

Stay in Control™ while enjoying that green dinosaur

by Ray Dodge, Chairman of the Board

Portland is widely thought of as the microbrew capital of the U.S., while Oregon's wines are winning accolades from far and wide. Nationally, beer gets a big promotional boost every year from award-winning Super Bowl commercials that cost more than \$2 million each.

You couldn't be blamed for thinking that we live in a wine and beer-drinking world. However, just enter the search term "cocktails" on the internet and you'll find a universe where there are thousands of drink recipes, hundreds of vodkas, rums, gins and other spirits.

Bookstores promote bartender guides, magazines for whisky lovers and books discussing the mellow nuances of an imported rum. There are cocktail videos, aprons, napkins and earrings all featuring olives, cherries, lemons, limes and martini glasses.

Indeed, cocktails not only are back in fashion, but making a big splash with recipes using exotic ingredients and high-priced, premium liquors. With the fun of creating a Gideon's Green Dinosaur or a Gin and Sin, comes the responsibility of not enjoying more than you can handle.

That's why some of the world's largest alcohol distillers have invested more than \$160 million since 1991 on programs to fight drunk driving and underage drinking.

Industry giants Bacardi, USA, Inc., Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, Inc., DIAGEO, Future Brands and Sidney Frank Importing all are members of The Century Council, a national leader in advocating for responsible drinking.

That would be six industry giants and one successful but much smaller company, Hood River Distillers.

Oftentimes, smaller companies would like to participate in national programs that operate for the common good, but because of costly dues or hefty financial and time commitments, they are unable to do so.

Leaders at Hood River Distillers, located in the beautiful Columbia River Gorge town of Hood River, Ore., wanted the customers who purchase their Pendleton Whisky, Broker's London Dry Gin, Yazi Ginger Vodka and dozens of other brands, to know that the company is serious about responsible drinking.

“Stay in control,” the company reminds customers as they look forward to creating the perfect Broker’s Gin & Tonic or sipping a Cockspur 12 rum imported from Barbados.

“Stay in Control” has become the company mantra at HRD-sponsored events and in its marketing materials. Large banners display the slogan whether it is at one of the world’s largest rodeos or a big-city singles event.

HRD knew that to get the word out beyond the events it sponsors, the company would need to support a well-regarded national program.

That’s where The Century Council comes in. It is the largest organization in the world that’s devoted exclusively to educating consumers about their responsibilities when it comes to drinking alcohol.

The Council has used the \$160 million contributed by the big companies--and HRD--to create programs that support Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and to implement innovative ideas and strategic partnerships to educate people about the tragedies that can result from unwise use of alcohol.

Recently HRD President Ron Dodge received a letter from Georgia’s attorney general applauding HRD as a responsible corporate citizen. Attorney General Thurbert E. Baker has launched the Century Council’s programs in Georgia as part of his agenda to help prevent underage drinking.

The Century Council’s latest initiative is called “We Don’t Serve Teens.” It is designed to inform adults that providing alcohol to underage drinkers is unsafe, illegal and irresponsible.

On Feb. 13, Oregon’s attorney general, Hardy Myers, will join Phil Lang, chairman of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, Chief Larry Kanzler of the Milwaukie Police Department and Ralph Blackman, CEO of The Century Council in kicking off the “We Don’t Serve Teens” program in Oregon. The program begins at 10 a.m. at the State Liquor Store, 10804 S.E. Oak Street in Milwaukie.

Hood River Distillers is fully supportive of this program and others that The Century Council sponsors, like those listed below.

The Council has distributed 5.1 million pieces of underage point-of-sale materials to more than 100,000 retailers nationwide. A survey found that the materials help to deter young people from attempting to buy alcohol illegally.

The Cops in Shops® program teams law enforcement and alcohol retailers to deter underage purchase attempts and to keep adults from purchasing for underage youth. The program is being implemented either statewide or in individual cities in 38 states.

Full House at Prom Night developed in partnership with the National Commission Against Drunk Driving, reached more than two million students in 16,000 middle and high schools.

Another program developed by The Century Council and Boys & Girls Clubs of America is Ready or Not. It motivates adults to talk with kids 10 to 14 about alcohol and what to say when anyone asks them if they want to drink.

It's time for Oregon communities to implement the "We Don't Serve Teens" program and others sponsored by The Century Council.

Is your community ready? Or not?

For more information, contact the Century Council at 1310 G St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20006; 202-637-0077.

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