

# BottomLine



THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS // VOL. 32, NO. 8 // AUGUST 2021



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■ Lack of Labor Creates Opportunity // PAGE 8

■ BP to Take Full Ownership of Thorntons  
// PAGE 26



**NEW**  
AUGUST 23

# POWER UP YOUR SALES!



DOUBLE PLAY—A 2<sup>ND</sup> SET  
OF WINNING NUMBERS

NOW DRAWS MON WED SAT

Powerball is getting even better with the addition of Monday draws and the Double Play feature, which gives players a 2nd set of winning numbers each night. Now retailers have the opportunity to earn more commissions with every Powerball ticket sold! **Retailers will also receive \$5,000** for every Double Play top-prize winning ticket purchased at their location and redeemed for payment.

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DOUBLE PLAY - \$1 MORE PER PLAY  
POWERBALL DRAW AT 10:59 PM, DOUBLE PLAY DRAW AT 11:40 PM



Power Play increases non-jackpot prizes only and does not apply to Double Play prizes. Odds of winning Powerball/  
Double Play: 0+1: 1 in 39; 1+1: 1 in 92; 2+1: 1 in 702; 3+0: 1 in 580; 3+1: 1 in 14,495; 4+0: 1 in 36,526; 4+1: 1 in 913,130;  
5+0: 1 in 11,688,054; 5+1: 1 in 292,201,338. Overall odds of winning: 1 in 25.  
Knowing your limits is always the best bet. Call the Michigan Problem Gambling Helpline for confidential help at 1-800-270-7117.





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# BottomLine



THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS  
VOL. 32, NO. 8 // AUGUST 2021

## features



### LACK OF LABOR CREATES OPPORTUNITY

As the country has gone through a pandemic that closed many retail businesses across the United States, the convenience store industry proved to be quite resilient. It was able to grow inside store sales by 3.3% last year despite the foodservice category being down by double digits. As the foodservice category looks to rebound in the convenience store industry, it continues to be a struggle for many retailers due to simply not having enough help.



### COVER STORY // BACK TO VARIETY

In the summer of 2020, *The Wallstreet Journal* published an article title *Why the American Consumer Has Fewer Choices—Maybe for Good* with the overview focusing on how U.S. companies spent the past decades trying to please everyone. The pandemic made that impossible, and now some no longer plan to try.



### BP TO TAKE FULL OWNERSHIP OF THORNTONS

BP is taking full ownership of its Thorntons joint venture to increase its presence in the U.S. fuels and convenience retail industry, acquiring the majority share it does not already own in the Louisville, K.Y.-based convenience retailer from ArcLight Capital Partners LLC.





# president's message

EDWARD WEGLARZ // MIRA PRESIDENT & CEO

## Preparing for the Best...Planning for the Worst

**A**s I write this message my thoughts are racing trying to understand and predict the future, specifically regarding the Delta Version of the COVID-19 virus and all the possible permutations of any government restrictions or reactions to the “numbers” that are being bantered about.

I truly believe that the best course of action is move forward, preparing for the best, but still planning for the worst. We all need to keep the momentum of the businesses moving forward. Standing still is not an option. Standing still is an option that will drain your finances and degrade your enthusiasm to move forward.

All industries are facing some common problems like recruiting employees, experiencing blockages in the supply line that cause inventory shortages and competition from eCommerce. There are also permanent changes in the habits of consumers. Online shopping including prepared meals and grocery delivery, or curbside pickup will be around even after the Delta Version of the COVID-19 virus is long gone. If we don't change our processes to satisfy the needs, wants, and desires of the customer we are going to left behind in the business world.

If you haven't done so already you must begin to restructure your staff, your marketing, your offerings, your inventory, and your online presence to accommodate the changing whims of the customers. Remember, you lose customers for reasons beyond your control. Customers relocate, customers die, customers route to work or home changes, their health changes, all issues that are beyond your control. Therefore, you need to add new customers to your base.

Additionally, you need to implement procedures to increase the number of items that your current customers buy from you. I recommend requiring your employees to ask your present customers what items they purchase somewhere else that you could provide at your store. That help increase your sales, saves the customer time and trouble, and he/she is less likely to change where they shop.

On the cautious side, realistically stop up on COVID-19 customer and employee items. Don't go overboard and “hoard”. But maintain an adequate supply of sanitizer, gloves, masks, disinfectant, etc. just in case another restriction is imposed by the government agencies. Actually, this is prime to purchase those goods since some wholesalers are having sales on COVID-19 related PPE.

Remember to look over the selection of programs that offered by MIRA, right on our website at [www.MIRAmw.org](http://www.MIRAmw.org). Program changes are made every month, keep up to date. ■

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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### EMERITUS DIRECTOR

Phil Kassa	Heartland Marketplace/ Saturn Food Center
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– DISCOUNTS –



# MIRA MEMBER EXCLUSIVE

Members with questions call the MIRA office at 1-800-666-6233



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*As a participating retailer, you'll:*

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- Offer an environmentally friendly recycling service at no charge
- Eliminate the need for your customers to wait for tanks to be filled

1

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We will walk you through the application process, obtain licensing on your behalf where applicable, and get you all set up so that you can start selling propane.

2

### Training & Displays

Once you're all set up, we'll train your staff on the program and its benefits and outfit your store with a 24-tank, or larger, storage display cage, promotional signage and marketing collateral.

3

### Away You Go

Finally, our logistics team will fill your cage and coordinate regular propane deliveries based on your sales volumes in order to maximize your stores' propane sales.

TO SIGN UP FOR THIS PROGRAM, CALL MIRA AT (800) 666-6233 OR EMAIL IT TO [INFO@MIRAMW.ORG](mailto:INFO@MIRAMW.ORG).





EVENT RECAP //

## Hitting the Green Pre-Covid Style

MIRA's 45th Annual Michigan Golf Open 2021 resembled the outing of past years, pre-COVID-19, with the dinner back inside the ballroom at Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center in Plymouth. This year, 230 golfers teed off and hit 18 holes – each sponsored by a different company.

"This is a great event," said Mark Seman, an avid golfer. "I get invited to play by Ron Garmo of Running Right Heating & Cooling and MIRA always puts on a top-notch golf outing. Fox Hills is a great course to play."

"It is one of the best golf outings in town," said Andrew Perlin, golfing in the Running Right foursome. "Our team loves golfing this course and attending this event. The food is always good and the raffle prizes are items you want to win."

"A big difference this year from last year was having two courses, since we were only able to have one last year," said Andrea Hesano, MIRA event coordinator. "COVID-19 hit us hard last year and we were able to overcome the challenges this year."

Like in past years, MIRA raffled off several prizes including a Dyson Vacuum, Apple iPad, Apple Watch, Apple AirPods, Apple Homepod Mini, Keurig, LG 55" TV, Bose Soundlink Mini, two liquor baskets, Red Wings basket, golf basket, coolers & a firepit.

Every year there is a list of companies that support the annual outing; 25 different companies sponsored the event this year.

"We have been sponsoring it for 15 to 20 years," said Tony Franchi, senior vice president of sales for Lipari Food. "It's so great to get back to normal and be back inside

the banquet hall here. It is such a fun event, meeting with people in our industry. It is why

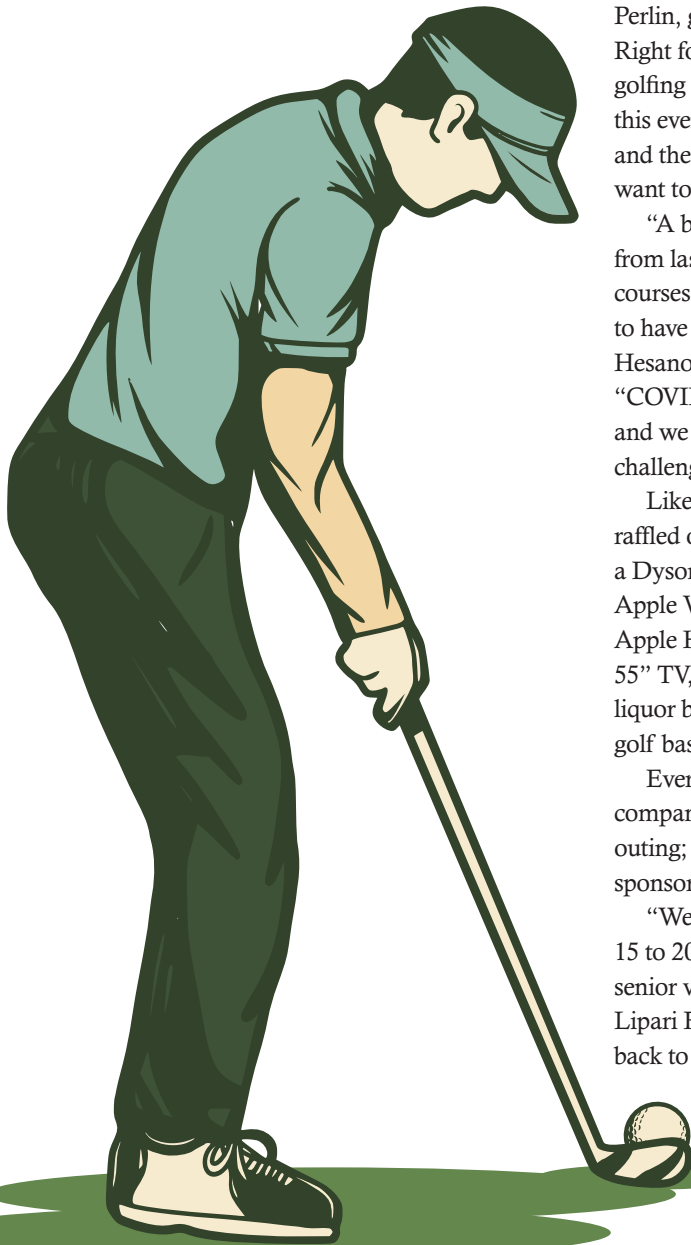
we attend. I golf, not particularly good, but it's always a great time."

His sons golf, but Saad Abbo attends mainly for the conversations. "This golf outing is the best place to meet people in the industry," said Saad Abbo, owner of U.S. Ice. "It's in the top best five events to attend every year. No one should ever miss this outing."

"Prairie Farms believes in supporting the community," said Dave Orlando, regional sales manager at Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. "We have been part of MIRA for many years. It is a great organization that gives all members a platform and we will always support MIRA and their events."

Auday Arabo, former MIRA president and CEO, attended the event as the president and CEO of Benchmark Beverage Company, who was one of the many event sponsors. "MIRA was created to help retailers and Benchmark was created with the same ethos," said Arabo. "When they asked us to sample some of our products, we were happy to supply the samples because our philosophy is 'liquid to lips' meaning the more people who try it, the more people like the products. We sponsor the event, because it's a win/win scenario."

In addition to the raffle prizes, MIRA also offered a cash prize raffle. The winner of the 50/50 raffle took home a \$1,000. "Thank you to all of our members who sponsored the 45th Annual Golf Open," said Ed Weglarz, MIRA president and CEO. "And thanks to all of our golfers who come out and support this event every year." ■





A photograph of three diverse people (two men and one woman) sitting at a table in a cafe, smiling and looking towards the left. The man on the left is holding a coffee cup. The background features exposed brick walls and industrial-style pipes.

# A FORCE FOR GOOD

Strong communities are the foundation of a healthy, thriving environment for all people. That's why you can count on DTE Energy to support local organizations that are having a real impact. We are proud to partner with MIRA.

**DTE**





## Tis the Season to Tailgate

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

Bob Vila, an American home improvement television show host known for *This Old House* and *Home Again*, shared his tailgating tips with viewers. Vila appropriately noted on his website, “changing leaves and a brisk chill in the air are signs that it’s that time of the year—tailgating season.” MIRA members are adding to his list of tailgating essentials to pack.

Whether you’re fans of the Detroit Lions, Chicago Bears, Indianapolis Colts, Cincinnati Bengals or Cleveland Browns or any of the college teams, you will need specific items for your tailgating parties. There is the hardware list that Vila shares and then the food and beverage list offered up by MIRA members.

Tailgaters will need a cooler to store your grocery items, covered in ice preferably and a grill to cook the food. “The must’s are brats, hot dogs, burgers, ribs and chicken wings,” said Phil Kassa, co-owner of Heartland Marketplaces. As for

the beverages, “Tito’s with Tonic or made into Bloody Mary’s, Fireball ice cold or mixed with cider (hot or cold to your groups preference), Tequila for margaritas, Screwball shot,” said Michael Cavin, Sales Manager for RNDC.

Store owners might want to also consider stocking portable beach chairs equipped with overhead protection to shield people from strong rays, rain, or snow to help you kick back and relax with a burger and beer at the tailgate.

Along with condiments for burgers and brats, most stores carry barbecue utensils and other needed items like disposable trays, bottle openers, bags of ice and ice packs as well as paper products to add to the list of needed items.

Tailgating was pretty much non-existent in 2020 due to the pandemic. “There really wasn’t much of a tailgating season last year,” said Cavin. “I’m aware of some family planned driveway activities prior to games, but that was about it.”

Although it is expected to be better than last year, there is

not a consensus of how much better it will be. “I am not sure if it will be like in years prior to COVID-19, but it will for sure be an improvement from last year,” said Kassa. “It’s definitely going to be better than 2020 and we are preparing party wings, ribs and subs.”

“I think it will be booming,” said Cavin. “Everyone loves football and getting together to share food and friendship.”

The isolation during COVID-19 shutdowns shutdown many seasonal events like football games and tailgating. “COVID-19 taught us all to not take our personal contact with friends and family for granted. Spending quality time with each other is paramount,” said Cavin.

Many businesses are trying to get back to a pre-COVID-19 normal. “Whether it’s right or wrong, we really haven’t changed our marketing strategy,” said Kassa. “We’re still pushing fresh, fast and friendly service. We are not really pushing pick-up or delivery service, because we need customers to physically walk into our stores. We do offer delivery through Insta-Cart, but we don’t really advertise it.”

Other items stores might consider carrying for tailgaters are items to play with like a football to toss around or a frisbee to throw. Also, folding tables and even a small tent cover. Some establishments have specific areas in the store for seasonal items such as those listed. These specific sections enable stores to market to each season. ■







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## c-store news & views

JIM GREEN // MIRA VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

### Lack of Labor Creates Opportunity

As the country has gone through a pandemic that closed many retail businesses across the United States, the convenience store industry proved to be quite resilient. It was able to grow inside store sales by 3.3% last year despite the foodservice category being down by double digits. As the foodservice category looks to rebound in the convenience store industry, it continues to be a struggle for many retailers due to simply not having enough help. The industry continues to face a shortage of labor and the escalating cost of labor, and every retailer is faced with the challenge of how to best service their customers without having enough help. It is very easy to just look at this as a problem, but I would encourage members to view this as an enormous opportunity with their customers. How you solve this issue for your store can impact your sales for years to come.

Recently I stopped in a convenience store that is a large chain retailer for a coffee and a breakfast sandwich. This retailer is known to have an assortment of warm breakfast sandwiches in a hot grab-n-go oven. After I got my cup of coffee, I went to get a breakfast sandwich and there weren't any. When I asked the clerk if they were out, she apologized and said that they simply do not have enough help to keep up and they did not have any ready. This was not unique to this location and this type of scenario is playing out with numerous retailers across the country. It is not just convenience store retailers either, McDonalds, Burger King, Wendy's, Dunkin Donuts, etc. are all struggling with staffing issues as

well. Wait times are long and many locations have signs up asking customers to be patient due to their shortage of help. Consumers, more than ever, are looking for a retail location where they can get food at a reasonable price and not have to wait fifteen minutes. This has created an opportunity in the market for independent retailers to take advantage of. Every independent operator should lean in and make foodservice a priority.

This is obviously a dilemma for retailers. How can they make foodservice a priority if they do not have the labor necessary to execute properly? By keeping it simple, that is how! If you do not have enough labor, then don't try to do too much. Focus on low labor, high quality solutions. When it comes to breakfast, focus on donuts and breakfast sandwiches. This will satisfy the largest number of your customers. Tyson makes several great breakfast sandwiches that can be offered in a hot grab-n-go oven. If you are not familiar with them, I suggest that you look at the Big AZ and Jimmy Dean breakfast sandwiches. You simply heat them and then put them on your hot grab-n-go shelf. For lunch and dinner continue to utilize your hot grab-n-go with Big AZ Burgers and Big AZ Chicken sandwiches. You can also add pizza. Bellarico's and DaVinci's Pizza offer turn-key pizza programs reducing prep time so even the smallest convenience retailers can add this foodservice offering to their lineup. It is simple to execute, even when you only have one cashier on duty. The pizza is already assembled. You simply bake, cut, package, and display in a box in your hot grab-n-go oven.

All the products I just recommended offer MIRA members a rebate to help with the cost of goods. These products must be ordered through S. Abraham and Sons, Team Sledd or McAneny Brothers to qualify. If you have not offered these programs in the past, this is the perfect time to get started. Consumers are seeking out retailers that are offering quality foodservice products in which they do not have to wait to get their food. ■

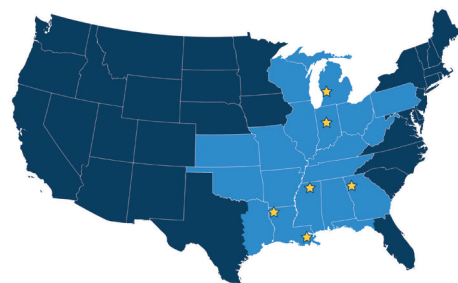


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# ohio lobbyist report

TERRY FLEMING // TC FLEMING & ASSOCIATES

## Legislature Home Till the Fall

The Ohio General Assembly completed work on Ohio's two year operating budget by passing HB 110, which was then signed by the Governor. The good news, and it's all good, is the \$74 billion budget contained no tax increases and, in fact, cut the state income tax for individuals by 3.5% and instead of 5 rates they eliminated the top rate so now there's only 4. The bill also contained a number of tax incentives for small businesses and as mentioned before you should have your accountant or lawyer check with tax department to see if you qualify for any of the tax cuts or incentives.

Working with the Ohio Tobacco Coalition, MIRA was successful in keeping out language that would have allowed the Cleveland Arts Council to receive more money by increasing taxes on tobacco products. The budget also increased spending for Ohio school's – something they've been trying to do for over 30 years. The towing industry was successful in getting their language in the bill that would require only two letters be sent for vehicles under \$3,500 that have been sitting in lots. This will go into effect on September 28th, of this year. With a \$74 billion budget bill being over 2,000 pages, the various state agencies all have some issues in this bill.

Other legislative issues include SB 40, which sets minimum markup for wholesalers selling to retailers. This bill has passed and was signed by the Governor. You can check with MIRA for details on this bill. A number of bills are still pending, one of which is HB 46. This bill would do away with renewing liquor permits in 2021 for certain liquor permit holders. However, this bill did not move and, since it was only



for 2021, it will not move, so if you're a liquor permit holder you need to renew. There are a number of bills still being heard dealing with electric cars and charging stations and ethanol tax credits that are still on hold.

In political news, there will be two special elections for open Congressional seats in August, the 11th and 15th districts. The 11th district will most likely be won by Nina Turner a current State Senator, while in the 15th district there are 11 people running with Coal Lobbyist Mike Carey the likely winner due to his endorsement by former President Trump. The race to replace retiring Ohio U.S. Senator next year got a jolt when J.D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy*, announced he was running and his PAC received a \$10 million dollar donation from Pay Pal owner Peter Thiel.

Next year, 2022, will be a huge election year in Ohio with new Congressional Districts and State Legislative Districts, along with all members of the Ohio House and Senate and all statewide elected officials. Enjoy your summer and lets hope the lack of employee's improves over the next 4 months. ■



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All the time.

### Details:

New & current customers are eligible for the following rebates:

- 2% Non-Tobacco/Non-Cigarette
- Additional 1% on Energy Supplements (Total of 3%)
- Additional 2% on Foodservice products (Total of 4%)
- Additional 2% on Supplies (Total of 4%)

### Requirements:

Customer must purchase the following categories:

- Cigarettes
- OTP
- Energy Supplements
- Supplies
- Coffee (If offered by retail operator)

Customer needs to average \$3,500 in total weekly purchases

Customer needs to purchase 12 out of the 13 weeks per quarter

Customer must maintain good credit standing

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**\$1,350** Estimated Rebate\*  
(Annual Total Paid Quarterly)

**\$2,000** Est. MIRA Member  
Program Savings

**\$3,350** Total Member Benefits  
PER LOCATION

\* Based on \$1,000 non-tobacco purchases weekly

For more information on Team Sledd, call the office at **800.333.0374**  
or E-mail Sheila Reilly at [SReilly@TeamSledd.com](mailto:SReilly@TeamSledd.com)





# michigan liquor report

PAT GAGLIARDI // CHAIR, MICHIGAN LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

## Violation Hearings

**T**he Michigan Liquor Control Commission is composed of five members (commissioners) appointed by the governor.

Last fall, Governor Whitmer appointed two new “hearing” commissioners to the MLCC, Lee Gonzales and Edward Toma whose terms began October 5, 2020, and will run through June 12, 2024. They replaced Commissioners Clemente and Jacobsen whose terms expired.

They join three “administrative” commissioners: GERALYN Lasher, Dennis Olshove and me. We are responsible for all matters pertaining to licensing, purchasing, merchandising and enforcement, and act as an appeal board for decisions rendered by the hearing commissioners.

Basically, the hearing commissioners work to ensure the public welfare; that scrupulous licensees stay within the rules and unscrupulous licensees aren’t operating. They adjudicate formal hearings regarding licensee violations such as sales to minors and intoxicated individuals, dishonored payments to the State, illegal acts, and ordinance violations. Unless appealed, hearing commissioners’ decisions and orders have legal finality.

When a hearing is scheduled, one of the commissioners or an administrative law judge will preside over the hearing. Hearings are based upon a complaint that alleges a violation of the Michigan Liquor Control Code, MCL 436.1101, et seq., or rules promulgated under the Code. Witnesses and evidence are provided by the Assistant Attorney General and MLCC’s Enforcement Division and law enforcement agencies as well as from the licensee and the licensee’s attorney (if the licensee obtained an attorney). The MLCC, upon due notice and proper hearing, may suspend or revoke any license. Violation hearings are completely processed and conducted by and through the MLCC.

The number of hearings per year varies. Right now, the MLCC is not conducting as many hearings as we were pre-COVID-19, but we are working back to those numbers. Based on the number we are doing currently, a safe estimate is between 1,000 to 1,500 hearings scheduled annually (multiple individual violation hearings for each date).

Pre-COVID-19, there were multiple hearing sites: Lansing, Grand Rapids, Southfield, Escanaba, Cadillac, Gaylord, Marquette, Pittsfield Township, Port Huron, Portage, St. Ignace, Sterling Heights, and Swartz Creek. This enabled the MLCC to hold hearings more frequently without having to wait for a certain number of violations within a given area. For the past year and for the

foreseeable future, we will continue conducting hearings via Zoom.

Prior to being appointed, Commissioner Toma served in MLCC’s Enforcement Division since 2009; 11 years as a state investigator and regulation agent. In his role, he conducted enforcement, background, and licensing investigations as well as financial audits and undercover operations for the MLCC. Before joining the MLCC staff, he worked in the alcohol retail and restaurant industry for several years. Commissioner Toma holds a Bachelor of Integrative Studies in Mechanical Engineering and Biological Science from Oakland University.

He recently shared a few thoughts about his new job:

### **GIVEN YOUR BACKGROUND WORKING IN MLCC’S ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, HAS IT IMPACTED YOUR PERSPECTIVE OR NEW RESPONSIBILITIES?**

Being an investigator has allowed me to understand why a violation against the Code, Rule or Statute was issued. That knowledge and experience has allowed me to fully understand the severity of the violation and the circumstances that caused the violation to occur before a penalty is issued.

I have a greater appreciation for the MLCC staff and all the great work that they do to deliver the highest level of customer service. The MLCC is not only running a more than a \$1.8 billion business, but it is also a regulatory agency with many components. Staff, many with decades of experience and dedication in licensing, finance, enforcement, and hearings and appeals, make this agency an exemplary business model.

### **WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING PART OF YOUR JOB?**

Putting all the puzzle pieces together to see the big picture before rendering a decision. All the witness testimony, evidence and the story presented by the licensee toward making their case must come together so I can get a clear understanding of the situation before determining a penalty. Although the charges may be the same from one file to another with similar violations, the circumstances surrounding each violation is different. Evaluating the evidence and testimony, and rendering a fair decision based on what is being presented is crucial.

### **SINCE YOUR APPOINTMENT, WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED AND/OR WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU THE MOST IN YOUR NEW ROLE?**

I have been pleasantly surprised to learn how creative licensees were during the COVID-19 pandemic to generate revenue and take

---

**MICHIGAN LIQUOR**  
*continued on page 14.*

**SAXON**  
INCORPORATED

GET OUR **NEW!**  
**LIQUOR ORDERER™**  
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- **MLCC** customer notification direct to the app
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Quantity  
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3	6	12	24
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# government relations report

JUAN ESCAREÑO // MIRA DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## A Half Mile Closer

*“There is no such thing as backing a winner; for he cannot be a winner when he is backed. There is no such thing as fighting on the winning side; one fights to find out which is the winning side.”*

– G.K. CHESTERTON

**R**ecently the Michigan Liquor Control Commission introduced language for a new rule to allow local municipalities to reinstate a half-mile rule for new locations. This is a direct result of the work MIRA has been working on for our members with liquor licenses. The rule was just introduced to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs in July and we anticipate this rule being in effect within the next year. The process for a rule change is long to ensure all the parties that may be impacted have an opportunity to evaluate the impact. The new rule will allow municipalities to use a half-mile when

reviewing new locations. The Michigan Liquor Control Commission would use the municipal governments recommendation when determining licensing. This gives MIRA an opportunity to work with our member stores on the local level wanting to see their city government enact such a requirement for future locations.

In most towns, and cities, such a requirement is important to ensure we don't dilute the opportunity for a store to make a living on a fixed cost item while at the same time reducing the over saturation of liquor in their cities.

Again, this creates an opportunity in the near future for you to approach your local government and advocating this type of smart planning. The destruction of the half-mile rule in a control state leaves retailers selling a fixed item to less and less people as the competition is increased. We have been opposed to the elimination of the rule from the beginning and this rule introduction is a direct result of our continued push to get some sort of half-mile rule implemented.

Part of working in the political arena is being realistic with the tools we have and the relationships we can work with. Would we have wanted this years ago? Yes, but the reality was that everything needed to advance this cause of ours was not there. This has been a process we have been working towards for years. Change for the good takes time. The cliché applies well here, “good things come to those that wait.” ■

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### MICHIGAN LIQUOR *continued from page 12.*

advantage of the opportunities provided by the Commission and the legislature to do business during the pandemic, including cocktails-to-go and the establishment of outdoor service areas.

#### HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR ROLE IN UPHOLDING THE MLCC'S MISSION OF PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY?

The role of a hearing commissioner is extremely important as it acts as the first line of defense in protecting the public's health and safety. My job is to address any operating concerns brought by the Enforcement Division and to determine if a fine, suspension or revocation is necessary to prevent a licensee from putting public health and safety at risk. Another big part of my job is educating licensees about a process they might be unfamiliar with, or the Code and Rules, to prevent further violations.

#### DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR MESSAGE FOR LIQUOR LICENSEES?

Use MLCC's website; it has a lot of great information that you need to know to do business. Take advantage of the many resources that are available online at [www.michigan.gov/lcc](http://www.michigan.gov/lcc).

Contact MLCC's district offices and talk with MLCC staff any time you have questions or need clarification on the Code or Rules to avoid the potential for unnecessary violations. While I understand that mistakes can and do occur, a lot of those errors or oversights can be avoided with a phone call to staff or a look at the MLCC website. ■

*It is the mission of the MLCC to make alcoholic beverages available for consumption while protecting the consumer and the general public through the regulation of those involved in the importation, sale, consumption, distribution, and delivery of these alcohol products.*

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# Back to Variety

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*



In the summer of 2020, *The Wallstreet Journal* published an article titled *Why the American Consumer Has Fewer Choices—Maybe for Good* with the overview focusing on how U.S. companies spent the past decades trying to please everyone. The pandemic made that impossible, and now some no longer plan to try. In that same article, the paper used IGA Inc. as an example citing that “some IGA grocery stores now offer only four choices of toilet paper. A few months ago, before the coronavirus pandemic, IGA’s 1,100 U.S. stores typically carried about 40 varieties.”

MIRA members are weighing in on the value of offering a variety of products and what the future has in store on the issue. “First and foremost, the supply chain is broken, because there just aren’t any employees,” said Phil Kassa, co-owner of Heartland Marketplaces. “We can’t get deliveries on time because our suppliers don’t have drivers, and our suppliers are behind because they can’t get products from the manufacturers.”

Kassa used the example of Miller Poultry no longer offering specialty cut chicken parts, because they don’t have the labor to produce the products. “They are just keeping us in business with higher volume SKUs,” he noted. “Our shelves are low





because companies like SpartanNash or Lipari are roughly 24 to 30 hours behind on deliveries, and even at that, we can't get full and accurate deliveries. It has been a struggle to keep shelves full."

Offering a variety of products to its customers is not an issue for RNDC, but supplies are a problem. "Variety is fairly good, but the supply on certain items is limited. Imported goods are struggling due to glass shortages and shipping challenges," said Michael Cavin, Sales Manager for RNDC. "Overall, variety stayed pretty solid but again, imported goods and rare bourbons have been challenging to get in supply."

The Pandemic gave grocers some perspective. "COVID made us realize we don't need all these different varieties that take up space, and eventually expire," said Kassa. "Most customers made it without 15 kinds of mac & cheese or 50 different varieties of salad dressings. They bought what we had to offer."

Not all stores faced the same challenges. "We are getting all the variety we need," said Roy Rabban. "Save-a-Lot is different. Even during the pandemic, we didn't face that issue. We are a national company with our own warehouses and contractors supplying us a certain amount. We are not a high-volume store like places like Sam's Clubs and Meijer's."

For RNDC, there were specific products that were unavailable because of the pandemic such as limited supplies of tequila, cognac, scotches, and rare bourbons.

Retailers and suppliers alike are focusing on the future and moving forward. "Inventories on challenged items is getting better and I believe that the worst of the outages is over. New bourbons and flavored whiskey entries are coming out monthly. There are also some new tequila lines arriving," said Cavin.

The food and beverage industry continues to evolve as the world moves passed the Coronavirus pandemic.

"During COVID-19, paper products, cleaning supplies, disinfectants, and canned vegetables were hard to come by, but now, most of the products are coming back in stock – maybe not all the varieties, but there is representation," said Kassa.

"Hopefully, the supply chain will be back to normal when the enhanced unemployment benefits end, and people are forced to go back to work. As far as business, I can't complain," noted Kassa.

Kassa added, "we are including more prepared and pre-packaged items because of our struggles with labor. We are adding more pre-packaged deli, bakery, and

meat items where we just price and date the products instead of preparing them at the stores. To our surprise, customers response has been mostly positive.

The COVID-19 impact exposed the fact that consumers were addicted to endless varieties and not only did the pandemic put that issue into perspective, but it also changed the way retailers service customers.

"We are also adding more self-checkouts at our locations, because we can't hire cashiers," said Kassa. "Again, because of COVID-19, customers are accepting the fact that we are still trying to service them, but in a different way."

Bobby Hesano, president and CEO of D&B Grocers Wholesale and Distributors predicts that by the first quarter of 2022, the industry will be back to a normal of offering a variety of products. "You cannot survive without variety, because you lose shelf space and ultimately will lose market share," said Hesano. "The consumers love variety and that is why vendors make variety. When you have 17 varieties that shrink down to six, you lose shelf space and then market share. The consumer loves it, because it gives them choices. It's no different than going to Baskin Robbins for 31 flavors. The deals will also come back. This time next year, we will back to normal."

While the industry waits to get back to a pre-COVID-19 stock inside their businesses, costs of doing business continues to increase. Rising commodity and other costs are the top external concern among food and beverage industry executives surveyed by the tax, audit and advisory firm Mazars USA for its 2021 industry outlook. One-quarter of respondents, who included a mix of manufacturing, wholesale/distribution and restaurant executives, said they were "very concerned" by this factor, while delivery costs also ranked within the top three.

According to [www.fooddrive.com](http://www.fooddrive.com), "from food commodities to transportation, increasing costs have been the hallmark of the post-COVID-19 era. Prices for corn, soybeans and wheat recently hit their highest level in eight years, while oil is at a two-year high.

Many large food and beverage manufacturers have looked to pass along these higher costs to consumers in the form of price increases, with Coca-Cola, Unilever, Nestlé, Mondeléz International and General Mills as just a few taking this route." ■

*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for Bottom Line.*





## What are Some Products You Have a Hard Time Keeping in Stock?



“Water and the entire beverage category have been items that are hard to keep in supply. The entire paper product line, as well as has been tough to keep in stock but that will start to change.”

– **BOBBY HESANO** // D & B GROCERS WHOLESALE AND DISTRIBUTORS



“Almost everything is hard to get in like tequila, bourbon, you name it. High Noon Hard Seltzer was out, a \$10,000 Miller order went down to a \$5,000 order because of it being out of stock. They keep saying it will get better, but we are waiting. That is what is going on. It’s everything. People are not working.”

– **CLIFF DENHA** // THE WINE PALACE



“Coke was out of 2 liters of Coke, Diet Coke and Sprite, six-pack bottles were out of stock as well. We had a \$26,000 liquor order and we got in about \$8,000 worth of the liquor. Distillery can’t get class to bottle products. It is all on the supply chain. They can’t get people to work, and they can’t get the raw materials to make things.”

– **JERRY CRETE** // IDEAL PARTY STORES



“Cognac has been the toughest and tequila has been tough. Some of the liquors have been so difficult to keep in stock.”

– **FRANK AYAR** // WALTER’S SHOPPING PLACE



“I have the products. That is not the problem for me. The problem is that I cannot get the product out to my customer, because I don’t have the drivers. I can’t get employees to drive the trucks to distribute the ice. It’s a big problem.”

– **SAAD ABBO** // U.S. ICE



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## Detroit Chemical and Paper Supply Share Their Philosophy



■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

**T**hey operate with the philosophy to provide great products, at competitive prices, while providing consultative service and to ask the question: “What can we do to help our customers today?”

Headquartered in Warren, Michigan, Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply is housed in a 50,000 square-foot facility. Since their humble beginnings in 1978, locally owned Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply has become a leading janitorial and sanitary supply company in Michigan. Now reaching the JANSAN top 10% in size as a distributor nationally.

Becoming a MIRA member just made business sense. “Although the industries we serve vary, the retail stores and markets of MIRA members have been an opportunity to help hundreds of business owners access world class JANSAN chemical and paper products at significant savings,” said Terry Radzinski, VP & Operating Partner.

Radzinski explains that the company is consultative in nature meaning, “Our dedicated sales and customer service staff will share decades of expertise to recommend the best programs and products for each individual business,” he said. “In most cases, we will also save you money on your current product usage. Our customers often say we have the best service within our industry.” Although in a competitive industry, Detroit Chemical has distinctive traits that sets them apart of others which includes experience, expertise, consultative service and size. “As a leading distributor we are able to access the best products, at competitive prices, with genuinely caring service experts. We believe in giving customers what they want when they want it,” said Radzinski.

Like many distributor industry businesses, the COVID-19 pandemic forced Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply to pivot. “The pandemic and government guidelines challenged and allowed us to prove our consultative nature to providing programs and

product solutions to best help our customers operate their businesses,” said Radzinski. “As large as we are, if we couldn’t get product from manufacturers timely, we found alternatives. Overall, it was a great learning experience and helped us grow into an even more versatile provider.”

Despite the pandemic, Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply is growing. “We recently moved into a nearly 50,000 square foot facility in Warren to stock more of what businesses need, so you get it even faster,” said Radzinski. “Even in 2020 we hired sales, warehouse, drivers and bought new trucks as we continue to grow into 2021.”

Many MIRA members already know of Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply’s consultative nature when it comes to servicing their businesses. They are asking people to tell a friend. “We hope MIRA members share their experiences with others,” said Radzinski. “We would love the opportunity to consult other companies and quote them a JANSAN program. The savings and access to world class products we provide will be evident once we meet and share our decades of expertise!”

They also produced a video to explain their company. It’s their “Who we are” video. It can be found on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/Foa7b-tzROM>.

Detroit Chemical and Paper Supply share their philosophy:

### OUR EXPERIENCE

Many of our staff have been in the JANSAN industry and/or with Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply 10, 20, 28 and 30+ years providing our customers experience and expertise in providing the cleaning chemicals and paper supplies your business needs to compete in today’s marketplace.

### OUR CUSTOMERS

Many Michigan businesses find our experience and expertise as a leading distributor helpful in deciding the best solutions to run their businesses, like Little Caesars Arena, MJR Theaters, Ford Field, DTE Energy Music Theatre, food plants, and hundreds of healthcare facilities, c-stores and markets.

### OUR PRODUCTS

With more than 40 years of relationships in the JANSAN industry, Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply negotiates pricing contracts with global leaders like Essity/Tork, Georgia Pacific, Dial, Clorox, Lysol, Sunburst, Betco, Arrow, Sofidel, Solaris, Stoner, Zenex, and many more to provide the best products and programs at competitive prices. ■

*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for Bottom Line.*



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## OSHA Initiative Seeks to Protect Manufacturing Workers in Midwest Facilities from Hazardous Noise Levels



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Region V OSHA, which includes Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, issued a press release announcing a Regional Emphasis Program (REP) for Exposure to Noise Hazards in the Workplace. The goal of the

REP is to encourage employers to take steps to identify, reduce, and eliminate hazards associated with exposure to high levels of noise. The enforcement directive was issued on June 01, 2021. Prior to the initiation of enforcement, a three-month period of education and compliance assistance to the public will be conducted to support the efforts of the Agency

in meeting the goals of the REP. Enforcement related to this REP will begin on September 1, 2021.

By law, OSHA requires employers to implement a hearing conservation program when the average noise exposure over eight working hours reaches or exceeds 85 decibels, which the Centers for Disease Control compares to the sound of city traffic (from inside the vehicle) or a gas-powered leaf blower.

Nearly one in 10 people endure noise levels at work loud enough to cause hearing loss while seven in 10 experiences moderately loud noise levels, reports the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Yet, the bureau's Occupational Requirements Survey, published in 2019, found that more than half of the nation's manufacturing workers reported not using personal protective equipment to protect their hearing.

For a complete list of North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes covered by this REP, go to [OSHA2021994NOISEREP.pdf](#) (dol.gov). If you do not know your NAICS code you can search MANTA and list your business name as well as city and state.

For questions or additional information, please contact Sedgwick's Jim Wirth at 614.546.7331 or [jim.wirth@sedgwick.com](mailto:jim.wirth@sedgwick.com)

### TRANSITIONAL WORK GRANT UPDATE

Helping employers get their injured workers back to work as soon as safely possible, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation launched its revamped Transitional Work Grant (TWG) program June 1, offering free grants and guidance worth thousands of dollars.

To encourage participation, the agency removed its 3-to-1 matching requirement for grants as well as its one-grant-per-lifetime limit. Employers are now eligible for 100% reimbursement up to their approved grant maximum, and one grant every five years.

"Transitional work programs work – they help injured workers stay on the job or get back to work more quickly, and they save employers resources when it comes to lost production, hiring and training substitute workers, and claims costs," said BWC Interim Administrator/CEO John Logue.

BWC also added services to the TWG program that help employers manage an injured worker's return to work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another service assists employers in managing their workspace for health and safety during COVID-19.

Employers with a transitional work plan actively participate in the recovery and return to work of their employees. Injured employees can resume their work functions with minimal time off, and employers are better prepared to place an injured employee in a job or given work tasks consistent with any medical or physical restrictions.

Transitional work grants are based on the employer's number of employees and range from \$2,900 to \$6,300. To learn more, visit Transitional Work Programs on BWC's website or email questions to [TWSupport@bwc.state.oh.us](mailto:TWSupport@bwc.state.oh.us). ■

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## Merchants Welcome President's Order on Competition

The coalition seeks to reduce U.S. swipe fees, the highest in the world

■ BY NACS ONLINE

The *Merchants Payments Coalition*, which represents retailers and others fighting for a more competitive, transparent card system, said it welcomes an executive order on competition signed by President Joe Biden and calling for its principles to be applied to address lack of competition in the payments market.

"The clear message is that the Biden Administration supports competition across all sectors of the economy and wants to tear down barriers to fair and open markets," said Doug Kantor, general counsel of NACS and MPC executive committee member. NACS was a founding member of the Merchants Payments Coalition.

"Swipe fees charged by the credit and debit card industry are anti-competitive and harmful to Main Street businesses," Kantor said. "With this executive order, we welcome action by the Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission, banking regulators and other agencies to bring an end to anticompetitive practices in the payments industry."

Biden signed the executive order to establish a "whole-of-government effort to promote competition in the American economy." The order's six dozen specific initiatives affecting a wide range of industries did not directly address swipe fee or card payments, but the lack of competition in banking was cited. Regulators were directed to "provide more

robust scrutiny of mergers" and allow consumers changing banks to download their banking data and take it with them. More broadly, the DOJ and FTC were told to "enforce the antitrust laws vigorously."

The Merchants Payments Coalition decried the swipe fees pocketed by big banks, which have reported dramatic increases in credit and debit card volume as Main Street still struggles to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The giant card companies and banks may be rejoicing that their scheme of fixing huge credit card swipe fees is paying off, but their gain is Main Street's pain," Kantor said. "We need competition to reduce swipe fees so bank CEOs aren't the only ones celebrating."

Kantor's comments came after JPMorgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon enthusiastically welcomed signs of increased consumer spending during an earnings call, saying "the pump is primed" for the year ahead.

Bank of America—the nation's largest debit card issuer and fourth-largest credit card issuer—yesterday reported earnings of \$9.22 billion in the second quarter, a dramatic increase from the \$3.53 billion it reported for the quarter in 2020. BOA credit and debit card volume was up 40% year-over-year at \$200.3 billion.

In recent years, the lack of competition has allowed credit card swipe fees to skyrocket, negatively impacting business owners who, to compensate for swipe fees, must increase prices. Banks that issue

Visa and Mastercard credit cards charge merchants an average 2.25% of the purchase price to process transactions, according to the Nilson Report, a global news and statistics provider for the payment industry. Multiplied across millions of transactions each day, those fees more than doubled from \$25.6 billion a year in 2009 to \$67.6 billion in 2019.

When all brands of credit and debit cards are included, processing fees totaled \$116.4 billion in 2019, up 88% over the previous decade, according to Nilson. Debit-card swipe fees are limited to 21¢ per transaction for the nation's largest banks if they follow Visa and Mastercard's fee schedules, but smaller banks can charge more.

Card processing fees are most merchants' second-highest cost after labor, and they drive up prices paid by the average household by hundreds of dollars a year. U.S. merchants pay the highest swipe fees in the industrialized world, more than seven times the 0.3% for credit cards and 0.2% for debit cards allowed in Europe.

Credit card swipe fees remain one of the highest operating costs for convenience store retailers, according to *NACS State of the Industry* data. Consumer preferences for more touch-free transactions and the coin circulation challenge in summer 2020 led to record debit and credit card usage at convenience stores. In 2020, 74.6% of all transactions were paid by plastic, and overall card fees paid by the convenience store industry were \$10.7 billion. ■





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## BP to Take Full Ownership of Thorntons

The deal aligns with the energy company's aim to grow its U.S. fuels and convenience retail business



■ BY NACS ONLINE

BP is taking full ownership of its Thorntons joint venture to increase its presence in the U.S. fuels and convenience retail industry, acquiring the majority share it does not already own in the Louisville, K.Y.-based convenience retailer from ArcLight Capital Partners LLC.

BP said it plans to retain and build on the Thorntons brand. When the deal is complete, BP will expand its Midwest and Southern footprint with 208 owned and operated locations across six states, including Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and Florida.

"We have a proud history of high-quality retail brands across the country. Incorporating Thorntons into our business combines their customer-first culture with our existing U.S. retail network and will help us deliver our convenience strategy of offering customers what they

want, where and when they want it," said David Lawler, chairman and president of BP America, in a press release.

Convenience retail is evolving amid rising demand from consumers with ever-changing needs. Based on Euromonitor analysis, the convenience opportunity will nearly double over the next decade in 45 of the leading economies of the world, growing at more than 5% each year, BP said. BP said this anticipated growth aligns with the strategy its convenience and mobility business, which aims to nearly double global earnings by 2030. The company also looks to increase the number of convenience sites in its global network from about 2,000 today to more than 3,000 by 2030.

"We are committed to putting the customer at the heart of what we do to help accelerate the mobility revolution and redefine the convenience experience at service stations," said Greg Franks, BP senior vice president

of mobility and convenience in the Americas. "Thorntons has generated long-term customer loyalty over the last 50 years because of its best-in-class operations."

Thorntons' successful, customer-focused app and digital presence will help enhance the digital solutions needed to develop innovative and personalized offers at the locations now fully owned by BP. This includes high-quality food, loyalty programs and next-generation mobility solutions, including electrification. The deal is expected to close later this year following regulatory approvals and follows Thornton's 50th year anniversary.

According to the NACS State of the Industry Report of 2020 Data, the convenience industry topped \$548.2 billion in sales in 2020. Although total industry sales declined in 2020 because of the pandemic, they had grown 12.5% from 2010 to 2019, with inside sales increasing 32.3% during the same period. ■



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Premier Snacks Distributors ..... (248) 289-1088  
Harvest Sherwood ..... (313) 659-7300  
Wolverine Packing Company ..... (313) 259-7500

## ENERGY, LIGHTING & UTILITIES

Inovis Energy ..... (313) 600-1458  
 Running Right ..... (248) 884-1704  
DTE Energy ..... 1-800-477-4747  
DTE Your Energy Savings ..... 1-855-234-7335

## FOOD EQUIPMENT, MACHINERY & KIOSKS

Taylor Freezer/Broaster Chicken ..... (734) 525-2535

## GAS STATION BRANDING & MAINTENANCE

Oscar W Larson Co. ..... (248) 620-0070

## GASOLINE WHOLESALERS

Central Ohio Petroleum Marketers ..... (614) 889-1860  
High Pointe Oil Company, Inc. .... (248) 474-0900  
Markham Oil Company, Inc. .... (517) 861-7366  
Obie Oil, Inc. .... (937) 275-9966

## GREETING CARDS

Leanin' Tree ..... 1-800-556-7819 ext. 4183

## GROCERY WHOLESALERS & DISTRIBUTORS

Lipari Foods, Inc. .... (586) 447-3500  
D&B Grocers Wholesale ..... (734) 513-1715  
SpartanNash ..... (616) 878-2248  
T.I. Spices, Inc./Amal Distributing ..... (586) 790-7100  
UNFI West Region ..... (262) 942-3387

## HISPANIC PRODUCTS

La Preferida, Inc. .... (773) 254-7200

## HOTELS, CONVENTION CENTERS & BANQUET HALLS

Penna's of Sterling ..... (586) 978-3880  
Suburban Collection Showplace ..... (248) 348-5600

## ICE CREAM SUPPLIERS

Prairie Farms Ice Cream Program ..... 1-800-399-6970 ext. 200  
 Velvet Ice Cream Co. .... (740) 892-3921  
Blue Bunny Ice Cream ..... (616) 453-6358  
Pointe Dairy Services ..... 1-800-858-7707

## ICE PRODUCTS

U.S. Ice Corp. ..... (313) 862-3344  
Arctic Glacier Premium Ice ..... 1-800-327-2920  
Home City Ice ..... (513) 598-3738  
Taylor Ice Co. .... (313) 295-8576

## INSURANCE SERVICES: COMMERCIAL

Conifer Insurance Company (Liquor Liability) (248) 559-0840  
Bisson Agency - Farm Bureau Insurance ..... (248) 590-2116  
Canopy ..... (313) 662-3522  
Globe Midwest/Adjusters International ..... (248) 352-2100  
Insurance Advisors, Inc. .... (248) 694-9006

## INSURANCE SERVICES: HEALTH & LIFE

BCBS of Michigan ..... (313) 448-2756  
 Blue Care Network ..... (248) 799-6300  
Business Benefits Resource, LLC ..... (248) 482-8282

## INSURANCE SERVICES: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Conifer Insurance Company ..... (248) 559-0840  
 Sedgwick ..... 1-800-837-3200 ext. 7188

## LEGAL SERVICES

Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho, PLC ..... (734) 261-2400  
Kullen & Kassab, PC ..... (248) 538-2200  
Willingham & Cote, PC ..... (517) 351-6200

## LIQUOR SHELF TAGS

Saxon, Inc. ..... (248) 398-2000



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All-Star Gaming ..... (855) 772-4646  
 IGT Global Solutions ..... (517) 272-3302  
 Michigan Lottery ..... (517) 335-5648  
 Ohio Lottery ..... 1-800-589-6446

## MILK, DAIRY & CHEESE PRODUCTS

 Borden Dairy  ..... (855) 226-7336  
 Lipari Foods, Inc. .... (586) 447-3500  
 Prairie Farms Dairy Co.  ..... (248) 399-6300  
 Harvest Sherwood ..... (313) 659-7300  
 Pointe Dairy Services ..... 1-800-858-7707

## MONEY ORDERS

 Retailers Express Money Orders ..... 1-800-666-6233

## OFFICE SUPPLIES & PRODUCTS

 Office Depot ..... (855) 337-6811

## PAPER PRODUCTS & PACKAGING SUPPLIES

Rolly Receipts LLC ..... (937) 344-3242

## PAYROLL SERVICES

 ConnectPay Payroll Services ..... (248) 594-6900




## PET SUPPLIES MISC.

 Great Lakes Pet Treats ..... (810) 715-4500

## PIZZA SUPPLIERS

 Omni Food Concepts  ..... 1-888-367-7829  
 Hunt Brothers Pizza ..... (615) 259-2629

## POINT OF SALE & RETAIL TECHNOLOGY

 Great Lakes Data Systems (LOC Software) ..... (248) 356-4100 ext. 107  
 Petrosoft LLC ..... (412) 306-0640  
 Smokin' Rebates/Success Systems .. 1-800-653-3345  
 BMC-Business Machines Company ..... (517) 485-1732


## PRINTING, PUBLISHING & SIGNAGE

 Saxon, Inc.  ..... (248) 398-2000  
 Ahearn Signs, Inc. .... (734) 699-3777  
 EGI Solutions ..... (586) 978-9630  
 Pace Custom Printing ..... (248) 563-7702

## PRODUCE DISTRIBUTORS

Anthony Marano Company ..... (773) 321-7500

## PROPANE

 Tank Traders Midwest ..... (877) 429-5797  
 Blue Rhino ..... (989) 345-0170  
 Planet Propane ..... (248) 647-0000

## REAL ESTATE

 Sell Your Business Program ..... 1-800-666-6233

## REFRIGERATION SOLUTIONS (COMMERCIAL)

Raves Cooler Doors ..... (248) 887-0648

## RETAIL CONSULTING

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



## REVERSE VENDING MACHINES & SERVICE

UBCR, LLC ..... (248) 529-2605

## SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE & MORE

 Defense Alarm Systems ..... (586) 777-7222  
 Netco Services ..... (248) 850-2228

## SODA POP, WATER, JUICES & OTHER BEVERAGES

 Coca-Cola Refreshments (Metro Detroit program) .....  
     ..... Metro Detroit  (313) 868-2008  
     ..... Belleville  (734) 397-2700  
     ..... Flint  (810) 237-4000  
     ..... Cleveland  (216) 690-2653  
 Faygo Beverages, Inc.  ..... (313) 925-1600  
 Monster Energy Company ..... (800) 426-7367  
 Pepsi Beverages ..... Detroit 1-800-368-9945  
     ..... Howell 1-800-878-8239  
     ..... Pontiac (248) 334-3512  
     ..... Cleveland (216) 252-7377  
     ..... Twinsburg (330) 963-5300

## TOBACCO ALTERNATIVES

E-Alternative Solutions ..... (904) 843-3731  
 Swisher International ..... (904) 607-7405

## TOBACCO COMPANIES & PRODUCTS

Altria Client Services ..... (513) 831-5510  
 Fully Loaded, LLC ..... (877) 728-2547  
 R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company ..... (336) 741-0727

## WASTE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING

Commercial Waste Systems (Cardboard recycling buyers) ..... (219) 663-5678  
 Midwest Recycling (Clothing recycle boxes) ..... (313) 304-9099

## WINE & SPIRITS COMPANIES

Benchmark Beverage Co. .... (734) 744-6132  
 Cornerstone Wine Distributor ..... (586) 839-2552  
 Luxco ..... (313) 333-4637  
 Proximo Spirits ..... (810) 278-0599  
 Tito's Handmade Vodka ..... (248) 885-3424  
 Wise Men Distillery ..... (616) 805-7003

## WINE & SPIRITS DISTRIBUTORS

Great Lakes Wine & Spirits ..... 1-888-860-3805  
 RNDC of Michigan ..... 1-888-697-6424

## FOOD RESCUE / FOOD BANKS

### MICHIGAN

Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank ..... (616) 784-3250  
 Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank - Benton Harbor ..... (269) 926-2646  
 Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank - Cadillac ..... (231) 779-0056  
 Food Bank of Eastern Michigan ..... (810) 239-4441  
 Food Bank of South Central Michigan .. (269) 964-3663  
 Food Gatherers ..... (734) 761-2796  
 Forgotten Harvest ..... (248) 967-1500  
 Gleaners Community Food Bank ..... (866) GLE-ANER  
 Greater Lansing Food Bank ..... (517) 908-3680  
 Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes ..... (269) 343-3663  
 The Manna Food Project ..... (231) 347-8852  
 Western Upper Peninsula Food Bank ... (906) 482-5528

### OHIO

Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank .... (330) 535-6900  
 Cleveland Foodbank ..... (216) 738-2265  
 Freestore Foodbank ..... (513) 482-3663  
 Mid-Ohio Foodbank ..... (614) 277-FOOD  
 SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen ..... (740) 767-4500  
 Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign and Logan Counties ..... (937) 325-8715  
 Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio ..... (440) 960-2265  
 Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley ..... (330) 792-5522  
 Shared Harvest Foodbank ..... (513) 874-0114  
 The Foodbank, Inc. .... (937) 461-0265  
 Toledo Northwestern Ohio Food Bank ... (419) 242-5000  
 West Ohio Food Bank ..... (419) 222-7946

### ILLINOIS

Central Illinois Foodbank ..... (217) 522-4022  
 Eastern Illinois Foodbank ..... (217) 328-3663  
 Greater Chicago Food Depository ..... (773) 247-3663  
 Northern Illinois Foodbank ..... (630) 443-6910  
 Peoria Area Food Bank ..... (309) 671-3906  
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 St. Louis Area Foodbank ..... (314) 292-6262  
 Tri-State Foodbank ..... (812) 425-0775



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**AUGUST 4, 2021**

## MIRA'S 16TH ANNUAL OHIO GOLF OUTING

This outing is a social event where retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers and service providers all come together to have a little competitive fun. A day on the course includes breakfast, dinner and 18 holes of golf!

*Shale Creek Golf Club // Medina, OH*



**SEPTEMBER 21, 2021**

## MIRA'S 22ND ANNUAL HOLIDAY FOOD & BEVERAGE BUYING SHOW

As Michigan's largest liquor show, retailers and on- and off-premise licensees come from miles to see, sample and buy a wide variety of new products. Admission for MIRA members is free. Must be 21 years or older to attend this show.

*Suburban Collection Showplace // Novi, MI*



**NOVEMBER 18 & 19, 2021**

## MIRF'S "HIGH FIVE" TURKEY DRIVE

As the holiday season approaches, the Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation turkey drive committee has pledged to put a turkey on the Thanksgiving table of over 6,000 needy families throughout Michigan, Ohio and Illinois that may not otherwise enjoy this special meal.

*Michigan // Ohio // Illinois*



**JANUARY 29, 2022**

## MIRA'S 106TH ANNUAL TRADE DINNER & BALL

Join over 800 leaders in the food, beverage & petroleum industries at this one-and-only black tie gala. Delight in fine cuisine, dancing and entertainment and engage with colleagues and friends to celebrate the strength and vitality of MIRA and the members it serves.

*Penna's of Sterling // Sterling Heights, MI*

## publishers statement

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