

Member Spotlight: St. Joseph Police Department, Missouri

Missouri receives grant to expand officer training

"We get a yearly grant, we apply for it every year. We've gotten it the past numerous years and it is specifically focused for officers going out. It pays their overtime to go out and hunt for drunk drivers or drug drivers," said Traffic Sgt. James Tonn with the St. Joseph Police Department. "They also have another alcohol grant that is for liquor enforcement. So we can go out and make sure bars aren't serving underage drinkers."

Read more about the St. Joseph Police Department and the work they do as part of the "Midland Empire Alcohol Task Force". **The NLLEA encourages membership from local law enforcement agencies in your state to join the NLLEA** and share their knowledge and expertise to improve the standards and practices of liquor law enforcement.

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Hancock County Man Willie Necaise, Jr. Pleads Guilty to Illegal Moonshine Charges

Agents with the Enforcement Office of the Mississippi Alcoholic Beverage Control ("ABC") Division began investigating Necaise in 2018. The investigation revealed that, over time, Necaise traveled out of state and obtained at least 569,775 pounds of sugar, a primary ingredient for moonshine. In addition, records showed Necaise getting large deliveries of propane gas to a rural shed in Hancock County, even during the summer. Agents tracked Necaise to Slidell, Louisiana, and observed him getting a pallet of sugar and coming back to Hancock County. Armed with a search warrant, ABC Agents found forty 55-gallon drums of mash, 1200 new plastic jugs and a 200-gallon stainless steel cooker, along with sugar and other items related to illegal moonshine. Necaise did not have a license to distill liquor.

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State Police Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement conducts 4,360 checks, issues 77 warnings for COVID-19 compliance

"Our officers continue to ensure licensed liquor establishments are taking the necessary steps to keep their customers and employees safe during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Major Jeffrey Fisher, director of the Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement.

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In the late 1980's it was not uncommon to drive the main highway in St. Joseph Missouri and see underage kids drinking beer in the parking lots and unfortunately it didn't require any effort to find drunk drivers on the road. St. Joseph, like so many other cities made major improvements on drunk driver enforcement over the following decades and saw a marked decrease in impaired driving crashes. While the focus had been on the drunk drivers, the underage drinking issues tended to take a back seat as it was often seen as a "lesser crime".

That all changed in 2000 when the local police department started working with the Missouri Office of Highway Safety. With a small amount of grant funding local officers started an underage drinking enforcement program that originally started by patrolling parking lots to issue tickets for underage drinking. This small project continued to evolve until 2007 when the State of Missouri eliminated all but five liquor enforcement agents for the entire state.

To fill this void, local officers started collaborating with other law enforcement agencies in Northwest Missouri and formed the "Midland Empire Alcohol Task Force". This unit is made up of police officers and deputy sheriffs from fifteen counties that focus on conducting compliance inspections, performing bar/party patrols, illegal gambling investigations, business inspections and responsible beverage server training classes. The area that they cover is approximately the size of the state of Connecticut and almost all of what they perform is from either grant funding, or programs like the responsible beverage server classes that are fully self-sustaining from licensing fees.

What has made this unit so effective is that the driving forces were not from department administrators but from the supervisors and law enforcement officers. Since 2007 this "part time" liquor enforcement unit has conducted over 6,500 alcohol compliance inspections in the region and saw the failure rate drop from 54% to around 3% last year. These inspections, along with teaching an average of 920 students per year in the responsible beverage server training classes is what has reduced the underage drinking problems in the region. With the Coronavirus issues earlier this year, the instructors developed an online training program and testing process so that this valuable training could be conducted online instead of in a crowded classroom.

This unit has been recognized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2008 for their work in underage drinking/driving prevention and they received the John W. Britt Community Service Award from the NLLEA in 2012.

Defiant Restaurant Owner Hires Top Attorney to Challenge Closure Orders

Dave Fansler says he's called the dining space at his Pismo's Coastal Grill restaurant a patio for well over a decade now. The Fresno County Health Department says it falls under the definition of indoor dining, which is prohibited under the state's COVID-19 emergency order. Fansler has continued to serve customers at his restaurant, which he says has led to three citations for defying the indoor closure order. Now, he's hired high powered local attorney Warren Paboojian to represent him in the dispute.

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How Alcohol Regulations Promote Public Health

Alcohol regulations are designed to promote safe and healthy places for patrons to eat, drink, socialize and enjoy entertainment. Unfortunately, we don't always know how that is done. The regulations are even more important today as we face concerns about the COVID-19 virus spreading. A review of these regulations and how they work to promote public health and safety can help staff be diligent about maintaining a licensed premise's responsibilities.

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#SaveUtahBars pushes for liquor law changes during COVID-19

"Right now, there's a workaround," she said of Utah liquor laws. "People can go into the restaurant, show their ID, order food, open a bottle of wine, re-cork it and take it with them. All we're asking is that we be able to sell beer and wine so it's not uncorked. It's absolutely corked and they can't open it until they get home with their take out.

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Boise State to sell alcohol in general seating areas of Albertsons Stadium

Whenever football returns to Albertsons Stadium, and whenever fans are allowed inside to watch, alcohol will be available for purchase in the main seating areas. In an email to season ticket holders Monday, Boise State announced plans to sell beer and seltzers in the general seating areas beginning this fall. Of course who knows whether there will be a season or if fans will be there to watch, but it's a significant change for a program that previously showed little interest in offering alcohol to the general public.

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COVID-19 means long stretch of stormy weather for people with alcohol and substance use disorders

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created an environment that is particularly problematic for individuals with alcohol and substance use disorders (ASUD), according to physician scientists at the National Institutes of Health.

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Ohio Attorney General Files Groundbreaking Lawsuit Utilizing the 21st Amendment Enforcement Act for the First Time

The lawsuit against Wine.Com, Inc., U.S. Beverage Advertising Corp., Pacific Wine & Spirits, LLC, ShakeStir, LLC, Winc, Inc., Houdini, Inc., & AWS Hopkins, LLC results from stings conducted by the state alleging these companies shipped wine and liquor into the state in violation of Ohio law.

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Anheuser-Busch to Pay Record \$5 Million Offer In Compromise for Trade Practice Violations Tied to Sports and Entertainment Sponsorships

The \$5 million fine is the largest offer in compromise collected to date by the TTB, Thomas Hogue, a spokesperson for the federal agency, confirmed with Brewbound. A-B's offer tops a \$2.5 million fine **collected last year from Heineken USA for alleged trade practice violations.**

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Alcohol Law Enforcement Job Opportunities:

North Carolina Department of Public Safety Alcohol Law Enforcement Division

California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control

- [ABC Agent Trainee](#)
- [ABC Agent](#)

If you have Alcohol Law Enforcement news to share, please send it to Carrie Christofes, Executive Director at carrie.christofes@nllea.org. Thank you,

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