland we have navigated over the past two years, a story comes to mind that my wife Marge tells about the sea and its unforgiving nature. Our young son Steve was taking a sailing class along with his cousins at Portland Yacht Services years ago. To celebrate the end of the class, the owner, Phineas Sprague took the students out for a sail on his beautiful schooner. It was a gorgeous day and Phin invited Marge to go along for the ride. As they sailed around Casco Bay, he was telling her about the many adventures he’d had on the sea, as he had sailed around the world several times.

Sailing through White Head passage on this picture perfect day, not a cloud in the sky, and just enough wind to move the vessel quietly through the water, Phin was letting my nephew, Danny, steer the boat. The two...continued on page 9

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45 Melville Street
Augusta, Maine - 04330
Tel: 207.623.2178 · Fax: 866.711.5408
www.mainerestaurant.com
info@mainerestaurant.com
www.facebook.com/mainerestaurantassociation
www.twitter.com/mainerestaurant

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Yarmouth

Gus Tillman
Senior Advisor
Holiday Inn By the Bay
Portland

STAFF

Richard A. Grotton, FMP
President & CEO
dick@mainerestaurant.com

Becky Jacobson
Operations Manager
becky@mainerestaurant.com

Rebecca Dill
Events Director
rebeccad@mainerestaurant.com

Laura Hatfield
Administrative Assistant
laura@mainerestaurant.com

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**Tournament Sponsor**

**MAINE MEAT AND CHEESE ASSOCIATION**

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**The Winners Are:**

**FIRST PLACE**
Flight A - Cains Foods
Flight B - Pat’s Pizza - Old Port
Flight C - Pepsi Beverage Company

**SECOND PLACE**
Flight A - Performance Foodservice - NorthCenter (team #1)
Flight B - Captain Mike’s
Flight C - Coca-Cola Bottling Company

**THIRD PLACE**
Flight A - Performance Foodservice - NorthCenter (team #2)
Flight B - Ecolab
Flight C - Cold River Vodka

**LONGEST DRIVE**
Troy Hanna - Gritty McDuff’s

**SIXTH DRIVE**
Chef Jeff Landry - Native Maine Produce (The Farmer’s Table)

**CLOSEST TO THE PIN**
Sandy Waltz - FairPoint Communications

**PUTTING CONTEST**
Troy Kavanaugh - FairPoint Communications

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With the Durbin Amendment taking effect:
You’ll see more money in your bank account.
(Assuming you process with Heartland.)

On October 1, important legislation that reduces the amount you pay for processing debit card transactions went into effect. The Durbin Amendment imposed a cap on debit interchange — or transaction fees — and every cent of savings you see adds up to valuable Durbin Dollars you can put to use for your business. If you’re not getting everything you deserve, ask your current processor what they are doing with your savings.

To learn more, call Heartland’s Durbin information line at 888.475.2180 or visit GetYourDurbinDollars.com to learn how Durbin can positively impact your business.

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The Maine Restaurant Association
October/November 2012
We extend our sincere appreciation to all those who participated in the golf tournament.

Many Thanks to Our Sponsors!

We hope you have taken advantage of our training courses both on-line and in-classroom programs, especially discounted for Association members to make certain these classes are affordable for every operator. Remember, the certification obtained through these classes is valid for five years and employing a CFPM is a requirement of the Food Code.

The process of foodservice inspection is not as black and white as might be expected. It is a highly subjective process requiring prudent judgment and a healthy dose of common sense. The Food Code is very detailed and a clear understanding of the intent of the code is helpful in maintaining a clean, safe, food service environment.

Many restaurants in Maine are located in buildings not originally constructed to be restaurants. They were originally built as private homes, railroad stations, banks, car ferries, warehouses, even fish factories. They are not “cookie cutter” modern facilities built from the ground up to serve one defined menu.

That unique character is precisely what attracts visitors from across the nation to visit Maine. It is part of what entices top chefs to live and work here and it is clearly a significant factor in the growth our “foodie” reputation.

Our restaurants often serve three meals each day. Our buildings take a beating as thousands and thousands of guests walk our floors year. Cleaning, painting and repairing the property is a constant effort.

We often create great restaurants in older buildings. Maintaining these structures as licensed eating establishments is often a challenge but it is clearly necessary that we do not permit any practice that could threaten food safety. Restaurants must be clean and the person in charge of the kitchen must be knowledgeable and facile in following safe food handling practices. That is our responsibility as an industry.

There are 970,000 restaurants in the United States, the second largest private sector employers in the nation behind health care, providing 12.9 million jobs and safely serving 1.7 billion meals a year!

Every year we proudly serve several million of those safe, delicious meals right here in Maine, let’s keep it that way. Make sure your staff is well trained in handling and serving safe food then sit back and enjoy your next inspection!
**Chairman's Column...**

...continued from page 1

Don’t miss this opportunity to recognize and reward the hard work, dedication, creativity and sheer gift of Maine’s restaurant entrepreneurs. To submit your nomination, please contact events director, Rebecca Dill by emailing events@mainerestaurant.com, calling 207.623.2178, or writing 45 Melville Street, Augusta, Maine 04330.

_The Maine Restaurant Association Board of Directors is now accepting nominations for the Association’s annual awards. Nominating someone for an award couldn’t be easier or less formal. Write a short note, send an email or just pick up the phone. We’re anxious to accept your nomination in one or more of the following categories by November 9th._

- **Restaurateur of the Year**
- **Chef of the Year**
- **Allied Member of the Year**
- **Lifetime Achievement Award**

_Do you know of a gifted chef, a restaurateur who has mastered the art of hospitality, or a supplier that goes the extra mile? Make your nomination now! Think of someone who gives back to the community, serves at the top of their game, is generous and inspires. Then, let us know!_  

**Election Resource Center**

As election day draws near, the National Restaurant Association offers an _elections resource center_ to help guide restaurateurs and employees through the voting process.

_The center offers information on voter registration, voter time off, various rules about early voting, election analysis articles, a 2012 election map, and Get Out The Vote posters. The election resource center also features industry specific information, such as a Vote for Prosperity video and the NRA’s Congressional Visit Program._

_All of the items in the elections center are meant to be shared and passed on. The NRA asks participants to put up voting posters in employee lounges, include the restaurant.org/elections address in employee newsletters, and play the Vote for Prosperity Video (see GO TV Video section at restaurants.org/elections) at staff meetings. The association also will help customize congressional visits at restaurant locations._

**NRA Corner**

_Information and opportunities available to MeRA members* as a benefit of their free dual membership in the National Restaurant Association_  

**What if you could increase restaurant patron traffic, reduce operating expenses, and boost profits, all in just a few hours?**

*Dual membership applies only to restaurant members, not allied members though no login information is required to access the Election Resource Center._

**Culinary Cats**

_Do you know of a gifted chef, a restaurateur who has mastered the art of hospitality, or a supplier that goes the extra mile? Make your nomination now! Think of someone who gives back to the community, serves at the top of their game, is generous and inspires. Then, let us know!_
Consistent marketing in Maine magazine’s Eat section offers your business credible connectivity with a passionate community of food lovers. These people love Maine and want to participate in the state thoroughly.

A 12-issue contract supports and expands your overall marketing program and bolsters your business goals. With frequency and consistency, you have unparalleled visibility for your business and you also earn a better rate.

The Eat Maine guide offers your business the perfect opportunity to tell your story in a year-round publication in print and online. A full-page advertisement in Eat Maine conveys the strengths and unique aspects of your business. It’s a conversation. Your business is the content. And the guide provides excellent support to your existing twelve-issue contract in our magazines. Strong images, descriptive text, and all your critical information are part of the package.

Call us today and start a dialogue to position your business for results.

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- 10% off the 12x rate with a 12x contract
- 5% off for a credit card on file with a 12x contract

2013 Eat Maine Guide Rates

| Eat Maine Guide Full Page | $1300 |
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| Inside Front Cover | $3000 |
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Great Maine restaurants. You’ll be in great company.