KANE'S BEVERAGE WEEK

The marketing, regulatory and financial news that matters . . . when it matters for bev/al executives and their advisers

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The Inside Story

Dear Subscriber:

Never since I purchased ***Kane's Beverage Week*** in 1982 have we published between Christmas and New Year's. I don't believe Frank Kane, who started the newsletter nor North American Publishing, which acquired it from his widow, did either.

But the events of the past week have been so extraordinary that I believe an extra edition is not only justified but mandatory. Hence this extra edition.

May we all enjoy a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

— Joel Whitaker, Editor and Publisher

HHS Rescinds FDA Rule Imposing $14,060 Fee On Bev/Al Firms that Produced Hand Sanitizer

In a New Year's Eve action just hours before 2020 ended, the **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services** withdrew a **Food & Drug Administration** notice published in the *Federal Register* that imposed a $14,060 fee on bev/al firms that stepped up to produce hand sanitizer during the Covid-19 epidemic.

The FDA had said the fee was required under the CARES Act.

But HHS's Office of General Counsel determined that the fee is a "legislative rule and that no one at FDA has been delegated authority to issue such a rule." As a result, said, **Brian Harrison**, HHS Chief of Staff, "the notice is void" and "HHS leadership . . . ordered the Federal Register Notice to be withdrawn, meaning the surprise user fees will not need to be paid."

Chris Swonger, president, **Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S**., praised the action, saying, "“This is such a relief to hundreds of distillers. We want to thank HHS leadership for quickly intervening and protecting distillers from these unwarranted fees. Distillers were proud to help make hand sanitizer for their communities and first responders during their time of need.”

In his statement, Harrison said: “Small businesses who stepped up to fight COVID-19 should be applauded by their government, not taxed for doing so. I'm pleased to announce we have directed FDA to cease enforcement of these arbitrary, surprise user fees. Happy New Year, distilleries, and cheers to you for helping keep us safe!”

In the statement, Harrison noted that "in March, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) issued a guidance document – the Temporary Policy for Preparation of Certain Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer Products During the Public Health Emergency (COVID-19) – which provides flexibility for those entities capable of producing hand sanitizer to rapidly enter the market.

"In the guidance, the FDA stated it “does not intend to take action against firms that” produce hand sanitizer products – which are classified as over-the-counter drugs – during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, provided the firm's activities are consistent with the guidance," Harrison said, adding:

"Importantly, the guidance contains no discussion regarding user fees or any indication such fees would be due by these entities, many of which would be entering the drug manufacturing business for the first time. Nevertheless, on Dec. 29, the FDA posted an over-the-counter drugs user fee notice that imposes a significant financial burden on these small businesses.

"This action was not cleared by HHS leadership, who only learned of it through media reports. HHS leadership convened an emergency meeting late last night to discuss the matter and requested an immediate legal review. . . . Only the HHS Secretary has the authority to issue legislative rules, and he would never have authorized such an action during a time in which the Department is maximizing its regulatory flexibility to empower Americans to confront and defeat COVID-19," Harrison said.

USTR Imposes Additional 25% Tariffs On French, German Cognac, Brandies, Wine

Just a day before 2020 ended, the U.S. Trade Representative's office announced the U.S. had imposed an additional tariff on "aircraft manufacturing parts from France and Germany, certain non-sparkling wine from France and Germany, and certain cognac and other grape brandies from France and Germany."

Buried in a *Federal Register* notice was the fact that bev/al producers and importers were again being made to pay a price for the failure of U.S. and European trade negotiators to resolve a dispute involving government subsidies to Airbus and Boeing.

Not only that, but the tariff increases on Cognacs, brandies, and some wines were an additional 25%, while the tariff "adjustments" — that's USTR-speak for increases — on parts used in making large civil aircraft were only 10%.

The USTR, in a press statement, said it was responding to the European Union's imposition of tariffs on $4 billion in U.S. trade.

"In implementing its tariffs, however, the EU used trade data from a period in which trade volumes had been drastically reduced due to the horrific effects on the global economy from the COVID-19 virus. The result of this choice was that Europe imposed tariffs on substantially more products than would have been covered if it had utilized a normal period. Although the United States explained to the EU the distortive effect of its selected time period, the EU refused to change its approach," USTR said.

NABI Calls on Biden to Suspend Tariff Move, Calls It 'Reckless, Pouring Gasoline on Fire'

President-elect Joe Biden should "immediately act to repair and give stability to our trade with the European Union by suspending for 180 days the Airbus Tariffs upon a commitment by the EU Commission to suspend the Boeing Tariffs for the same period," said **Robert M. Tobiassen,** president, **National Association of Beverage Importers.**

"U.S. trade law fully authorizes this 180-day suspension," he said, adding that such a suspension enables the new Administration to review the entire situation while it also mitigates the economic damage done to American importers, distributors, retailers, and consumers."

USTR's action is "more than frustrating; it is reckless at this late day in the sunset of Ambassador Lighthizer's tenure" as U.S. Trade Representative, said **Robert M. Tobiassen**, president, **National Association of Beverage Importers**.

"Having failed to negotiate settlement of this 16-year dispute, he throws gasoline on the fire as he prepared to "get out of Dodge" only to increase the trade policy challenges by the Biden/Harris Administration. He should be consulting with the Transition Team and not building new barriers with our allies in the EU," Tobiassen said, adding:

"The rationale of the timing selected by the EU Commission for the timing of the trade volume determination is a technical argument at best and one that does not merit the potential risk of the EU simply retaliating. It is wishful thinking regardless of the statement in the USTR Press Release that the U.S. showed restraint in the adjustments it made by adding more products to the Airbus tariffs list so as not "in order to not escalate the situation." In this season of "perpetual joy" to quote Charlie Brown, this gift is more like a lump of coal from Charles Dicken's immortal protagonist saying "Bah Humbug."

DISCUS: USTR Move Disrupts Enitre Hospitality Supply Chain

In a separate statement, **Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.** said it was "extremely disappointed that the U.S. has announced it will impose more tariffs on additional categories of imports of EU distilled spirits in connection with the civil aircraft subsidy disputes, including certain Cognacs and other non-grape brandies.

"These tariffs not only harm EU spirits producers, they also disrupt and negatively impact the entire U.S. hospitality industry supply chain. Hospitality businesses and our consumers, as well as producers, wholesalers and importers of distilled spirits are collateral damage in a dispute wholly unrelated to the drinks business.," DISCUS said, adding:

"These tariffs are continuing to have a devastating impact on our businesses, which are also suffering due to the closings of restaurants, bars, and distillery tasting rooms because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We continue to urge the EU and the US to negotiate an agreement that will end the excessive and unwarranted tariffs on distilled spirits across the Atlantic without any further delay."

Feds Reject Dietary Guidelines Change on Bev/Al Consumption

The final *Dietary Guidelines for Americans,* rejected a proposal to scrap prior recommendations on consumption of alcoholic beverages. If approved, the proposal would have said men should consume just one drink a day, a 50% cut from the prior two drinks a day and the same as the guideline for women.

But instead the Dietary *Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* did not change the prior guidelines on how much alcohol or sugar a person should consume. In a statement, the Department of Health & Human Services said there was not a preponderance of evidence in the material the committee reviewed to support specific changes, as required by law.

National Beer Wholesalers Association said the 2020-2025 U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans "reflects a thoughtful review by both the HHS and USDA. Both agencies have conducted a serious examination of the federal government's future recommendations and determined that the long-standing guidance for moderate alcohol consumption for men continues to be up to two drinks per day and up to one drink per day for women, as it has been for more than 30 years."

"The Dietary Guidelines' overarching advice for alcohol consumption has remained the same since its inception in 1980 – if alcohol is consumed, it should be in moderation, and only by adults of legal drinking age," said **Distilled Spirits Counci**l Science Advisor Dr. **Sam Zakhari,** who has spent more than 40 years' of his career studying alcohol and health including 26 years at the National Institutes of Health.

The 2020 Guidelines on alcoholic beverages state, "Adults of legal drinking age can choose not to drink, or to drink in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men and 1 drink or less in a day for women, when alcohol is consumed. Drinking less is better for health than drinking more. There are some adults who should not drink alcohol, such as women who are pregnant."

"The distilled spirits industry strongly supports the Dietary Guidelines as an important source of evidence-based information for healthcare professionals and for American adults who choose to consume alcohol," Dr. Zakhari added. Not only that, they also, by law, serve as the basis for federal nutrition policy in the United States.

Defining moderate drinking for adults of legal drinking age as up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men is underpinned by science and has been a cornerstone of the alcohol guideline for three decades.

The alcohol guideline also conveys information on the definition of standard drink-equivalents: 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (40% ABV), 5 ounces of wine (12% ABV) and 12 ounces of regular beer (5% ABV). The Guidelines point out that each of these standard drinks contain 14 grams (0.6 fluid ounces) of pure alcohol.

"In keeping with the longstanding dietary science, the Guidelines make clear that a standard drink-equivalent of beer, wine and distilled spirits each contains the same amount of alcohol," said Dr. Zakhari. "This scientific fact is a critical aspect of responsible drinking, and a key component of alcohol education materials utilized by the public health community, leading federal agencies on alcohol matters, and state education authorities."

The Guidelines also outline potential health risks associated with alcohol consumption and identify individuals who should not drink beverage alcohol. These individuals include those who are pregnant or might be pregnant; under the legal age for drinking; have certain medical conditions or are taking certain medications that can interact with alcohol; are recovering from an alcohol use disorder or if they are unable to control the amount they drink; plan to drive or take part in other activities that require skill, coordination and alertness.

Over the decades, DISCUS has distributed several thousand copies of the alcohol guideline to physicians, nutritionists and other health professionals. The Council said it will continue to do its part to help disseminate this important resource.

Trump's Signature Makes Excise Tax Cuts Permanent

After saying he wouldn't sign the stimulus package that made permanent the Federal Excise Tax reduction for craft distillers, brewers and wineries, President Trump signed the measure.

His signature on the bill was praised by bev/al trade organizations that had joined to get the measure, contained in the Craft Beverage Modernization & Tax Reform Act, included in the stimulus package.

Chris Swonger, president/ceo, **Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.,** said DISCUS was "President Donald J. Trump and Congress delivered this much-needed economic relief to craft distilleries. While distilleries have faced extraordinary challenges this year, this legislation making their reduced tax rates permanent will give these distillers a renewed sense of certainty and hopefulness for the future."

Jim McGreevy, President and CEO of the **Beer Institute**, said:

"The pandemic has decimated the hospitality industry – especially restaurants and bars – and this legislation offers some relief and helps start our economy down the path to the recovery. I want to thank Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy for working on a bipartisan basis to put forward assistance for the American people, particularly our friends in the hospitality industry who have been severely impacted by restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19, and I want to thank President Trump and his administration for their leadership in providing much-needed help to Americans. The permanent alcohol excise tax relief contained in this legislation will help support

American jobs at a time of significant economic uncertainty."

Mark Stutrud, founder and president of **Summit Brewing Co.,** Saint Paul, Minn., added:

"The permanent excise tax relief will provide essential funds that will drive three new positions, adding to our sales and marketing depth and maintenance capability. Furthermore, will be able to accelerate our investment in capital equipment."

In 2017, Congress included two years of excise tax relief for all brewers and beer importers as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was extended for one year in December 2019.

According to recent polling done by the Beer Institute, 63% of Americans support Congress making the current federal excise tax rates permanent for all brewers and beer importers.

Further, more than 350 members of the House and more than 75 members of the Senate were cosponsors of the Craft Beverage Modernization and Tax Reform Act of 2019, which makes the excise tax relief for brewers and beer importers contained in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act permanent.

Heaven Hill Fills 9 Millionth Barrel

Heaven Hill Distillery, the world's second-largest holder of aging Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey, filled its 9 millionth Bourbon barrel on Dec. 30, 2020. Heaven Hill said it is the only local, independent, family-owned and operated company to reach this historic benchmark.

"In a year defined by teamwork and perseverance, today we celebrate another historic Heaven Hill milestone as we fill the nine millionth barrel of Bourbon," said Max L. Shapira, President, Heaven Hill. "This nine millionth barrel, a rare achievement in the industry, is a testament to Heaven Hill's commitment to quality and consistency since 1935."

The milestone wraps up a banner year of Heaven Hill's continued investment in the future of American Whiskey.

Now aging more than 1.8 million barrels across 63 warehouses, Heaven Hill's Bernheim distillery produces 1,300 barrels per day as the largest single-site Bourbon distillery in American Whiskey. T

he new Bourbon Heritage Center tasting rooms and retail store were completed and a grand opening of the entire new center is on track for early summer 2021.

The launch of Larceny Barrel Proof, Elijah Straight Rye Whiskey, Elijah Craig Toasted Barrel and Parker's Heritage Collection 10-Year-Old Heavy Char showcased the depth of premium innovation across diverse portfolio of award-winning mashbills.

The nine millionth barrel will be put up to age in Rickhouse Y, where it will be displayed amongst Heaven Hill's other milestone barrels.

Cocktails Fastest Growing Category In Control States: NABCA

Cocktails, with 3% share of the nine-liter case Control States spirits market, was November's fastest growing category with 30% growth reported and a 12-month trend of 38.2%., **National Alcohol Beverage Control Association** says.

Tequila, with 7% share, grew during November at 14.5% and 21.1% during the past twelve months. Vodka, with 33% share, grew during the same periods at -2.1% and 4.0%, respectively. Brandy/Cognac(2.1% during November, 14.5% twelve-month trend), Canadian Whiskey(3.6%, 7.3%), Cocktails(30.0%, 38.2%), Cordials(1.8%, 4.6%), Domestic Whiskey(5.8%, 12.0%), Gin(-4.1%, 2.3%), Irish Whiskey(-2.3%, 6.3%), Rum(-1.3%, 3.0%), Scotch(-7.4%, 2.2%), Tequila(14.5%, 21.1%), and Vodka(-2.1%, 4.0%) grew at rates below their twelve-month trends.

Overall, Control States' spirits case sales grew 2%, against a weak comp, over the like year-earlier period . Montana (11.0%), Pennsylvania (5.4%), and Wyoming (14.7%) reported monthly growth rates for November exceeding their 12-month trends.

The growth rates for Alabama (3%), Iowa (4.8%), Idaho (7.3%), Montgomery County, Md. (-16.6%), Maine (6.4%), Michigan (17.0%), Mississippi (10.1%), North Carolina (1.8%), New Hampshire (-33.8%), Ohio (-0.6%), Oregon (-0.7%), Utah (5.9%), Virginia (-5.6%), Vermont (2.0%), and West Virginia (9.3%) fell short of their twelve-month trends.

Control state rolling-twelve-month-volume growth, 8%, improved upon October's reported 7.8%. Spirits volumes are growing 8% year-to-date compared to 3.3% a year ago.

Short- and long-term growth trends are calculated to compare and analyze control state sales data. Twelve-month moving averages are used to calculate the short-term trend (rolling-twelve-month growth), and the three-year CAGR is used to calculate the long-term trend. November's short-term trend, 8.0%, is the highest value reported, and November's long-term trend, 4.5%, is the second highest value reported, by the control states.

Control state spirits shelf dollars were up 6.4% during November while trending at 13.2% during the past twelve months. Maine (11.5%), Michigan (27.9%), Montana (15.6%), Pennsylvania (5.7%), Utah (11.0%), and Wyoming (13.7%) reported growth rates exceeding their twelve-month trends.

Alabama (7.6%), Iowa (4.9%), Idaho (12.6%), Montgomery County, Md. (-12.7%), Mississippi (17.2%), North Carolina (6.6%), New Hampshire (-37.9%), Ohio (6.4%), Oregon (5.1%), Virginia (-1.5%), Vermont (4.3%), and West Virginia (13.1%) grew shelf dollars at rates below their twelve-month trends. Shelf dollars in the control states are up 13.6% year-to-date compared to 5.9% last year.

Price/Mix for November is 4.4%, down from October's reported 8.3%.

Following the eruption of the Covid pandemic in March, control states' on- and off-premise markets have behaved capriciously. November is no exception, NABCA said. During the 12-month period ending February 2020, the off-premise monthly spirits share averaged 82%. The off-premise monthly shares of the control state market during March-November by month were 91%, 99%, 97%, 90%, 90%, 89%, 88%, 88%, and 91%, respectively. This sequence suggests that the on-premise marketplace's recovery is irregular and saw-toothed-like after being devastated by the coronavirus. Trends suggest the control state off-premise share for

December will be above historical levels as the recovery continues.

Wine

November's nine-liter wine case sales growth rate was 1.4%. Pennsylvania (reporting 6.2% nine-liter-case growth for wines), New Hampshire (-17.5%), Mississippi (9.0%), Utah (4.3%), Montgomery County, Md., (-7.4%), and Wyoming (9.7%) are the control states that are the sole wholesalers of wines and spirits within their geographical boundaries. Rolling-twelve-month wine volume growth in these six control states is 2.7%, up from October's reported 2.5%.

70% of Consumers Planned To Celebrate New Year at Home

That's according to **Drizly**, which surveyed consumers. The celebration may be at home, but it's up from the prior year when 61% said they planned to celebrate. Only 8% of consumers said they didn't plan to mark the turn of the calendar at all. The survey also found:

-- **Cocktails are overtaking Champagne:** Though 39.4% of consumers still plan on reaching for their favorite bubbly this year, nearly 44% plan on reaching for their favorite cocktail instead. Following closely behind is wine (27.8%), beer (20.6%) and hard seltzer at 5.3%.

-- **Speaking to specific brands,** the top selling products of last year, included (in order) Veuve Clicquot Brut Yellow Label Champagne, Tito's Handmade Vodka, La Marca Prosecco, Dom Pérignon Vintage Champagne and Moët and Chandon Impérial Brut Champagne.

NY Gov.: Crowds OK at Buffalo Bills Game But Restaurants Must Remain Shuttered

Following the suspension of a New York City restaurant\s liquor license after it hosted a celebratory meeting of the Whitestone Republican Club. Whitestone is a neighborhood in Queens.

At the time of the party, indoor dining at 25% capacity was legal and it observed all requirements.

But the New York State Liquor Authority yanked the restaurant's license after seeing a video showing a conga line during the party.

Meanwhile, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said 6700 Buffalo Bills fans can attend the team's playoff game but won't allow restaurants to have indoor dining.

Cuomo says there's a difference: the football game will be outside, which he says is safer. But the restaurant operators say as long as they follow public health guidelines, they should be allowed to open. But they can't.

"I'm six minutes from the stadium, so anybody that wanted to stop before or after, I lose that," said Ralph Galluzzi, owner of Raphael's in Hamburg.

No. 1 Wine Auction House Opens in Delaware

Acker, the oldest wine shop in America and the world's largest fine and rare wine auction house, said it will host the world's first "live online" auction of 2021 Jan. 13-15 from its new facility in Delaware.

The key word is "live." Acker has been hosting online auctions since 1998.

The Delaware expansion increases operational capacity, staffing, and upgraded logistical services. Furthermore, the Delaware hub includes storage amenities, with optimal cellar conditions, Acker's white-glove inventory, appraisal, cataloguing, and packing services. Most of Acker's US live auctions will stream from its Delaware location as Acker continues expanding.

The largest wine auction house in the world by a wide margin, bringing in over $122M in auction revenue in 2020, the company has been based in New York City since 1820, with additional headquarters in Hong Kong, London and increasing outposts around the globe. In addition to the expansion of its services and amenities to its global clients, Acker will continue to host traditional auction events in New York and Hong Kong.

The Delaware expansion increases operational capacity, staffing, and upgraded

One Eight Distilling to Mark 6th Anniversary By Releasing 1st Bottled-in-Bond Bourbon

One Eight Distilling, Washington, D.C., said it will release its first Bottled in Bond bourbon on Friday, Jan.8.

District Made Bottled in Bond Bourbon Whiskey is a 5 year and 28-day old bourbon whiskey, distilled grain-to-glass from 59% Maryland corn, 24% Maryland rye, and 17% Riverbend Malted Rye (North Carolina).

It is the oldest bourbon to be distilled, aged, and bottled in DC. Only 120 bottles will be available for purchase directly through the distillery.

The Bottled in Bond Act of 1897 was the first law created to protect consumers with a series of requirements that guarantees the authenticity of a whiskey.

To be considered bottled-in-bond, the whiskey must be from one distillery within one distillation season, aged at least 4 years in a bonded warehouse, and bottled at 100 proof. "We're thrilled to be releasing our second bottled in bond expression as we approach our 6th anniversary.

After 5 years in the barrel, One Eight said its award-winning bourbon at 100 proof has deep flavors of molasses, candied ginger, and black tea with a full-bodied mouthfeel "that's like biting into a rich chocolate cake. We are proud to be able to work with ingredients from the Mid-Atlantic, and distill them into exceptional spirits, right here in DC," says **Alex Laufer**, co-founder and head distiller.

Bushmills Irish Whiskey Buys 2021's 1st Drink

But only if it's Bushmills, which seems perfectly reasonable. To redeem the offer, a copy of the receipt must be uploaded to Bushmills.com/FirstWhiskey for reimbursement of up to $6 on purchases from January 1 through March 18, 2021 in participating U.S. states

Bushmills' #FirstWhiskey program launches at a time when the bar and restaurant industry needs the support of its patrons. Bushmills Irish Whiskey said it continues to stand in solidarity with bartenders across the United States and encourages consumers to show support for their favorite local spots by participating.

This program follows Bushmills' $200,000 donation to the USBG Foundation's Bartender Emergency Assistance Program earlier this year. Bushmills plans to offer continued support for U.S. organizations that are providing relief to those affected by the current crisis. For more information, head to @BushmillsUSA.

Kentucky's Only Distillery Owned By African-American Opens in Louisville

Brough Brothers Distillery, the first and only Black-owned distillery in the state of Kentucky, opened in Louisville.

Their distillery will provide job opportunities and economic growth for the community of Park Hill, a historically underserved area of Louisville's West End.

"Brough Brothers has an opportunity to not only provide employment opportunities for our local community, but also design an experience for locals and tourists in the heart of one of Kentucky's cultural hubs," Brough Brothers co-founder and CEO **Victor Yarbrough** said. "At a time in history when there is much attention on Louisville, we are excited to represent positive change and hope for and on behalf of our city."

First approved by the distillery-governing body the **Alcohol and Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau** in August 2018, Brough Brothers Distillery was recognized by Kentucky's Senate as the state's first African American-owned distillery in August 2020. Approved by the Kentucky Alcoholic Beverage Control Board in September, it will continue to make history as it distills and barrels its first barrel of bourbon this winter. Its bourbon shop will be open for business to bourbon enthusiasts by appointment only in spring 2021.

Brough Brothers currently has major distribution partnerships in five states, including Kentucky, Florida, Tennessee, Indiana, and Colorado. It will expand its distribution to another 20 states in early 2021.

Jägermeister Donates $1 Million To NIVA Emergency Relief Fund

Jägermeister and the National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) announce a long-term partnership with the goal of helping to preserve independent live music venues across the United States through the Save Our Stages initiative. Kicking off with a $1 million donation to the National Independent Venue Foundation, a 501(c)3, for the NIVA Emergency Relief Fund, Jägermeister and NIVA will work together through 2021 to raise awareness and provide support both for the fund and the surrounding nightlife community.

"The global pandemic has left the nightlife industry feeling paralyzed, and we're committed to helping our partners find their footing during these difficult times. Through both our partnership with NIVA and our Save the Night initiative, we're looking forward to offering independent live music venues and the surrounding communities the support they need to push forward & continue creating the art we love." - **Chris Peddy**, Chief Marketing Officer at Mast - Jägermeister US.

Sandy Grant Gordon, Introduced Glenfiddich, Creating Demand for Single-Malt Whisky, Dies

He was 89 and the great-grandson of the founder of **William Grant & Sons.**

Before he launched Glenfiddich, single malts were little known outside Scotland. When Glenfiddich was launched in 1963, sales vastly exceeded expectations. By 2019 it was the sold more single-malt Scotch than any other brand. Today, single malts represent 10% of all Scotch exports by volume.

Michter's Master Distiller Emeritus Dies

Willie Pratt was 78. He joined **Michter's** in 2007 after a 40-year career at **Brown-Forman** where he served on the company's committee studying distillation, cooperage, and aging conditions.

At the start of his tenure at the company, he oversaw Michter's production program which was conducted at another Kentucky distillery before Michter's could afford its own brick and mortar facility. Eventually Pratt oversaw the design and the building of the state-of-the-art Michter's Shively Distillery. When Pratt decided to work a reduced schedule, he turned over the Michter's Master Distiller position to **Pam Heilmann**, who was eventually succeeded by **Dan McKee**. Willie continued to serve as the company's Master Distiller Emeritus and remained actively involved in Michter's production until his passing.

Continued Success,
KANE'S BEVERAGE WEEK

JOEL WHITAKER, Editor