AFD/Pepsi Scholarship Challenge Drive pledges $1 million for Metro Detroit scholars

"Potential, made possible"

The Associated Food Dealers of Michigan is pleased to announce the formation of an exciting new joint effort between Pepsi and AFD - committed to raising $1 million for Metro Detroit and state students who might not otherwise be able to afford college.

Called the AFD/Pepsi Scholarship Challenge Drive, Pepsi has made a commitment to donate $100,000 per year - for each of the next five years - for a total of $500,000. AFD will, in turn, raise an additional matching $100,000 per year.

With the slogan "Potential, made possible," the drive is targeted to students that are capable of attending college but may not be eligible for other scholarships.

"We created this college scholarship program to give Metro Detroit kids a chance at a future when there is no other financial avenue," said Dave Dempsey, general manager of Pepsi Detroit. Pepsi will also work with AFD to raise the additional $100,000 per year to meet the $1 million goal.

"Pepsi's generous pledge of a half million dollars over the next five years has paved the way for us to reach our goal of $1 million for this worthy cause," said Joe Sarafa, AFD president. "We are sincerely grateful for their support and commitment."

The scholarships are designed to help low-income students from the Metropolitan Detroit area in particular, and the state of Michigan in general. Shelf talkers and other signage will explain the program to consumers, but in order to reach its goal, Pepsi and AFD are asking for support from the supermarket and convenience store industry.

"There are many bright young men and women for whom college has been out of reach - until now," added Scott Gillesby, general manager Pepsi Central Region. "But the future can be brighter with the support of our industry. Unfortunately, college tuition isn't available at 'everyday low prices.' Pepsi has started the ball rolling. We are asking retailers and suppliers alike to take it from here and give your support to the AFD/Pepsi Scholarship Challenge Drive."

Joe Sarafa added: "When you participate in the AFD/Pepsi Scholarship Challenge Drive you touch the lives of the people in your community. As their lives improve, so does yours. This is one way to give something back."

Donations are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent provided by law. Please see the form on page 5 or call Liz Arbus at AFD (248) 557-9600 for information on how you can help Pepsi and AFD pave the way for young scholars to succeed. Each contribution builds a chance of a lifetime. It's potential, made possible!
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Chairman’s Message

U.S. Mint puts Wal-Mart first for dollar coins

In a U.S. Mint news release announcing the decision to put Wal-Mart ahead of all other retailers, Mint Director Philip Diehl said, “We expect other retailers to follow the Wal-Mart example.”

If that statement, and the context in which it was made, was uttered by a manufacturer, it would be a clear signal calling for an FTC investigation. Since the federal government itself is not subject to FTC regulation, our only recourse is to call upon Congress to thoroughly investigate this granting of preferential treatment to a mega-retailer.

It is clear to retail grocers and businesses in communities across the country that for at least one month, Wal-Mart has been given preferential and discriminatory treatment over hundreds of thousands of Main Street businesses that are unable to obtain the golden dollar through traditional channels. The fact that the U.S. Mint has given one multi-billion dollar commercial enterprise preferential treatment over community businesses clearly contributes to a discriminatory and non-competitive playing field.

Wal-Mart took this as an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage. I'm very angry that the government would do that. Independent retailers are being required to play the game with one arm tied behind their back. The U.S. Mint should immediately cease and desist further preferential distribution to Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart should have to use the banking system like every other commercial enterprise.

Call or write your member of congress: Senators - (202) 224-2203, Washington, DC 20510-2203; House of Representatives - (202) 225-3121, Washington, DC 20514-1101. Call AFD if you do not know who your Senator or Representative is.

AFD urges passage of the 1999 FDA Food Code

On Thursday, February 10, AFD presented testimony before the House Health Policy Committee urging passage of the 1999 FDA Food Code. For the past several years AFD has been part of a workgroup of regulatory and industry leaders whose goal was the uniformity of regulations between grocery stores and restaurants. Currently the Michigan Department of Agriculture inspects grocery stores under the Michigan Food Law of 1968 and Regulation 553. Restaurants are inspected by local health department staff under the Michigan Public Health Code using the 1976 Food Service Sanitation ordinance.

Activities at many establishments cause them to be dually licensed by both state and local jurisdictions. By adopting the 1999 Food Code, it will eliminate many of the inconsistencies and duplication of inspections between the two regulatory agencies. More importantly, adopting Food Code means that there will be a uniformity of regulations, more risk based inspections, coordinated licensing and fee structures, better consumer education and access to information. MDA administrative hearings and salaried food for all of us.

Because many of Michigan's food protection laws have remained essentially unchanged for 20-30 years, AFD is urging legislators to adopt the 1999 Food Code to provide Michigan's food industries the uniformity it deserves and consumers the safe food we all expect.

The Grocery Zone

By David Coverly

By Sam Dallo
AFD Chairman

In my first column as your new chairman, I have some surprising news about favoritism in our government. I recently learned that the U.S. Mint shipped millions of dollars of the new Sacagawea gold coins to Wal-Mart. The shipment positioned Wal-Mart as the first retail outlet where consumers can obtain the new coin and gave this private corporation the same amount of the initial distribution of coins as was sent to the Federal Reserve Banks. Other retailers have to await distribution through the Federal Reserve Banks. Although cloaked in the guise of efficiency, the put-Wal-Mart-first decision is nothing more or less than the giving of favored treatment to a mega-corporation.
Mega Market goes Krogering

Mega Market, the 67,000 square-foot Goliath of a grocery store on Greenfield Road at Mt. Vernon in Southfield, has joined the Kroger chain.

Faris Naimi, who co-owned Mega Market with brother-in-law Fred Najor, said the partners decided to sell to Kroger because the offer was too good to pass up.

Mega Market opened last July 15 to much fanfare. Spanning the space of 3 1/2 football fields, the store was designed to feature price as the main marketing concept.

"The store appealed to Kroger because of its location and also because of efficiencies that were built into the system," said Najor.

Mega Market's large aisles are half again the width of typical supermarket aisles. In fact, everything about the store was created with efficiency and cost savings in mind. Three truck bays allow semi trucks to unload into the back warehouse area by pallets that can be brought directly into the sales area. The state-of-the-art scanning and receiving system, 16 registers and electronically interfaced credit/debit system were designed for smooth, cost-efficient transitions from product ordering, to shipping, stocking, pricing and check-out.

When asked if Najor and Naimi would return to the grocery business, Faris Naimi replied: "We're looking at sites for a new store. We're always looking at opportunities."

Lobbyist sets up fund

Editor's Note: Jack Schick, longtime friend of AFD and lobbyist for Karoub & Associates, contracted a mysterious debilitating disease. He tells his story here and sets up a fund to help victims of the Necrotizing Fasciitis.

Dear AFD,

I am very pleased and excited to share with you a new project that I am working on with the Sparrow Health System.

As you recall, just a little over a year ago, I contracted Necrotizing Fasciitis (flesh eating bacteria) and was a patient at Sparrow. After six major surgeries my real work began. I remained at Sparrow for five weeks as an adult rehab inpatient working to regain my strength and learning to walk with a prosthesis. The people at Sparrow were fantastic, top to bottom. They are one of the reasons I survived and survived so well.

Now I have the opportunity to give something back. We are starting the Jack Schick Fund that will benefit Sparrow's Adult Rehabilitation Unit and help fund research on Necrotizing Fasciitis. The help I received there got me back on my feet even sooner than anyone expected.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers during the last year. Thanks again for the generous donation from AFD! I hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Jack Schick

Procter & Gamble cuts off merger talks

Procter & Gamble Co., faced with investor backlash and a sinking stock price, abandoned negotiations to acquire drugmakers Warner-Lambert Co. and American Home Products Corp. The company has been eager to expand into higher-profit products like prescription medicines.

The price of P&G stock fell drastically when word of the company's $140 million merger discussions were revealed. "We believed Warner-Lambert, American Home Products and Procter & Gamble could have been a blockbuster combination of technology, marketing and scale capabilities," Durk Jager, chairman, chief executive and president of P&G, said in a statement.

It was also announced that while it still is in the market for an acquisition, it no longer would be looking at drug companies.

Driver license changes

Editor's Note: This letter is in response to a note that AFD President, Joe Sarafa sent to our Secretary of State regarding the new look to our driver license. I agree that we can continually improve this product for you and all who use it.

You thank for taking the time to write to me with your thoughts on the format of our driver license. I agree that we can and should work together to better ensure alcohol and tobacco products are kept out of the hands of minors. In fact, when we change by increasing the print size on the date of birth, for better readability. I can assure you that we will continue to look for ways to improve the license better fit your needs. Retailers are one of the biggest users of the license, and your input is valuable. You are right in that the new Virginia license design presents a creative and interesting new approach for identifying minors. We will look into this possibility with our next contract, in our effort to continually improve this product for you and all who use it.

Thank you again for taking the time to express your ideas, and please do not hesitate to do so in the future.

Sincerely,
Candice S. Miller
Secretary of State

Calendar

March 27-28
35th Annual Food Marketing Conference
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo
(202) 429-4519

April 16-18
Supermarket Pharmacy Conference 2000
Pointe Hilton South Mountain Resort, Phoenix, AZ
(202) 452-8444
www.fmi.org

April 17 - 18
Carnival of Savings
AFD's 16th Annual Selling Trade Show
Burton Manor, Livonia
(248) 557-9600

May 7 - 10
FMI Supermarket Industry Convention and Exposition
Chicago
(202) 429-4521

June 11-15
Managing the Total Store: Operations Course
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo
(202) 429-4519
www.fmi.org

ADVERTISERS:
For information on advertising rates and data, call AFD, Hay Aylor, 18470 W. 10 Mile, Southfield, MI 48475.

AFD works closely with the following associations:

FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES
AFD offers discounts to FMI’s Supermarket Convention

The Food Marketing Institute’s annual Supermarket Convention & Educational Exposition is the largest, most comprehensive annual event of its kind in the world. Held May 7-9 at McCormick Center in Chicago, the Show features over 1,400 exhibitors, 30+ educational workshops, and idea exchange events as well as the presentation of FMI’s annual state-of-the-industry research. This event is attended by a world wide audience of retailers and wholesalers. This year’s theme: FMI Connecting with Your Future.

Featured pavilions include: SuperTechMart (www.supertechmart.com) and Whole Health. For more information, visit www.fmi.org.

AFD is pleased to once again offer a Group Advantage Program for this important convention, which means savings for you. Register today and take advantage of the 38% discount — that’s a $125 savings! Joining AFD’s group also enables you to take advantage of other Group Program benefits such as a priority customer service window at the Show, recognition in the Show Guide and promotional gifts! To find out more, call Dan Reeves at 248-557-9600.

Spirits are soaring for Novi brewery

The Local Color Brewing Co. of Novi, will soon become the state’s first microbrewery and restaurant to make its own vodka and rum.

It will be one of the few facilities in the nation to make the full range of alcoholic beverages. Open for just two years, Local Color has produced its own wines and beers which they distribute to area bars, restaurants, specialty stores and groceries.

Owner Peter Paisley says they will use the same marketing techniques with its liquors.

Paisley is hoping to counter recent trends that have been discouraging to the liquor industry. Nationally, consumption of distilled spirits declined more than 27 percent from 1981 to 1995, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States.

The last manufacturer of distilled spirits, United Distiller and Vintners N.A. in Allen Park will be shutting its doors at the end of June.

Paisley hopes to find his niche in the market by producing premium rums and vodkas distilled with natural ingredients.

AFD/Pepsi Scholarship Challenge Drive

Donation Form

Potential, made possible

Yes! I want to help students that are capable of attending college but may not be eligible for other scholarships. Please accept my donation of $. __________

Donors who fill out the form below will be sent a receipt for their records. Donations are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent provided by law.

Name ____________________________________________ Phone __________________________
Address ____________________________________________
City, State __________________________________________ Zip _______________________

AFD, Pepsi and the students you are helping sincerely thank you for your support!

Donors who fill out the form below will be sent a receipt for their records. Donations are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent provided by law.

Name ____________________________________________ Phone __________________________
Address ____________________________________________
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AFD, Pepsi and the students you are helping sincerely thank you for your support!

AFD Food & Beverage Report, March 2000
State Representative Richardville has the vision of his people

By Kathy Blake

State Representative Randy Richardville is a true representative of his people. Having lived in the Monroe area most of his life and having been active in the community, he has a vivid awareness and appreciation for what people do and what they need. In fact, his family tree has long been rooted in the district he serves. His heritage in the area gives him insight, loyalty and connections with the residents.

An effective communicator and person person, Representative Richardville is able to understand where people are coming from and see through their eyes. He's a person, Representative Richardville is able to understand where people are coming from and see through their eyes.

It's been a tremendous experience, learning to stand in someone else's shoes,” says Richardville. Seeing issues from other people's perspectives is his goal as he brings their wishes to Lansing.

In order to provide correct representation, Richardville takes time to meet as many constituents as he can and stay accessible. He brings politics to the people with his weekly call-in radio show on WTWR Tower 98.3 and a monthly cable television show which is aired on a local station. “I use the limited time I have to be accessible and keep people informed,” says Richardville.

Richardville has been an active member of his community for many years. He has been involved with economic development as a former Monroe County Planning Commissioner and a board member for the Eastside Community Development Corporation.

He is former chairman of Catholic Social Services of Monroe County and is active in United Way. He serves on the Monroe board of trustees for Karmanos Cancer Institute and is a member of the Monroe Rotary Club.

Richardville was on the strategic planning committee for Monroe High School where his wife teaches science. Their daughter graduated from the school and their son currently attends and plays on the varsity football team. The school is one of the 10 largest high schools in Michigan and received a blue ribbon award designating it as one of the best high schools in the state. Only 14 schools out of a total of 650 received the honor. Although he doesn’t claim credit for the high school’s distinction, he is very proud that it is one of the best.

Richardville’s community pride and involvement caught the attention of a group of business people who were calling citizens to recruit candidates for the 1996 Republican state representative campaign. Richardville agreed to run and lost to incumbent Democrat Lynn Owen.

Richardville says, “We ran a good, hard, clean race and I became friends with Owen.” The day after the election, I was out meeting with both sides to prepare for the 1998 election.” Owen couldn’t run again because he had already served three terms and Richardville won the seat in 1998.

His employer, North Star Steel, a division of Cargill Inc., offers a remarkable leave of absence program to employees. Since term limits put a cap of six years on state representative seats, it’s not desirable for individuals to leave their private sector employment to take a temporary job. Cargill has given Representative Richardville a leave of absence and guaranteed a position with the company when he’s out of office. At a luncheon for the Michigan Manufacturers’ Association, Lieutenant Governor Dick Posthumus introduced him as “a poster boy for term-limited government.” Leaving the manufacturing industry to hold political office is becoming less unique as a result of term limits. Several other major corporations have created policies for political leave of absence, says Richardville.

Representative Richardville believes term limits can be good for the state. “Government experience can be learned: what is needed are politicians who aren't far removed from being a citizen,” he says. The current legislature is made up of 64 freshman representatives who may return to nonpolitical employment in six years. “It's an energetic group,” he says adding that the vast majority are dedicated and committed to serving the interests of the people.”

“We’re still in touch with being a voter, we still have a taste for being a citizen and not a government official,” says Richardville.

Richardville is assistant majority whip and serves on the committees for: Great Lakes and Tourism; Veteran Affairs; Economic Development and Energy & Technology. He just recently joined the Great Lakes and Tourism Committee where the main concern is the low lake levels. “They are the lowest in 30 years,” and Richardville continues, “the water tables are down, wells are drying up, and boats can't get out of harbors. Dredging, which is expensive, has become necessary in order to allow boat traffic. The Great Lakes have dropped 40 inches in the past three years, mainly due to lack of significant rain and snowfall.”

On the Economic Development Committee, the focus has centered on Brownfield legislation and manufactured housing. The committee is providing incentives to build houses and businesses on Brownfield abandoned industrial sites. Richardville says that by encouraging development on Brownfield sites, less agricultural area will be zoned to development.

For manufactured homes, the committee has worked on bringing more clarity to local governments' control on zoning. “While we need affordable housing, we have neighbors that have rights too,” Richardville says.

In the Energy and Technology committee, Richardville sponsored a bill making it illegal to slam, or invoice without consent, for phone service. The bill passed the house.

Representative Richardville graduated Salutatorian from Monroe Catholic Central High School in 1977, received his Bachelor of Arts at Albion College and Masters degree in Management at Aquinas College. A sportsman and wildlife appreciator, he is a member of Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, the National Rifle Association and the Monroe Rod and Gun Club.

In addition to Representative Richardville being a longtime resident of his area, his parents are also native of his district. His ancestry includes French fur traders and among the family tree, the daughter of a Miami Indian chief.

To reach Representative Richardville, call (517) 373-2617, email richardville@house.state.mi.us or write State Representative, The Honorable Randy Richardville, P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, Michigan, 48909-7514.
Cyber groceries

Michigan customers can now buy groceries on the Web
Continued from front page

shopping has been targeted to two-income families more concerned with convenience than cost.

Streamline.com of Westwood, Massachusetts installs a refrigerator in customers' garages so they don't have to be home for deliveries. It charges a monthly fee of $30. However, the move to cheaper services is spreading. Webvan of suburban San Francisco charges no delivery fee. Now Priceline.com comes to Detroit with the sole intent of reaching customers who want a good deal.

When Farmer Jack began selling groceries locally online through Priceline.com, major daily newspapers sent reporters online to buy their groceries. Results were mixed, but all agreed that Priceline.com shoppers could save money.

More stores will join the Priceline.com bandwagon. In fact, beginning this month Farmer Jack will no longer hold a Priceline.com monopoly. Michigan and Toledo Meijer stores will also jump on. Others are expected to follow suit.

Here's how shoppers use Priceline.com:

First, consumers get a WebHouse Club card, which is available online or at Farmer Jack (and soon Meijer) stores. Then, they access the club online. They can choose from hundreds of grocery items. They select two or more brands for each product they want, then name the price they want to pay. Within a minute, they know whether their proposed prices have been accepted. A credit card is used to lock in the prices.

The next step is a trip to the grocery store, where the customer shops for the items, brings them to the register and completes the transaction with a swipe of their WebHouse Club card.

Right now, the process is cumbersome and time-consuming. However, for the shopper that is bent on getting the best possible deals, it may be worth their time. The trade off is time spent on the Internet, for money saved at the checkout counter.

For the independent grocery store, online shopping may not be a current threat, but surfing the Web is definitely the wave of the future.

WMU offers store management class in June

Managing the Total Store Operations Course will be held June 11-15, 2000 at Western Michigan University (WMU) in Kalamazoo. Offered in partnership with WMU, this week-long course is highly interactive, focusing on the complex operations side of the supermarket industry. Geared for individuals who are in store management positions, it is also ideal for those seeking to improve their knowledge of overall store operations. Course content includes food industry trends, store layout, financial analysis, merchandising, meal solutions, electronic marketing, retail technologies, recruiting employees and much more! The emphasis is on practical information for day-to-day supermarket operations. Plus, store tours of innovative local operators are part of the total learning package.

This course is also the perfect complement to the Managing the Total Store: Leadership Course. Store managers, assistant managers, owners/operators, general managers, district and divisional managers and high potential management candidates will benefit from this class.

Tuition: FMI members-$1695, nonmembers-$2495. Tuition includes accommodations, most meals, all course materials and store tours. Call (202) 220-0710.
Senate Approves GOP Minimum Wage Increase

The Senate this week passed by a vote of 83 to 14, a GOP sponsored amendment to the Bankruptcy Reform Act (S.625) raising the federal minimum wage by $1.00 per hour.

Under the amendment offered by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), the minimum wage would rise incrementally over a three year period to $6.15 per hour by 2002. To make the increase more palatable to GOP Senators and lighten the burden on employers, the amendment included $75 million in tax breaks for small businesses.

In addition, the amendment would eliminate a provision in the Fair Labor Standards Act that requires employers to include bonuses, commissions and similar compensation in the employees rate of pay for the purposes of calculating overtime.

This "bonus" provision is strongly supported by NACS. The President has promised to veto the bill based on widespread opposition among Democrats to the changes in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Senate Democrats are supporting an alternative bill drafted by Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) identical to the one defeated in the Senate late last year.

This "bonus" provision is strongly supported by NACS. The President has promised to veto the bill based on widespread opposition among Democrats to the changes in the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The Kennedy bill would phase in a $1.00 increase over just two years and provide $9.6 billion in business tax cuts over a five-year period. The House version of the bankruptcy reform package (H.R. 833), which was approved last year, does not include a minimum wage increase.

However, the House GOP leadership is planning to offer a "stand alone" minimum wage bill for a floor vote sometime before Easter.

This package is expected to also include a repeal of the $250 per store Special Occupational Tax on Alcohol (SOT) as part of the small business tax provisions.

Food Stamp notice raises unnecessary concern

Recently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sent an alarming notice to retailers authorized to participate in the Food Stamp Program. The manner in which the agency released its notice caused unnecessary concern, especially because some of the notices were sent to retailers' homes.

The main point was to inform retailers that the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires federal agencies to forward to the Department of the Treasury the Social Security number of any person who is 180 days delinquent in a legally enforceable non-taxed debt to the government. The notice was sent because the 1974 Privacy Act requires that the government notify individuals whenever there is a change in the use of their Social Security number. Unless a retailer is delinquent in fines for Food Stamp violations, there is no need for alarm. Please contact Kate Coler, (202) 220-0633 for more information.

Gasoline demand to grow over next 20 years

According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), refiners will see a healthy demand for transportation fuels over the next 20 years. While carmakers will start marketing fuel-efficient cars, the vehicles will not dramatically reduce the demand for energy in the transportation sector.

Petroleum demand is projected to grow at an average rate of 1.3% per year through 2020. Increased travel as well as economic growth will account for the increase in petroleum use for freight and shipping through 2020. Gasoline pump prices are also predicted to reach a peak across the nation at $1.29 per gallon next December — NACS.
March Madness

Stock up on your favorite 7-Up products for all the in-your-face, in the paint, take-it-to-the-hoop festivities!

Contact your local 7Up Sales Representative for more details.
State of Union Highlights Shift in Democrat Tax-Cut Policy

In his final State of the Union message, President Clinton called for a 10-year, $350 billion tax cut, signaling a shift in past administration policy. House minority leader Richard Gephardt quickly followed suit and endorsed the idea. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer (R-TX) was obviously pleased with the sudden Democratic shift, commenting "It's a significant movement in the right direction.”

While there is no agreement yet between Republicans and Democrats on the specifics of the cuts, there is now renewed hope for breaking the tax-cut logjam that has clogged Congress during the past year.

As expected, Clinton called for an increase in the minimum wage, but it was telling that he did not specify how much. While Democrats, including the President, have been pushing for a $1 increase over 2 years, moderate proposals have spread $1 over 3 years and added tax and labor relief. Perhaps this is a sign that Democrats are now willing to take a more moderate approach on minimum wage. Significantly, the word tobacco was not mentioned. No new tobacco taxes, no new tobacco regulations, no new tobacco legislation. Most likely this was an attempt to keep Vice President Gore out of trouble in the South during his campaign for the White House.

Turning to environmental issues, President Clinton announced new proposals for land preservation and focused on greater fuel efficiency as a means for reducing harmful air emissions. He proposed "major tax incentives" for new environmental technologies, including subsidies for businesses that produce clean energy and for families who purchase the next generation of "super-efficient" cars. He also called on the auto industry to use available technologies to "make all new cars more fuel efficient right away."

FSA to post tobacco stings on the web

Last month, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began posting on its Web site a database containing information about the results of its tobacco sting operations.

The database will be located in the “Children & Tobacco” portion of the Web site (www.fda.gov) and will be kept current through weekly updates. No information about a tobacco sting will appear on the site until 90 days after the sting occurs. Thus, all stings occurring prior to October 22 will be included. The database will be searchable by name of establishment, city, state, and zip code. The user will be able to access national and individual state reports on the site.

The Web site will also provide an avenue for e-mailing comments and reactions to the FDA about its Web site. NACS counsel is reviewing options for closing the site until the Supreme Court makes its decision regarding FDA tobacco authority this spring.

Tobacco sales to minors report is now available on the web

The Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) “Children and Tobacco Compliance Checker” Web site is up and running. Browsers can now search by state and get reports about national and or state results on retailer compliance regarding tobacco sales to minors. If you have any questions on the compliance program, contact the FDA at 1-888-FDA-4KIDS.
Robbery & Fire can't claim
Kit Kat Market

by Ginny Bennett

Eight months after the Kit Kat Market burned, store owner Lou Barbat has finally reopened to the relief and delight of his customers and his employees. Louie is happy to have the ordeal of rebuilding behind him. Now, as he ties up loose ends he can begin to focus his efforts on rebuilding his client base.

On May 21, 1999, the Kit Kat Market located on Harper two blocks from Van Dyke in Detroit, was burglarized. The robbers stole the safe from the office and set the office on fire in an attempt to cover their tracks and destroy any potential recorded evidence from the Kit Kat Market’s security system. The robbers bypassed the alarm and the fire was discovered by a customer who saw smoke as he was driving by on his way to work. The fire trucks arrived in the early morning, before Louie. The robbers broke in and then covered up the evidence with the fire and sadly, they haven’t been caught.

The office was destroyed by fire and the intense heat spread the damage throughout the 4,500 square-foot building.

At the beginning of February the store reopened, eight months after a long and painstaking process, but now everything is fresh and new. The store has a mini-mart format with an adequate selection of fresh meat, fruit and vegetable department. New dropped ceiling, floors, paint, signs, shelves and equipment have taken the place of the rubbish that filled the store after the fire. For Louie, the robbery and the fire is an unpleasant memory. The part he can’t forget is the difficulty he faced pulling together all the old records that were lost in the blaze. In addition to compiling data, Louie had to figure out the necessary procedures to help him retain his licenses and apply for permits. The latter was the most exasperating. And, he had to hire an architect to begin a new plan.

Disasters are, by their nature, unpredictable and no one is ever fully prepared. Louie is eager to share what he learned with other retailers. His advice is to follow the Boy Scout motto to always “be prepared” – for whatever might happen.

All Kit Kat Markets records, receipts, employment forms, and phone numbers were stored in his office and were ruined in the fire. “AFD’s staff was a big help,” says Louie. “We were able to get a whole lot of information on how to preserve our licenses.”

AFD was able to provide phone numbers to call for all the licenses that had to be kept in escrow or reapplied for. USDA, for example, requires that after discontinuing food stamp sales for 6 months, a retailer must take a class and be retrained in order to begin selling them again. This class meets on Thursdays, only by appointment. In addition, in order to apply to receive approval to reaccept food stamps, Kit Kat Market had to provide copies to prove the existence of numerous licenses including, beer and wine, WIC, updated corporation information, photo ID for all principals, Employer Identification Number (EIN) and DBA. A $100 fee per month is assessed for keeping a Lotto license in escrow.

Kit Kat Market also called on its CPA to restore some records. Louie says, “It is important, when disaster strikes, to act right away. He regrets the time he wasted waiting for the insurance to pay out. “Working with an architect, planning and applying for permits should be initiated,” he suggests, “before the insurance money is paid.”

Louie knows how important it is to be fully insured. He recommends having your insurance adjuster re-evaluate the policy annually so retailers are not under or over-insured.

Remarkably, Louie has retained his employees. Irma, his clerk, has been at Kit Kat since it opened 25 years ago. Several others have worked for him five years each. Some went on unemployment after the fire but some he “loaned” to fellow store owners, Alaa Naimi at Thrifty Scot and Tom and Joe Simann at Lafayette Market. All seven employees returned to Kit Kat once it reopened.

Initially Louis was fearful after the robbery and fire. However, Louis Barbat and Steve his partner and brother, were determined that even though the fire could destroy a building it could not destroy the faith they had in their ability to build again and that their customer base would return. “I believe people will come here because of our customer service and because of the convenience,” Louie says. He sees the mini-mart format and ample, close-up parking as his two main draws.

Visiting the store just a few days after it reopened, it appears that his faith was well placed and customers are finding their way back. The parking lot was busy and the lottery cashier, Robin, had a long line.

Louie plans to have a grand opening celebration with banners, signs, and flyers. However, he will wait until he can accept food stamps and as of this writing, that is still a couple of weeks away. He is waiting to take the requisite class.

The Barbats immigrated from Iraq when Louie was 14 years old. A year later his father Antoine died and Salima Barbat, Louise’s mother, raised her family on her own. Although young, the boys had to take responsibility for the family livelihood. They worked in grocery stores until Louie was 19, at which time he purchased Kit Kat, at his mother’s urging.

Ironically, Kit Kat Market had been claimed by a previous fire and for that reason it was available and affordable, for Louis to purchase 25 years ago.

Louie hasn’t let the 1999 fire defeat him or let his troubles overwhelm him. Today he enjoys spending time with his young children, boating. He also enjoys playing racquetball. He would like to own another store someday. From now on he will protect his records, be fully insured and take his own good advice to follow the Boy Scout motto and always be prepared.
Electric Choice Update

Michigan's utilities are entering a new era, one that allows customers to choose their energy supplier. Customers now have the option of continuing to buy electricity from Detroit Edison or they may choose an alternative electric generation supplier. This is called deregulation, or Electric Choice.

Electric Choice is occurring in phases and some of this information may not apply to you at this time; however, we suggest you clip and save this article for future reference.

For customers who choose to participate in Electric Choice, Detroit Edison will continue to provide transmission and distribution services. This essentially means that Detroit Edison will continue to maintain the poles and wires that deliver electricity.

Detroit Edison will also provide customer services such as billing, meter reading and power restoration in the event of a storm.

For those customers who choose to participate in Electric Choice, some aspects of the relationship with Detroit Edison will change.

**Enrollment**

It is expected that new energy suppliers will process Electric Choice customer enrollments electronically once a customer has decided to participate in Electric Choice. In order to do this, the customer will need to provide specific enrollment information to their new supplier.

In the future, if a customer chooses to return to Detroit Edison service, they can do so by contacting Detroit Edison directly or through their new energy supplier.

**Billing**

Customers who do not participate in Electric Choice will be billed in the same manner as they are today.

Customers who participate in Electric Choice may receive two bills, one for energy generation and one for transmission, depending on whether their supplier chooses Detroit Edison to perform the billing services or the supplier performs its own billing.

Customers should ask their new supplier if they offer complete billing services. In the event the supplier bills directly, Detroit Edison will provide the supplier with customer usage information.

**Meters**

Detroit Edison will continue to own, maintain and read the meter equipment. This includes all equipment needed to accurately measure the quantity of energy used. Some Electric Choice customers may have to upgrade their metering equipment.

**Restoration**

If a customer loses power, Detroit Edison will restore service in the same manner as it does today. There will be no differentiation between Electric Choice customers and customers who continue to have Detroit Edison provide their energy.

The Detroit Edison Customer Communication Center, 1-800-477-4747 will continue to handle outage calls the same for all customers whether or not they participate in Electric Choice.

**For more information**

A toll-free information number has been established for Electric Choice related questions. The toll-free number is 1-877-413-INFO (4636). If you have an Electric Choice question, please call or visit the Detroit Edison Web site at http://www.detroitedison.com. Another good information source is the Michigan Public Service Commission web site at http://cis.state.mi.us/mpsc/electric/restruct.
Young smokers sent to the doghouse

Let the youth buyer beware, because kids that smoke cigarettes in Wayne County may wind up in the "doghouse" —literally.

The results of a major new initiative to reduce teen-age smoking were announced recently in Wayne County. Sheriff Robert A. Ficano stated that his pilot program, Operation Dog House, had placed undercover sheriff deputies near retail stores that are close to high schools. Approximately 25 youths were spotted smoking cigarettes. They were taken into custody, issued a ticket, and their parents were notified.

To avoid going to court and receiving a fine, the youthful offenders were given the opportunity to attend an eight-hour Tobacco Cessation program, sponsored by the Wayne County Health Department, and perform eight hours of community service at the Michigan Humane Society.

This is a first of its kind partnership to teach youthful offenders that crime has consequences. Sheriff Ficano states, "Youths have to spend a little time in the "doghouse" and we hope this becomes a valuable learning experience for them."

Joe Sarafa, President of the Associated Food Dealers, states "We are very proud of the actions taken by Sheriff Ficano to reduce youth access to tobacco products."

For additional questions please contact Ralph Kinney, Deputy Chief of Staff, at (313) 224-8488.

What new ATF “gray market” regulations mean to convenience stores

New federal regulations went into effect January 1 which prohibit convenience stores from receiving or selling tobacco products that were previously exported from the U.S., unless they have been repackaged.

What convenience stores need to know about these new regulations, issued by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), is that it is now illegal to buy and sell any U.S.-made tobacco product – i.e. cigars, cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, or pipe tobacco – that was exported abroad, then re-imported back into the country. Such products will have markings on their packaging indicating their for-export status (i.e. "Tax-exempt. For use outside the U.S.").

When such products are exported and then re-introduced into the country, U.S. Customs has been authorized to distribute them only to a tobacco manufacturer or an export warehouse. Anyone else who is found in possession of such products, including retailers, will face a fine of at least $1,000.

Note that tobacco manufacturers who receive for-export tobacco products from U.S. Customs may, after paying federal excise taxes, repack the products to conform with domestic packaging requirements. These repackaged products are legal for retailers to sell.

ATF will continue to allow retailers to sell foreign-made cigarettes that have been imported into the country. While these are also considered “gray market” products, the new regulations do not prohibit their sale. The difference between the illegal and legal products can be found in the markings on the packaging: among other things, if the packaging states the product was manufactured outside the U.S., then retailers are not prohibited from selling the product.

Finally, it is legal for retailers to sell for-export products that have not been repackaged if the products were purchased prior to January 1, 2000. But retailers who do so must be prepared to show U.S. authorities paperwork that verifies the date the products were purchased.

For more information, please contact NACS Counsels R. Timothy Columbus at (202) 342-8555, or Stephen Gold at (202) 342-8412.
Associated Food Dealers is pleased to announce a partnership with LDMI Telecommunications.

So many telecom companies to choose from . . . such a mess of confusing offers. LDMI gives your business straightforward benefits including:

• Competitive rates.
• Real people customer service 24-hours a day, 365 days a year.
• Face-to-face consultation on your telecom needs.
• No Fees, No Minimum and No Contract.
• Six (6) second rounding

Call 888-BUD-LDMI (53644) for simple telecom solutions and savings.
eSkye introduces alcohol ordering over internet

eSkye (www.eskye.com) announced the availability of free services to licensed retailers of beverage alcohol products in Michigan as of March 3, 2000. eSkye is a technology company that allows retailers to send their ordering information directly to distributors over the internet. eSkye seamlessly links all of the industry's three tiers - retailers, distributors, and suppliers - in one online marketplace. eSkye allows all three tiers to conduct business utilizing innovative patent-pending technology, which streamlines the order process and improves the entire supply chain.

eSkye services will initially be available only for National Wine & Spirits of Michigan products. For more information call eSkye at 1-877-ESKYECOM or register online at www.eskye.com.

MDA license renewals due

In February, the Michigan Department of Agriculture Food and Dairy Division released the retail food establishment license renewal applications for the 2001 licensing year. Renewal applications were mailed the week of February 7, and are due to be returned along with fees by March 31 to the MDA Lansing Office. Late fees of $10 per business day, up to a total of $100, will be assessed if the application is received after the March 31 deadline. Late fee assessment is based upon the postmark on the return envelope. A license cannot be issued until a completed application and license fee and/or any applicable late fee is paid.

License fees are based upon the total square footage of the building (exclusive of living areas) as determined by the building’s external perimeter. Along with each renewal application is a set of instructions for completing the renewal, and a map of telephone numbers for MDA regional office locations. A new addition this year is the premier issue of Food Digest, a newsletter for licensed food, food processing and food service establishments. This newsletter gives brief updates on food-related issues under development at MDA.

MDA has recently established a new toll-free telephone number and decal program to make existing food safety information more readily available and accessible to the public. Six decals are being included with each retail food license renewal for placement on entrance doors, near cash registers, deli counters, etc. MDA strongly encourages establishments to take advantage of this opportunity to proactively communicate with consumers. For more information, contact David Bruce, MDA Food and Dairy Division, (517) 241-2467.

Production needs new equipment Accounting wants positive cash flow

...And you forgot your referee's hat

Now you can give them both what they want.
Business Leasing from Michigan National lets you boost productivity while managing cash flow. To learn more or to apply today, call George Caracostas at (248) 473-2785 or Cindy Jensen at (248) 615-5863.
IT'S WHAT SMOOTH AND GREAT TASTE HAVE IN COMMON.

And it’s what we refer to as Pilsner. 150 years of brewing tradition, the choicest blend of hops and American-grown barley malt. What it means to you is a chance to unwind with your friends over a smooth, great-tasting beer.

MILLER LITE® TASTE A TRUE PILSNER."
$2 Instant Ticket Sales Soaring!

Instant tickets have played a large part in the Lottery's solid performance over the past few years, and they are continuing to grow in popularity among customers. One category of instant tickets is selling particularly well this year — $2 instant tickets. During the Lottery’s first quarter of fiscal year 2000, sales of $2 instant tickets posted a 6-percent increase over the same period last year.

Your friendly customer suggestions to try the Lottery’s $2 instant games have led to higher sales — a trend we expect to continue in the coming months. The Lottery recently launched a television advertising campaign featuring the wide variety of $2 instant tickets the Lottery offers. The extra attention this advertising campaign is creating should bring even more customers into your stores — allowing you to take full advantage of the 7-percent sales commission awarded for the sale of $2 instant tickets during fiscal year 2000!

The Lottery is excited to debut four instant games this month — three of which are $2 tickets! Players will experience a little luck o’ the Irish with “Pot O’ Gold,” a new $2 ticket hitting stores on March 6, with prizes up to $17,000. After March 13, players will go wild for the $1 “Wild Ride” which offers a $2,000 top prize. The $2 “3 Wishes” debuts on March 20, and offers a dream-come-true $30,000 top prize. Finally, on March 27, the $2 “Red & Black Doubler” hits ticket counters offering a $36,000 top prize.

Michigan Rolldown

The debut of the Lottery’s newest on-line game, Michigan Rolldown, is generating lots of excitement for retailers, as it is different from any other game the Lottery currently offers. Your assistance in explaining the details of the new game to players will help make Michigan Rolldown a hit with your customers. Information about Michigan Rolldown can be found in the point-of-sale kits the Lottery sent out in early February, in the article that ran in the February issue of the Lottery’s Game line publication or by contacting your Lottery representative.

I encourage you to point out the following features of Michigan Rolldown to Lottery players who visit your store:

Every dollar in the nightly prize pool is awarded to Michigan Rolldown players! In the event that no one matches all five numbers drawn, the prize money is rolled down to the players who matched four of five numbers.

• The Lottery anticipates more than 25,000 prize winners per drawing.
• Michigan Rolldown offers better odds than Cash 5, with players choosing five numbers from a pool of 33 instead of 39.
• Drawings are held six nights per week — Monday through Saturday.
• Cash prizes for matching five, four, three and even two numbers.

I encourage you to prominently display your point-of-sale materials for the game. The brochures included in your kits are especially useful in helping players understand how the new “roll down” feature works.

The launch of Michigan Rolldown was accompanied by a statewide television and radio advertising campaign to help boost sales in your stores. Also, be on the lookout for Michigan Rolldown coupons in the near future. In early March, coupons for free Michigan Rolldown tickets were sent to adults throughout the state.
HERE COMES THE CASH

bookoo Cash

SWEEPSTAKES

$10,000
4 GRAND PRIZE WINNERS

$5,000
8 WINNERS

$1,500
100 WINNERS

Tell your customers to enter the Daily 3 & 4 bookoo Cash Sweepstakes with their non-winning Mid-Day and Evening tickets.

MARCH 27 - APRIL 22, 2000

RECEIVE A 7% COMMISSION ON NEW $2 INSTANT GAMES!

The Michigan Lottery realizes that a big part of our success is due to thousands of Michigan retailers just like you. That’s why, with all new $2 instant games introduced after October 1, 1999 you’ll see your commissions jump to 14 cents for every ticket you sell.

So be sure to stock up on our newest $2 instant tickets — Pot O’ Gold, 3 Wishes and Red & Black Doubler — and see your profits soar!

POT O’ GOLD On Sale March 6 7% commission!

3 WISHES On Sale March 20 7% commission!

RED & BLACK DOUBLER On Sale March 27 7% commission!

ALSO AVAILABLE
Wild Bingo, Silver & Gold and Cash Bonus 7% commission!
Salute to Service Organizations

Michigan National earns Visa member service quality award for eighth consecutive year

Visa U.S.A. has awarded Michigan National with a 1999 Member Service Quality Performance Award.

This marks the eighth consecutive year that Michigan National has won an award for achieving one of the best chargeback rates by an acquirer with annual Visa sales between $2 billion and $5 billion.

The award reflects Michigan National’s ability to provide world-class service by educating merchants on Visa card acceptance procedures and the importance of providing adequate transaction description information for the cardholder’s benefit.

“Once again, Michigan National has been recognized by Visa for superior performance,” said Marc Belsky, senior vice president of Payment Products and Services for the bank. “This recognition demonstrates the exceptional depth of experience of our team and the consistent focus we place on merchant education and training.”

“Michigan National’s outstanding operating performance mirrors its continuing commitment to excellence, both to its customers and to the Visa payment system,” said Matt Price, senior sales director, Visa U.S.A. “The end result of Michigan National’s efforts is a cost-effective program that delivers optimal value and convenience to its customers.”

Since 1992, Visa has recognized superior operating performance by U.S. issuers and acquirers in key operating areas. Michigan National is one of 34 financial institutions from Visa’s United States membership that has won awards in one or more categories this year. Members qualified for service quality awards during the May 1998 to April 1999 period.

Michigan National provides diversified financial services and offers creative ideas and product options designed to help consumers and businesses meet their financial goals. A member of the National Australia Bank Group, Michigan National is a $10.7 billion-asset financial services corporation with 187 financial centers and more than 300 ATMs. Michigan National is committed to being the bank of first choice in its markets and provides the leading-edge products and services that customers expect from a member of a global financial network. Visit Michigan National’s web site at www.MichiganNational.com

Group Savings

AAA Michigan is pleased to announce a partnership with the AFD which allows us to offer you and your employees the opportunity to join the state’s leading membership organization, at a special group rate. Benefits include:

For Your Business
- A highly-perceived employee benefit at no administrative cost to you

For You and Your Employees
- Eligibility to apply for group discounted auto and home insurance* via convenient automatic account deductions
- 24-hour prepaid Emergency Road Service
- Free TopTiks®, TourBooks® and maps, plus member-only values on cruise and tour packages
- Exclusive savings of up to 20% or more at thousands of hotels across Michigan and the U.S.

To find out more or to enroll your company, call Judy Shaba at 248-557-9600

One-rate calling plans make cents

by Karen Der, AirTouch Cellular

There are nearly 90 million wireless subscribers in the United States. This group is increasingly enjoying the added security and convenience that wireless phones provide. Consequently, there is a variety of calling plans out there to meet virtually everyone’s needs.

Most recently, there has been a proliferation of national one-rate plans. If you’re considering one, but aren’t sure which offer best suits your needs or your pocketbook, here are a few tips to help you find the right plan.

Do Your Homework
Many of these plans tout one simple rate with no roaming or long distance fees in their advertisements. However, some plans may be misleading.

First, determine where the carrier offers service. Most wireless carriers refer to this as their “national footprint.” Does the carrier’s national footprint encompass the geographical areas that you call to and from?

See AirTouch, page 25
Associated Food Dealers of Michigan 16th Annual Selling Trade Show

CARNIVAL of SAVINGS

- Purchase the Essential Products that you carry in your stores at Special Discount Prices for two days from over 200 exhibitors.
- Sample New Products unveiled at the show.
- Meet and Network with industry leaders!
- Save Time and Money. It's your one stop shopping place!

Monday, April 17, 2000—5 p.m.-9 p.m.
Tuesday, April 18, 2000—2 p.m.-8 p.m.
Burton Manor • Livonia, Michigan

The law requires that you be at least 21 years of age to attend this show.
Admission ticket required.

Watch your mail for more information. Booth space is still available.
Please call Becky with any questions:
(248) 557-9600

Associated Food Dealers of Michigan Serving the Food and Beverage Industry for over 84 years
Salute to Service Organizations

Meadowbrook Insurance Group:
From humble roots company grows

Meadowbrook is proud to be based in Michigan; in addition to the Company's Southfield-based corporate headquarters, Meadowbrook's primary insurance carrier, Star Insurance Company, is domiciled in Michigan. Meadowbrook has strong ties in the local business community, and supports many local and national charities.

Meadowbrook is much more than an agency, an insurance company or a service consultant. As Mr. Segal points out, "We're a risk management company that can provide all insurance-related services. Working with us, clients can learn to control their exposures and even participate in the underwriting profits of their insurance risks."

AFD has teamed up with Meadowbrook to make worker's compensation insurance coverage available to AFD members. Through Star Insurance Company, Meadowbrook is the endorsed Worker's Compensation provider for AFD members. Star is a specialist in providing workers' compensation coverage to groups and associations nationwide, and is rated "A-" (excellent) by A.M. Best Company.

To learn more about worker's compensation coverage exclusively for AFD members, contact Meadowbrook's Midwest Regional Vice President, Darwin Daniel at (800) 482-2726, ext. 8142.

Blue Cross Blue Shield may be the right choice

There are many facts that make Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and Blue Care Network (BCN) the right choice.

BCBSM is a non-profit health care organization offering a full range of insurance products: Traditional, PPO, HMO, and POS.

It has the most widely recognized and accepted ID card for health care service.

One of every two Michigan residents is a member of BCBSM. The organization processes over 60 million claims per year.

There are 15 regional customer service centers from Detroit to Marquette and with the largest telecommunications system in the state BCBSM has the capacity to store 16 billion units of information.

The BCBSM hotline, Blue

Blue HealthLine helps members make health care decisions.

Since its premier in 1997, Blue HealthLine has proven a valuable resource of health information for Blues members.

Blue HealthLine is a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week hotline that members can call to speak with a registered nurse or listen to one of many topics from our extensive audio library.

The hotline assists members in making informed medical decisions by determining appropriate level of care and offering education and health care advice.
Airtouch, continued from page 22

Secondly, inquire as to whether there is an additional charge for calls made or received outside of the carrier's national footprint. If so, what are the charges?

Third, find out if the single rate plan is truly a single rate plan. Is there a difference in price between "peak" and "off-peak" calling times? Depending on the time of day you make most calls, this could make a difference in your bill.

About Airtouch's National Calling Plan
Airtouch's National Calling Plan offers several packages with anywhere from 100 to 1000 minutes. All Airtouch National Calling Plan packages follow the customer throughout the United States. Therefore, there are no long distance charges for calls originating and terminating within the United States as long as the subscriber has Airtouch long distance service on their wireless phone.

Additionally, with Airtouch's National Calling Plan, there is no differentiation between peak and off peak hours. Rather, there is one flat Airtouch rate.

AirTouch's National Calling Plan also includes many other features, including:
- Call Waiting
- Call Forwarding
- Three Way Conference Calling
- Detailed Billing
- Voice Mail
- Extended Call Delivery
- Voice Mail Alert
- Caller ID
- 1st Minute Inbound Free

Additional details may apply. For more information about Airtouch's National Calling Plan, call 1-888-772-2355 or visit your nearest Airtouch retail outlet. Airtouch serves more than 9 million U.S. cellular and PCS customers on a proportionate basis. Its ventures operate in 25 states and 22 of the top 30 U.S. markets, including Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle. Airtouch is part of Vodafone AirTouch Plc, the world's largest wireless communications firm, based in the United Kingdom. It has mobile operations in 23 countries on five continents, with more than 31 million proportionate cellular customers. For more information, visit the Airtouch web site at www.airtouch.com.

TeleCheck has paperless check processing
Telecheck Michigan, Inc. was founded by Arthur A. Nitzsche in 1979 and recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary. TeleCheck is the nation's largest check guarantee company and is associated with TeleCheck Services, its parent company which was established in 1964. TeleCheck services more than 200,000 merchants and processes 2.2 billion checks. In fact, the company has established how all checks could be accepted without risk to our merchants.

Electronic Check Acceptance (ECA) is the means to a paperless processing of checks and is available today. The customer's check is scanned via a new Eclipse Terminal, and then given back to the checkwriter at the time of sale. All funds are transferred electronically, with no more need to process checks.

For more information call David Hausch (248) 799-9561.

Vic's selling to Busch's
According to sources and the Detroit Free Press, Vic Ventimiglia Jr. is selling two of his three Vic's World Class Markets to Busch's, an Ann Arbor based supermarket chain. Busch's will acquire the Novi and Bloomfield Hills locations while Ventimiglia will maintain sole ownership of his Beverly Hills store.

As part of the deal, Ventimiglia will have a three-year contract overseeing the produce departments at all 11 Busch's stores. The deal is expected to be completed by April 1.

"The Farmington Hills store will be the model for what we want all of the stores to be," Ventimiglia said.

For so many reasons, choose

Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan

For information about Blue Cross coverage available to AFD members, please call Judy Shaba at 1-800-66-66-AFD.

www.bcbsm.com

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.
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LDMI Telecommunications is different than many long distance phone companies which are competing for every household with gimmicks and plans. LDMI sets its sights narrowly on small and mid-sized businesses operating in the Midwest by using a few very old, yet trusted principles: focus, single-source shopping and loyalty.

The company’s business customers seem to like the approach—LDMI has been documented as having among the highest loyalty rates in the industry. Perhaps the first distinction between the giants and LDMI is service. The company is a facilities-based carrier, meaning it can control the integrity of call data from beginning to end, and provide real-time service along with it. The company has a 24-hour service center and sales representatives who use face-to-face visits and customized comparisons as selling tools.

LDMI has its own billing platform. If the most common service-related complaint of telecommunications providers is complicated bills, then LDMI has cornered the market on a solution. Their integrated bills are straightforward and easy to read, regardless of a customer’s size or complexity.

LDMI now offers businesses a complete portfolio of products and services, including everything from long distance, local service and voice mail to high speed DSL internet connections. And, their size and focus on the business customer allows for lower prices to the end user.

CEO Patrick O’Leary says the message is simple. “We may be the telecommunications company in a brown paper bag, but our business customers have been clear: they prefer the steak over the sizzle.”

The “steak” has earned LDMI Telecommunications much recognition, including being voted one of “Michigan’s Top Ten Privately Owned Companies” three consecutive years by Detroit Magazine.

For more information, please call LDMI at 1-888-532-5364.

NACS opposes DOL proposed rule on making unemployment insurance available under FMLA

In February NACS submitted comments opposing the Department of Labor’s (DOL) proposed rule creating an opt-in program enabling states to use their unemployment insurance funds to help support longer leave time for parents taking care of newborns or adopted children under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Except for a few states where there are small employee payments, the unemployment insurance system is financed by federal and state payroll taxes on employers, administered under Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) and Title III of the Social Security Act. According to the Labor Department’s Employment and Training Administration (ETA), weekly unemployment benefits nationwide in 1997 averaged about $200 per claimant. While ETA has recommended that claimants on family leave be eligible for benefits for up to 12 weeks, the average duration of benefits nationwide in 1997 was 14.6 weeks. Thus, each individual who takes family leave could be expected, under this proposed rule, to collect between $2,400 and $2,900. The Unemployment Insurance Working Group, of which NACS is a member, states that administrative costs could add $10 per week more to employers’ costs. This would bring the total to between $2,500 and $3,000 per employer who takes leave. This amount would be taken from the unemployment insurance trust fund accounts resulting in a total cost to the economy of between $15 billion and $18 billion.
Amendments proposed giving local government control over liquor licenses and regulating internet liquor sales

Two bills amending the Michigan Liquor Control Code were introduced recently. House Bill 5159 would give local government control over off-premise liquor licenses. AFD strongly opposes this bill.

According to the bill, an application for a license to sell alcoholic liquor for on or off premises, except in a city having a population of 750,000 or more, must be approved by the local legislative body where the business is located before the license is granted by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), except for a renewal of an existing license.

If an objection to a renewal has not been filed with the MLCC by the local legislative body not less than 30 days before the license expires, approval by the local legislative body is not required.

House Bill 4752, which has already passed the House, was created in an attempt to prohibit internet sales of alcohol to minors. The amendment would require alcohol sellers to be appropriately licensed under the laws of this state, pay any applicable taxes to the MLCC, comply with all prohibitions of this state including, but not limited to, sales to minors.

The seller would be required to verify the age of the individual purchasing the alcoholic liquor by obtaining the purchaser’s driver license number, date of birth, state of issuance, telephone number and address or other valid documentation of age and retain the information for four years after the transaction.

The bill would provide protection of the three-tiers of commerce requiring individuals to purchase directly from Michigan retailers.

It would also limit the amount of alcoholic liquor that can be purchased by an individual to not more than 312 ounces, containing less than 21 percent alcohol by volume.

The bill would also require shipping in containers with labeling on the outside in letters, not less than one inch in height, stating the following: “Contains alcoholic liquor, must be delivered to purchaser or designated adult only.”

Stop by Booth #251 at AFD’s Carnival of Savings for our Trade Show Specials!
State of Michigan to pay EBT transaction fees

Retailers will be partially reimbursed for the expenses they incur for using their own equipment to process EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) food stamp and cash transactions. But so far, reimbursement will only be for the first two years of statewide implementation. This means that no fees will be paid to retailers during the pilot in Jackson County in May 2000. During the first year of statewide implementation, however, retailers will receive two cents per transaction, and one and a half cents for each transaction processed during the second year. Michigan now joins the ranks of the Dakotas, Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin - states that reimburse retailers who use their own equipment to process EBT transactions. For more information, contact Elizabeth Tansing (202) 220-0638.

President to Sign EBT Bill

In a major victory for the food industry, the House passed the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Interoperability and Portability Act (S. 1733) on the first legislative day of this session of Congress. The bill, initiated by FMI and championed by Sen. Peter Fitzgerald (R-IL) and Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), will enable food stamp recipients to use their EBT cards at any store in any state. The bipartisan legislation unanimously passed the Senate on November 19, 1999, and is expected to be signed by President Clinton. Thanks to all who played a role in the grassroots campaign to make this happen. —FMI

EBT implementation news

The Food and Nutrition Service and the State of Michigan are pleased to inform you of the implementation of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in Michigan. The EBT program will change the method of delivery of Food Stamp and Cash Assistance benefits for FIA customers. The Michigan EBT program will eliminate paper food stamp coupons and paper cash checks by using an on-line system similar to commercial debit point-of-sale (POS) services. Food stamp and cash assistance benefits will be electronically transferred to an account linked to a FIA customer's debit card for use by customers. Funds for food stamp and cash purchases made at a retail establishment will be settled directly with the retailer's bank account through the Automated Clearing House (ACH).

Citicorp Services, Inc. (CSI) has been selected by the State of Michigan to provide Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) services to eligible FIA customers in Michigan. The current schedule calls for a pilot program to begin in Jackson County on May 1, 2000. Statewide rollout will continue during 2000 and until all clients are converted to EBT in early to mid 2001. A complete schedule will be published when finalized by the state. Once statewide, the total client population participating in EBT will be approximately 300,000 including 95,000 cash assistance customers.

Citicorp Services Inc. (CSI) will work with the State to plan, implement and operate the EBT project. This includes the management of retail participation. Representatives from CSI will conduct a number of meetings throughout the State to describe the program and the policies that govern retailer participation. CSI will also be available to answer your questions and provide assistance connecting your store to the Michigan EBT program.

In the near future, CSI will be mailing a short survey and informational package specifically designed to identify the current retail environment and to assist in planning for your participation in the program. Your input is valuable. Please provide the information requested so CSI can meet your needs during this transition.
United States
Census
2000

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Jim Beam, an American tradition for five generations

In 1788, the same year that the Constitution of the United States was ratified and took effect, Jacob Beam decided to move his family west. He loaded up his belongings, strapped his copper still to the back of his second-hand wagon and followed Daniel Boone’s trail through the Cumberland Gap.

As did many farmers, he headed 400 miles west to Kentucky. Called Bourbon Country in honor of the nation’s French allies during the Revolutionary War, the land held fertile soil, and fresh, spring water from gentle rains.

Mr. Beam was a farmer and miller by trade, and in addition to raising corn, hogs and fruit, he also built a water-driven mill where he could grind his neighbor’s corn for a percentage of their crop.

Extra grain was difficult to store and even tougher to get to market. Whiskey, Beam knew, provided the safest and most economical way to use surplus corn. It was easy to store, wasn’t subject to mildew, and considered even more valuable than the unstable Continental currency. People commonly paid for goods and services with whiskey.

Using his own still, Mr. Beam began producing an amber-colored whiskey made from a fermented mash of corn, rye and fruit. The product—which used more corn than anything else—was called bourbon, after the land it came from.

By 1811, the whiskey market was experiencing tremendous growth and Jacob Beam, along with his wife and 12 children, had a flourishing still. Jacob passed the family bourbon making traditions and leadership of the distillery on to his son, David, in 1820. David, his wife, and their 10 children continued the family business, keeping Jacob’s secret recipe close to their hearts.

During David’s tenure, the discovery of California gold brought hundreds of Americans west. New immigrants poured into America. At the same time the Erie Canal opened and also navigation on the Mississippi made the shipping of goods easier.

The whiskey industry benefited from this new growth.

David Beam turned over the reins to his son David M. Beam, who moved the distillery to Nelson County, Kentucky, closer to the railroad. David M. brought his son, James Beauregard Beam, into the business when he was 16. Jim took over the family distillery in 1894, and for the next 52 years, continued to preserve his great grandfather’s bourbon-making traditions and the family recipe.

During the time that Jim Beam headed the family business in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he faced increased government regulation. In 1897, Congress passed a bottled-in bond bill that protected consumers from counterfeiting by sealing bonded bottles with a green stripe label. Six years later, the Food and Drug Act of 1906 brought whiskey labels under federal regulation, touching off a debate over the definition of whiskey. Then in 1909, President William Howard Taft issued a legal decision defining whiskey types.

Jim Beam’s company continued to grow and prosper during the early 1900s until it was forced to shut down during Prohibition in 1919. During the 14 years of Prohibition, Beam sold all of his liquor holdings to take up citrus growing in Florida, then coal mining.

With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the 70-year-old Jim Beam returned to distilling and incorporated The James B. Beam Distilling Co. in Clermont, Kentucky, on August 14, 1934.

Booker Noe, Jim Beam’s grandson and the current master distiller emeritus of Jim Beam Bourbon, believes the reason his grandfather returned to making bourbon was to teach his son, T. Jeremiah Beam, the family’s bourbon-making traditions and to pass down the family recipe to the fifth generation of Beams.

“He cultured a strain of yeast, used in production to ferment the mash, upstairs at home in the attic where he kept a private stock of whiskey,” recalls Mr. Noe. He also remembers that his grandfather would take some of the precious yeast culture home on weekends, gently setting it beside him in his big black Cadillac—just in case some disaster would happen at the plant.

Just two years after the repeal of Prohibition, the bourbon industry was booming. Kentucky distillers purchased 1.5 million new white oak barrels for aging and paid more than $9 million in taxes, over one third of the state’s total revenue.

Eleven years later, in 1946, Jim Beam’s son, T. Jeremiah Beam, became president and treasurer of the James B. Beam Distilling Co. Jim Beam died one year later at the age of 83.

In the 1950s, the Beam Company revived the commemorative whiskey flasks that had been popular prior to the Civil War. Jim Beam produced numerous special bottles, including those commemorating the admission of Alaska and Hawaii to the Union and observing the centennials of other states. The bottles started a collecting craze and the formation of “Beam clubs.” One ceramic bottle known as the “First National Bank” edition was reportedly sold for $5,000.

Jeremiah must have been exceptionally proud of his family’s legacy when, in 1964, the U.S. Congress recognized bourbon as America’s Native Spirit. From that time on, no other country could legally produce a bourbon whiskey.

Jeremiah didn’t have any children to follow in his footsteps. However, he saw that his sister’s son, F. Booker Noe, Jr., had the family passion and talent for bourbon making. Jeremiah brought his nephew into the family distillery when he was 21 years old. At Jeremiah’s side, Booker learned the family bourbon-making traditions that had been passed down through five generations before him.

The Jim Beam distillery continues to use the same vintage yeast strain created by Jim Beam in 1934. Booker, who lives in the home his grandfather lived in at the turn of the century, keeps a copy of his family’s secret bourbon formula in a bank in Bardstown, Kentucky.

During Booker’s forty-year plus tenure at the distillery, production increased twelve times over.

In 1987, Booker introduced his own signature bourbon, Booker’s Bourbon. First created as a Christmas gift for special friends, Booker’s Bourbon is bottled straight from the barrel, uncut and unfiltered.

“It’s wonderful to see people today enjoying the same thing that their parents and grandparents enjoyed years before them,” he says. “I’m proud to see other families sharing and passing down the same enjoyment for Jim Beam Bourbon that has been passed down in the Beam family for 204 years.”
Jim Beam introduces VOX Vodka and Peach Pucker

In February, Jim Beam Brands Co. rolled out its newest spirit, VOX Vodka. Marketed as a luxury spirit, VOX is imported from the Netherlands.

“VOX combines the 400-year-old distillation expertise of the Netherlands, a country with a long legacy of excellent vodka, and meticulous distillation techniques,” said Nancy Litner, vice president of marketing for Jim Beam Brands Co. “The result is the finest ultra-premium vodka in the world and what we believe will be a new marketplace leader.”

Created from a mild, light grain of 100 percent wheat, VOX is an 80-proof vodka. It is distilled five times and then filtered to create its brilliant, clear colorless appearance.

VOX is distinctively packaged in a tall, column-shaped bottle made of Austrian glass designed by award-winner Laura Handler.

“VOX is a cool, crisp and wonderfully smooth spirit,” says Litner. “We believe it will have strong appeal to discriminating vodka and spirits drinkers and will soon prove the standard for the very best that vodka has to offer.”

This month, Jim Beam Brands Co., will introduce a new flavor to its DeKuyper Pucker line – peach. DeKuyper Peach Pucker Schnapps is billed as “Peach with a Punch.”

According to Jim Beam Brands Co., DeKuyper Pucker has become the hottest line of cordials, selling over 500,000 cases in 1999. “DeKuyper Peach Pucker adds yet another unique flavor dimension to the tremendously successful DeKuyper Pucker collection of Sour Apple, Watermelon, Cheri-Beri and Grape Pucker,” said Alan Cohen, vice president, brand management for Jim Beam Brands Co. “With DeKuyper Peach Pucker, we now offer consumers a virtual ‘rainbow’ of colorful and delicious sweet and sour cordials that are delicious shooters, and ideal ingredients in flavored martinis and margaritas.”

With the introduction of DeKuyper Peach Pucker, Jim Beam Brands Co. will capitalize on the popularity of the peach flavor and expects to bring new consumers into the Pucker Schnapps category.

Like the other products in the Pucker line, DeKuyper Peach Pucker is packaged in a clear bottle to showcase its intense peach color. Vibrant label graphics feature bold illustrations of fanciful peach halves, signifying the cordial’s burst of peach flavor.

The introduction of DeKuyper Peach Pucker will be supported with promotions including a shelf-talker that conveys the “Punch” slogan. It will be available in an array of sizes, from 50 ml to 1.75 liter.

Both VOX Vodka and DeKuyper Peach Pucker are distributed by Jim Beam Brands Co., an operating company of Jim Beam Brands Worldwide, Inc., an international distilled spirits and fine wines company that manufacturers and markets more than 80 brands in 160 countries. The company is a part of Fortune Brands, Inc. (NYSE:FO), the consumer products company.

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AfD on the Scene

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The Associated Food Dealers of Michigan is awarding academic scholarships worth $1,000 each to at least 20 extraordinary students.

Eligibility:
A high school senior, college freshman, sophomore or junior who is:
- a student employed by an AfD member company for at least 6 months as of January 1;
- and/or an applicant whose parent is a full or part time employee of an AfD member company, for at least one year as of January 1.

Special Rules:
- Only one scholarship will be awarded per AfD member company.
- At least 10 Merritt as well as at least 10 Minority Scholarships will be awarded.
- Applicants are eligible to win and receive a scholarship grant a maximum of two times.
- To be considered for an academic scholarship, an application must be completed and returned by March 20, 2000. To request an application, fill out the form below or call AfD at (248) 557-9600.

Selection of Winners:
Scholarship winners will be chosen in April by a panel of educators.
Winners will be notified by approximately May 1. Winners must enroll as full-time or part-time students for the fall college semester.

For more information, call AfD at (248) 557-9600
Detroit Edison’s “Partners in Excellence” Trade Ally Appreciation Night

January 21

Jonathon Haglund entertained.

Great start for Electronic Fund Transfers

The Liquor Control Commission processed its first Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) payment on Dec. 3 and the pilot program has been running so smoothly that it is being launched nearly statewide. The EFT payment program is aimed at making liquor orders more efficient for the state's 13,000 retail liquor licensees and eliminating the need to transact almost 2 million checks — if all licensees sign up for the program. The process is simple: licensees complete an authorization form allowing the Commission to withdraw funds from their account; a “Payment by EFT” message will appear on their liquor invoice once the authorization form has been processed; licensees sign their invoice at delivery to indicate approval for an EFT payment; and then funds are withdrawn electronically from licensees' accounts on the third day after delivery. The voluntary program was developed by the LCC in partnership with the CIS Office of Technology Resources, and the cooperation of the Department of Treasury.

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AFD’s “Escape to Monte Carlo” was a dazzling night of dining and dancing! The crowd of over 1,000 was dressed to the nines as guests mingled, munched, laughed and lingered on until the wee hours of the night.

Friday, February 4 at Penna’s of Sterling

The complimentary photo booth, sponsored by AirTouch Cellular was a big hit.

Thank you, Bob and Sasic Alfhouse of The Fleming Co. making the trip from Ohio for AFD’s special night.

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AFD board member, Jim Garrau and his wife, Bun.....looking good!

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