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American Beverage Licensees Annual Meeting Offers Industry Insights & Retailer Recognition

Beverage Retailers Bring Together Industry in Denver, CO

Bethesda, MD – June 23, 2016 – Members of American Beverage Licensees (ABL) and colleagues from the hospitality industry gathered in the Mile-High City June 12-14 to share ideas, connect with peers, and learn more about the issues facing their businesses at ABL's 14th Annual Meeting. Attendees heard from speakers who covered a wide array of topics including music licensing, craft beer, recreational marijuana regulation, and federal and state alcohol policies.

During the three-day event, attendees heard from general session speakers including Ron Kammerzell (Senior Director, Marijuana Enforcement Division – Colorado Department of Revenue), Bart Watson (Chief Economist – Brewers Association), Harry Schumacher (Owner/Publisher – Schumacher Publishing Company) and Megan Metcalf (President – Schumacher Publishing Company). ABL President Warren Scheidt welcomed ABL members to Denver, while ABL Executive Director John Bodnovich briefed attendees on federal policy issues facing retailers, as well as a number of local issues that are shared by retailers from state-to-state.

In a program titled "Music Licensing & Your Business", Jessica Frost (Executive Director, Industry Relations & Licensing – BMI), and John Johnson (Senior Vice President – ASCAP) discussed the perspectives and business approaches of their respective companies and answered attendees' questions on music licensing.

With an eye toward a local issue that has gained national industry attention, Jeanne McEvoy (President/CEO – Colorado Licensed Beverage Association) and Mat Dinsmore (General Manager – Wilbur's Total Beverage in Fort Collins, CO) discussed the *Keep Colorado Local* movement and the its successful efforts to reach a compromise on alcohol regulatory reform legislation that was signed into law in Colorado just days earlier. Tom Edwards (President – New York State Liquor Store Association) and Steve Morris (Vice Chairman – Montana Tavern Association) also shared their associations' approaches to working with industry partners on three-tier issues.

Hospitality was also at the core of the Annual Meeting and included an afternoon of beer, brats and baseball sponsored by MillerCoors at Coors Field. Attendees also sampled imported beers from across the globe at the annual Opening Night Reception sponsored by the National Association of Beverage Importers.

In keeping with the local theme, the annual luncheon sponsored by Proximo Spirits featured a tasting of Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey led by Rob Dietrich, Stranahan's Master Distiller. Additional industry support for independent beverage retailers' signature event came from E. & J. Gallo Winery, Infinium Spirits, Serrallés USA, Sidney Frank, The Presidents' Forum of the Distilled Spirits Industry, Tito's Handmade Vodka, and the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Colorado.

The Annual Meeting provided an opportunity for ABL to recognize those who make a difference in the industry. Sixteen beverage licensees from across the country were recognized with the 2016 Brown-Forman Retailer of the Year awards at the ABL Honors Gala. Also recognized was the 2016 ABL Top Shelf Award honoree, Peter Coors (Chairman – MillerCoors; Vice-Chairman – Molson Coors Brewing Company). The ABL

American Beverage Licensees Annual Meeting Offers Fresh Perspectives & Important Recognition for Retailers

Top Shelf Award recognizes those who have demonstrated excellence over their careers in the beverage alcohol industry and represents the highest recognition given by ABL.

The ABL Board of Directors also elected four beverage licensees to the ABL Executive Committee during the Annual Meeting. These individuals, each serving two-year terms, will lead the association towards meeting its strategic goals and initiatives. The new officers include:

- Treasurer: Mat Dinsmore, Wilbur's Total Beverage, Fort Collins, Colorado
- Vice President Off-Premise: Bobby Greenawalt, Cigar & Fine Wine, Auburn, Alabama
- Vice President On-Premise: Steve Morris, Jorgenson's Restaurant & Lounge, Helena, Montana
- At-Large: Terry Harvath, The Wishing Well Bar & Grill, Appleton, Wisconsin

“The retail tier is where the retail beverage alcohol industry come together, and the ABL Annual Meeting is where beverage licensees come together,” said ABL Executive Director John Bodnovich. “We are proud to provide a forum for independent beverage retailers to share their experiences with their peers while learning more about the trends and issues that will shape their businesses.”

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American Beverage Licensees is the preeminent national trade association for beverage alcohol retailers. Direct retail beverage alcohol sales in the United States generate as many as 1.77 million well-paying jobs. ABL's thousands of on-premise and off-premise licensee members are independent and often family-owned establishments. The beverage retailing industry pays over \$19.3 billion in federal taxes and \$16.9 billion in state and local taxes. To learn more about ABL, visit www.ablusa.org.