



CESA 5

Juveniles are 25% of the population, but 100% of our future.

Columbia County Connects Newsletter

Circulation: 1100

Coalition Members Testify at Beer Tax Hearing in Madison

Winter Edition, 2009

Inside this issue:

A holiday rhyme	2
Teen Court Elects New Youth Board	2
Advocacy Action of the Quarter	2
Community Perception Survey	3
YAK Youth Attend Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership Conference	3
CCC Information	4

"The idea right now is that you and I and everyone else paying taxes is subsidizing the cost of the problem drinker."

On Tuesday, October 13, four CCC coalition members; two youth and two adults, attended a public hearing on raising the beer tax. The hearing was held in one of the large meeting rooms at the Capitol in Madison and was standing room only. Kendalynn Luetkens, Luke Malkowski, Anne Thompson, and Genevieve Kirchman testified at the hearing.

The increase in the beer tax is being sponsored by state Rep. Terese Berceau, D-Madison, and state Sen. Fred Risser, D-Madison. The bill proposes to increase Wisconsin's beer tax for the first time since 1969. The tax would increase from \$2 per barrel of beer to \$10 a barrel, which means an increase of about 2 ½ cents a bottle. Revenue generated by the tax increase would be used to fund drunken driving law enforcement grants, along with alcohol and drug abuse treatment and prevention programs.

"The idea right now is that you and I and everyone else paying taxes is subsidizing the cost of the problem drinker," Berceau said.

According to UW Health, Wisconsin has the highest rate of alcohol consumption, binge drinking, and

heavy drinking in the United States. Additionally, while drunken driving fatalities are dropping nationwide, the number of such fatalities is increasing in Wisconsin. Wisconsin's tax is the country's third lowest. The Journal Sentinel's "*Wasted in Wisconsin*" series and other news stories have reported on the statewide toll of drunken driving. Wisconsin is the only state where first-offense drunken driving results in a ticket; drunken driving does not become a felony until the fifth offense.

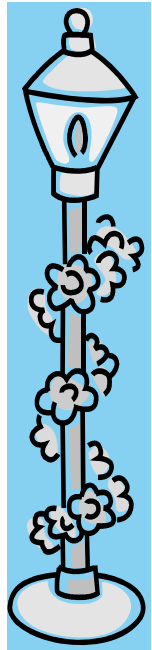
Now is the wrong time to even consider such a tax increase, said Scott Stenger, lobbyist for the Tavern League of Wisconsin, which opposes the beer tax increase. Taverns are seeing a significant decline in business because of the ongoing financial slump, he said. Berceau said she thinks sentiment is changing. "Many more legislators are coming up to me and saying, 'You know, many people in my district are bringing this up, I think I'm going to be on with you this time.'"

Reference: Forster, Stacy. "Lawmakers propose increase in beer tax." *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* [Milwaukee, WI] 29 Apr. 2009. Print.

Please feel free to post this newsletter or share it with a friend!

A holiday rhyme for you and yours.....

*May the children in your life enjoy a season,
Where alcohol isn't the celebration reason.*



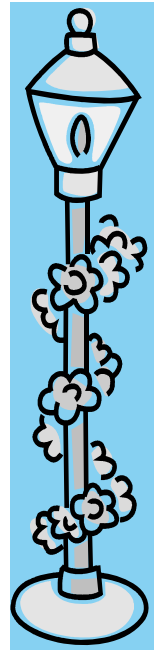
*A responsible New Year's Eve can be a blast!
There's no need for anyone to get completely
gassed!*

*Over 21's, keep these rules in mind,
When having mixed drinks, beer, or wine.*

*Always have food along with your drink,
It slows absorption and that is the link.*

*No more than two drinks, at the very most three.
Don't have more, even when they're free.*

*Never have more than one drink an hour.
Responsible holiday fun - you have the power!*



Teen Court Elects New Youth Board

Each fall Teen Court appoints a new youth board. This year's board consists of: Kendalynn Luetkens, Chairperson; James Bennett, Vice-chairperson; Robbin Kirk, Secretary; Luke Malkowski, Cassie May and Devin Nelson, Media – shared position.

The Board members will be in charge of running the Teen Court quarterly meetings, setting the agenda, and acting as role models for other Teen Court volunteers.

It really does not take much time to be an advocate.

Advocacy Action of the Quarter

It really does not take much time to be an advocate. Here are some suggestions on what you can do right now:

- In **2 minutes** you can e-mail an alderperson
- In **5 minutes** you can make a phone call and give your opinion
- In **15 minutes** you can give public testimony at a city meeting
- In **30 minutes** you can write, sign and send a letter to the editor

Community Perception Survey

Within the next four months, Columbia County Connects will begin sending out a Community Perception Survey. In 2002, the "Community Readiness Survey" was sent to over 200 residents of Columbia County. The information gathered from that survey was used to develop the Coalition's mission and goals. This new survey will help to assess where the county is now.

In the interest of going green and to reduce costs, the Community Perception survey will be on-line. Two-thousand random residents will receive a mailing with a web address to the survey. Those who are unable to access the web survey will be able to request a paper copy.

Watch your mailbox; yours may be one of the random addresses chosen to receive the mailing!

YAK Youth Attend Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership Conference

Be on the lookout this spring for a Human Billboard in several downtown communities!

On November 13-15, five area youth from the county youth group YAK (Youth Advisory Council) along with advisor Paula Enger, attended the *Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership Conference* held at the Wisconsin Lions Camp in Rosholt, Wisconsin. A portion of the cost for this conference was paid through a scholarship applied for in September.

Along with 100+ youth from across Wisconsin, they attended issue sessions that included topics on Diversity, Alcohol Use and Abuse in Wisconsin, and Promoting Healthy Relationships. In tactic sessions they got to dive in to guerilla marketing techniques and explore clothing design as a way to get a message out. The group worked hard developing an action plan that was then presented at the closing ceremony.

The YAK team brought their plan back to the group and a course of action is underway for its implementation. Be on the lookout this spring for a Human Billboard in several downtown communities!

What a great experience this was for the YAK members to interact with youth from across Wisconsin. Youth can have a voice and make change!!



Luke Malkowski, Sarah Sheeks, Katie Duerst, Lindsay Johnson, and Lauren Falstad

CESA 5
P.O. Box 564
626 E. Slifer St.
Portage, WI 53901
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Phone: 608-742-8811
Toll Free: 1-800-862-3725
Fax: 608-742-2384

*We're on the
web:
www.webcccc.
org*

The Staff

Columbia County Connects Project
Director /Youth Coordinator:
Tim Belleau, ext. 225
belleaut@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Communities in Action Coordinator
Paula Enger, ext. 243
engerp@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Community Advocacy
Coordinator / Teen Court
Coordinator:
Meg McCullough, ext 242
mcculloughm@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Advisor:
Genevieve Kirchman, ext. 247
kirchmang@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Support Staff:
Laurie Deakins, ext. 275
deakinsl@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Brenda May, ext. 301
mayb@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Andrea Schneider, ext. 293
schneitera@cesa5.k12.wi.us

Columbia County Connects

The Columbia County Connects Coalition is made up of members that represent school districts and communities throughout the county. This coalition was established through the Columbia County Juvenile Justice Committee.

Funding is provided by Columbia County Health and Human Services, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), a Federal Drug-Free Communities Support grant, Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future and the STOP grant.

The two main programs are Youth Connects (teen leadership) and Community Connects (community education). The 40 Developmental Assets play a major role in our programming. The following are the top 4 assets we are currently addressing:

- **Caring School Climate** - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
- **Safety**-Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.

- **Restraint**-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
- **Youth as Resources**-Young people are given useful roles in the community.

Community Advocacy

The Community Advocacy Department works with the Community Liaisons to provide community education on prevention, hold responsible beverage server classes for community groups, alcohol compliance checks, coordinate Community Action Teams, work with Project Northland teachers on 6th grade Poster Fairs coordinate Project Northland 7th grade Amazing Alternative activities and media advocacy campaigns.

Youth Connects

The Youth Connects Coordinator works with the Youth Liaisons in the individual schools in creating service programs and leadership opportunities with students. An adult from each school district supports the local youth efforts.

Please feel free to post this newsletter or share it with a friend!