



# Montana Brewers Association

## Fall 2017 Newsletter

### Brewers Celebrate Successful Year at Fall Rendezvous

By Dani Howlett  
MBA Membership and Events Coordinator

The MBA celebrated our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Montana Brewers Fall Rendezvous in Missoula on September 30. More than 1,500 attendees had the choice of 115 Montana-made craft beers from 31 breweries, including many limited edition festival release beers. The opportunity to sample festival release beers is a big draw for craft beers lovers and one of the things that makes this event unique.

The culmination of a Rendezvous tour that includes events in Bozeman and Helena, the Missoula brewfest is always a special event. But this year gave us particular reason to celebrate with HB 541 going into effect the very next day (see: *New Law Brings Big Changes, Growth for Montana Breweries*). This year's event also brought a few big changes.

We added a "Beer School" this year. Each class brought guests and brewers together to discuss a particular beer style, how it is made, and what sets it apart. Then, of course, the students were



*Attendees sampling and learning about Oktoberfests during a 'Beer School' class at the Montana Brewers Fall Rendezvous in Missoula.*

able to sample different breweries' take on that style. Brewers led four classes over the course of the evening, highlighting pale ales, IPAs, Oktoberfests, and stouts. The classes were a huge hit, so look for Beer School to become a staple for our events going forward.

The awards are another big part of the Fall Rendezvous.

This year we made the awards announcement early, giving guests more of chance to get a taste of the winning brews. We want to thank the Zoo City Zymurgists, Missoula's local homebrewing club, for organizing the beer judging and helping to make the event a success.

*(Check out the full list of winners on page 2.)*

## Congrats to the Winners from the 2017 MT Brewers Fall Rendezvous!

- **Best of Show:** My Ruca APA (Draught Works Brewery)
- **Best Festival Release Beer:** Broken Tines Oktoberfest (MAP Brewing Co.)
- **Best Belgian Ale:** Belgian Strong Ale (Flathead Lake Brewing Co.)
- **Best Festbier:** Broken Tines Oktoberfest (MAP Brewing Co.)
- **Best Fruit / Specialty Ale:** 5 Phantoms Pumpkin Barley Wine (Philipsburg Brewing Company)
- **Best Imperial IPA:** The Regulator (Tamarack Brewing Company - Lakeside)
- **Best IPA:** Midas Crush IPA (MAP Brewing Co.)
- **Best Pale Ale:** My Ruca (Draught Works Brewery)
- **Best Pilsner:** Pompey's Pilsner (Lewis and Clark Brewing Company)
- **Best Porter:** Plum Street Porter (Bozeman Brewing Company)
- **Best Saison:** Saddle Peak Saison (Bozeman Brewing Company)
- **Best Scottish / Irish Ale:** Scottish Winter Ale (The Highlander Taphouse- Missoula Brewing Company)
- **Best Sour:** Oud Bruin (Blackfoot River Brewing)
- **Best Stout:** 80 Chain (MAP Brewing Co.)
- **Best Wheat Beer:** Big Belt Weizenbock (Lewis and Clark Brewing Company)
- **Best Wood-Aged Beer:** Whiskey BA Imperial Stout (Blackfoot River Brewing)



*Photo courtesy of Flathead Lake Brewing Co.*



*Photo courtesy of Blackfoot River Brewing*



*Photo courtesy of MAP Brewing*

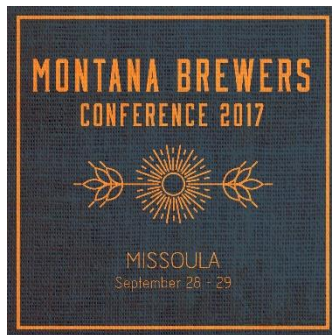


## MBA Caps off Festival Season with Conference & Rendezvous in Missoula

By Dani Howlett  
MBA Membership and Events Coordinator

At the end of September, brewers and industry partners from all around the state converged in Missoula for the Montana Brewers Conference and Fall Rendezvous. Over 100 brewers, sponsors, community leaders and beer geeks participated in the annual two-day conference, which featured informative and fun presentations, panels, interactive sessions, and beer-related activities.

On Thursday, attendees heard from Representative Adam Hertz (R-Missoula), Representative Ellie Hill Smith (D-Missoula), and MBA Executive Director Matt Leow in the session “Bipartisan Beer Love: Raising the Cap on the Tap”. The discussion chronicled the journey of HB 541, the most important legislation for craft brewers in nearly two decades, as it traveled through the legislative process and to the Governor’s desk during the 2017 legislative session.



Thursday also featured two sessions from the Brewery Sustainability Committee, which highlighted brewery case studies and offered up funding resources to breweries interested in energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable wastewater disposal, and more.

Appropriately, we wrapped up day one of the conference with a few glasses of beer. Certified Cicerone Mark Waiss of Summit Beverage led us through a five-course beer and food pairing,

matching beers from Great Northern Brewing Co., Draught Works Brewing, Bitter Root Brewing, and Philipsburg Brewing Co. with flavors from the Finn and Porter kitchen such as tuna poke with a fried wonton and dark chocolate espresso truffles. As participants munched and sipped their way through the courses, Mark explained how beer can be paired with various food to either compliment or contrast the flavors. Sometimes pairings don’t work, sometimes they hit the mark, and sometimes the result is a revelation.

Day two of the conference featured a presentation on customer service by Tim Brady, owner of Whetstone Station Restaurant and Brewery and Brewers Association Beer Server Training Instructor. The presentation was playfully dubbed “Your service sucks” – that guy on Yelp.” If you’re ever in Brattleboro, VT, be sure to stop by Whetstone Station and maybe even post a Yelp review.



*Conference attendees listened to Tim Brady, BA Ambassador, present their Brewpub Server Training Manual. September 29, 2017.*

Friday also featured intriguing discussions about the malt supply chain and Montana’s budding craft malt industry. The afternoon panel included an interactive tasting session with Montana State University agricultural researchers, Dr. Jamie Sherman and Hannah Estabrooks, to highlight their ongoing work to develop new, diverse malt lines grown right here in Montana.

The beer-centric conference wrapped up on Friday evening with an exclusive tour of K3, KettleHouse Brewing Company's new production facility on the banks of the Blackfoot River in Bonner, MT. KettleHouse owner Tim O'Leary led conference participants on a tour through the brewery, on-site water treatment plant and adjoining KettleHouse Amphitheatre.



*Conference attendees tour KettleHouse's third production facility, K3, in Bonner, MT. September 19, 2017.*

The MBA thanks our 2017 MT Brewers Conference and Fall Rendezvous sponsors who helped make it all possible. So a big Montana Brewers cheers to Advanced Chemical Solutions, Agency Insurance, American Welding and Gas, Big Sky Gas, Bridger Malt House, Flathead Valley Community College, G+D Chillers, GEA, General Distributing, JCCS, Malteurop, McDantim, Missoula Broadcasting, Montana Craft Malt, PayneWest Insurance, PintPass, Scott Hops, Sterling Packaging, Stockman Insurance, and TownSquare Media!

## New Law Brings Big Changes, Growth for Montana Breweries

**By Matt Leow**  
MBA Executive Director

Big changes are in the works at Montana breweries now that HB 541 is in effect. The new law raising the production cap from 10,000 barrels to 60,000 barrels took effect on October 1, prompting exciting changes for Bayern, Big Sky and KettleHouse. Meanwhile, other growing breweries that are looking at breaking the 10,000 barrel mark in the near future have been given a green light for growth.

With this significant barrier lifted, Montana breweries may now take full advantage of market opportunities. Other breweries that could not sell beer in a taproom under the previous law are now doing just that. Here's a look at how HB 541 is affecting three of Montana's oldest and largest breweries.

In 2016, KettleHouse opened their third production facility, a modern brewery dubbed "K3", on the old mill site in Bonner. The new facility, which is capable of producing around 20,000 barrels annually, will allow KettleHouse to distribute beer like their popular Cold Smoke® Scotch Ale to more communities around Montana and beyond.

Under the old law, they would not be allowed to sell beer through a taproom at their new facility. But thanks to HB 541, KettleHouse is now planning to open a K3 taproom in 2018. The taproom will be a welcome addition to the Bonner community and is sure to become a popular destination for locals and visitors who recreate in the area.

**Want to see how state legislators voted on important craft beer legislation? Check out the 2017 MBA Legislative Scorecard [HERE](#).**



“We’re excited to add a taproom experience not only to our brewery in Bonner but also to the world-class KettleHouse Amphitheater located next to the brewery,” said Tim O’Leary, KettleHouse co-founder.

“We’ll be helping our customers make lifetime memories on the banks of the Blackfoot River for years to come.”

A new taproom already opened across town at Big Sky Brewing. Big Sky has been in business since 1995, but until this October, they had never sold a single pint in their taproom. When the law was changed in 1999 to allow Montana breweries to sell beer in a taproom, Big Sky was already producing more than the 10,000 barrel limit.



*Governor Bullock, Rep. Ellie Hill Smith, Rep. Adam Hertz, and MT brewers and industry partners toast to the passage of HB 541. July 10, 2017.*

Big Sky has operated a modest sample room to provide free samples to guests. With their beers like Moose Drool distributed to 24 states, it's the brewery that visitors to Montana are most likely to already know and want to visit. However, there was never much incentive for Big Sky to do much with the sample room beyond having a destination for those visitors. After all, Big Sky gave away over \$2 million worth of beer during those years! Now, all of that has changed with the implementation of HB 541. Big Sky closed their sample room for over a month this fall to remodel the place and get ready for the new world of selling pints. Their newly remodeled

taproom opened on October 20, so be sure to check it out next time you’re in their neck of the woods.

The law change is affecting Bayern is different ways. Bayern Brewing has been selling their beer in the Seattle and Tacoma area where they've found a healthy market for their authentic German-style beers. However, the previous 10,000 barrel limit meant Bayern couldn't ship too much



*Governor Steve Bullock and Jürgen Knöller, owner of Bayern Brewing, share a beer. July 10, 2017.*

beer to the West Coast, otherwise they faced having to give up their tap room sales. For three years, Bayern walked that fine line of building relationships in Washington without being too successful in their out-of-state sales. Now, with HB 541 in effect, Bayern is free to pursue that export market and see just how big they can go.

The passage of HB 541 is a massive win for Montana brewers and beer lovers alike. The higher barrel limit means more Montana beer for both Montana and out-of-state consumers, and continued growth and success for this popular homegrown industry. Big thanks to the HB 541 co-sponsors who made this happen – Rep. Adam Hertz (R-Missoula), Rep. Ellie Hill Smith (D-Missoula) and Rep. Greg Hertz (R-Polson) – as well as Governor Steve Bullock for his strong support of Montana’s craft brewing industry and all the Montana craft beer lovers who showed their support for HB 541 during the 2017 legislative session. Cheers to Montana beer!

## The Sustainability Diaries

### Entry 1: Draught Works Brewery

By Heather Higinbotham

For the past two years, the Montana Sustainability Committee (MSC) has been working with craft breweries across the state to increase energy and water efficiency and implement sustainable business practices throughout their operations. To date, MSC has assisted 9 Montana breweries (almost 15% of the industry!) in identifying and implementing efficiency opportunities to save money, save resources, and be a better steward of everything that makes Montana awesome.

This is the first of a series of interviews with Montana breweries sharing their experiences on the journey to becoming more sustainable.



*Photo courtesy of Draught Works Brewery.*

#### MSC: What inspired you to prioritize sustainability at Draught Works?

DW: I think the mentality has always been a part of me, my upbringing. I already did a lot of this at home, but it wasn't translating into how we were running the brewery. From a business standpoint, it has to make business sense, and it is a no brainer that being less wasteful will eventually make business sense. We've had tremendous year over year growth as a new company, adding distribution and a canning line, and that has huge impacts. We want to make sure we're doing the best we can and taking responsibility for where we can improve.

#### MSC: What are you most excited about with your sustainability initiatives?

DW: Finally having someone to help us translate it into the day-to-day business. We never would have had time to do a sustainability analysis, learn about opportunities or how far off base we were. Because of the sustainability audit and prompting from MSC, it's snowballed into so many more projects. We are constantly noticing areas where we can reduce waste or tweak processes to be more efficient.

#### MSC: What has been your greatest challenge?

DW: Lots of waste, man. LOTS of waste! Water, sewage, plastic wrap. It's constant. To some degree, it was easy to be complacent. It's hard to make time for it. Once we started paying attention, we're seeing all these areas of unnecessary waste. We can't get stuck in "business as usual".

#### MSC: What is your biggest success so far?

DW: Definitely our water use reductions with the new heat exchanger. We went from embarrassing water waste levels to zero water waste. We were putting about 1,800 gallons of clean water down the drain per brew day. The new heat exchanger reduced our water needs per brew by half, and took a massive electrical load off the glycol chiller and gas boiler; it was probably damaging it before. The chiller would stay on all day trying to keep up, even though a knockout only took 30 minutes. Now it's only used for the fermenter, which gives us better quality control there too.



### **MSC: How have you gotten your employees on board?**

DW: We started tackling the culture challenge through meetings and discussion, making sure they understand WHY we are doing things a certain way. Mostly it's been through our SOPs (standard operating procedures): for instance, we no longer allow for inch and a half hoses for cleaning exterior equipment. We were finding that people would go find the larger hose and just fire extinguisher the equipment, when they could take a few more minutes to get the job done with a hand sprayer. We are working on education with burst rinsing and the SOP process in general, and for the most part, everyone is excited. We are sometimes asking people to take longer to get a job done, which isn't awesome, but they feel good about being part of the culture.

### **MSC: What's next?**

DW: We're paying attention to where we can make changes. Talking to other breweries, asking our employees to bring ideas or challenges to the table. And we're continuously looking at process opportunities: we're probably wasting a lot of chemicals so we try to reuse them where possible. It's a little more work, but there are always opportunities.

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Stay tuned for more sustainability stories from Montana breweries!

Contact the Montana Sustainability Committee for a free audit of your operations and assistance with funding and prioritizing efficiency opportunities: (406) 552-2431 or [montanasustainability@gmail.com](mailto:montanasustainability@gmail.com).

The Montana Sustainability Committee is a collaboration of subject matter experts from the National Center for Appropriate Technology, MT Resource Efficiency Project, MT Manufacturing

Extension Center, UnCommon Sense, and the MT Department of Environmental Quality. MSC specializes in helping Montana craft breweries gain a competitive advantage by increasing efficiencies, improving the triple bottom line, reducing waste, and lowering impacts on the environment.

## **Cheers to our Newest Members!**

### **Breweries:**

- [Blacksmith Brewing](#), Stevensville
- [Mountains Walking](#), Bozeman

### **Breweries in Planning:**

- [Crooked Furrow Brewing](#), Helena, Expected Opening: Winter 2017
- [Gally's Brewing](#), Harlowton, Opening December 2017
- [Old Station Brewing](#), Havre, Expected Opening 2018

### **Associate Members:**

- [Agency Insurance](#), Big Sky
- [Bridger Malt House](#), Bozeman
- [Flathead Valley Community College](#), Kalispell
- [Gropener](#), Missoula
- [ICCS PCA](#), Missoula
- [Montana Craft Malt](#), Butte
- [Montana State University - Billings](#)
- [Scott Hops](#), Whitefish



## Fishing. Hunting. Skiing. Beer. Get Your MBA Raffle Tickets.



### Grand Prize: Custom Montana RO Drift Boat

Winner receives one RO drift boat wrapped with the logos of MT Brewers Association members. The boat will come with oars, an anchor, and a Black Dog trailer.



### 1st Prize: Kimber Mountain Ascent Rifle

Winner receives Kimber Mountain Ascent Rifle. With a starting weight of 4 pounds, 13 ounces, the Kimber Mountain Ascent offers custom features and delivers legendary Kimber accuracy. Winner gets to pick their caliber!



### 2nd Prize: Big Sky Ski and Stay Weekend

Winner receives three nights stay at Big Sky Mountain Resort and two day lift tickets for two people.



### 3rd Prize: Montana Beer for a Year

Winner receives 52 growler fills at their favorite MBA member brewery.

### 4th Prize: Beer Connoisseur

Winner receives a set of six specialty beer glasses (different styles of stemware) from Libbey glassware, 2 MBA stainless steel growlers, and double growler carrier.



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Tickets are \$100 each and include a Montana Brew Crew Membership (Brew Crew Card entitles you to a free beer at 28 breweries). Funds support the MBA's work to promote Montana craft beer and create a regulatory environment that allows Montana's craft brewing industry to flourish.

Tickets are limited and can only be purchased at an [MBA member brewery](#).

For rules and restrictions, go to [montanabrewers.org/raffle](http://montanabrewers.org/raffle).