

NEW JERSEY LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION
90TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

NOVEMBER 14 & 15, 2023
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President's Message

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association's (NJLBA) 90th Annual Convention. This is a landmark event, celebrating nine decades of representing bars, taverns and restaurants throughout our State. While much has changed in the hospitality industry since our inception in the early 1930's, some things have remained constant. As we recognize the industry's achievements this week over multiple decades, the Association today remains very much the same dedicated and committed organization started so many years ago. The NJLBA has and will continue to play an active and critical role in ensuring the integrity of our members' liquor licenses, while also remaining the strong and dedicated voice for the industry in both the State House and legislative halls. This week, as we gather in Atlantic City, we represent the future of our industry, and I strongly believe it is a future filled with growth and prosperity, and that there is nothing we cannot overcome together.

The past four years have been a challenge for our licensees, as we emerged from the pandemic and worked to become acclimated to a new way of doing business. Back in November 2019, I had just completed my first year as President of the NJLBA, and I, like each of you, did not know how our lives would dramatically change in a few short months. Soon, we found ourselves facing issues never before seen by our industry. Those challenges became more pronounced as we were soon met with a stream of industry reform bills, ultimately designed to forever change the landscape of New Jersey's alcoholic beverage industry. I am proud to say we have continued to step up, day after day, to meet these legislative challenges. This past year saw the creation of the Coalition for Responsible Alcohol Licensing, a collaborative group of individuals representing all aspects of our industry. Together, we have worked to slow down the Governor's proposed industry reforms and help our elected officials better understand our concerns and viewpoints. Yes, we have a big job ahead, but we are moving in the right direction. Through the Coalition, we were able to hold an extremely successful Lobby Day in Trenton in April, where we spoke in-person with our legislators and shared our visions for the industry's future. We hope to hold another Lobby Day in 2024, and we will keep our members posted as further details become available.

Again, by standing together in the coming year, we can voice our concerns to our representatives and the Governor's Office, as well as our fellow licensees. This week's robust agenda reflects the continued need for providing current information related to these legislative issues. After the lame duck session concludes in January 2024, we may see many new representatives in Trenton. With that in mind, we would like to continue working to increase our membership base and fill our PAC accounts so we may support those legislators who support our industry's goals. Our Association's lobbyist will be available this week to update all attendees on these critical matters.

The legislative update is just one of many relevant topics on this year's robust convention agenda. The popular Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Seminar will return this year, with an informative panel discussion on current ABC topics. ServSafe and NJBrass classes will also be available to all attendees. Offered year-round by the NJLBA, these classes are made possible by a grant to the Association from the State Department of Labor. The grant funds allow licensees and their employees to receive training on the latest developments in the hospitality industry, while also helping to ensure the integrity of our liquor licensees.

In closing, I would like to extend a special thank you to our Convention sponsors, our Allied members, our Journal advertisers and industry partners for helping to make the NJLBA's 90th Annual Convention possible. To all who attended the convention, in particular our members, thank you for taking time away from your businesses to join us this week. Your dedication to the Association has helped ensure that our conventions are successful every year.

I hope everyone enjoys the convention, and I look forward to meeting you this week.

– James Filler, *President*

Executive Director's Message

As the Executive Director of the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association (NJLBA), it's my honor to welcome you to our 90th Annual Convention. This is quite a momentous occasion as we celebrate 90 years since Probation. This has been a challenging and difficult time for our bars, restaurants and taverns, and the NJLBA convention is truly a sign of our strength and resiliency. We have emerged from a pandemic and now face legislative challenges that could change the industry as we know it. The NJLBA will continue to take the lead and work tirelessly to defend the value of your licenses. I want to give a shout out to all of our members who contributed to the PAC, made calls to your legislators, put up the posters and table tents and participated in the Lobby day. We need to continue to work together to protect the interest of our liquor licenses.

You will find a copy of the agenda with all the training sessions, panel discussions and workshops in this journal.

In addition, the convention provides a unique forum for meeting and exchanging ideas with legislative leaders, ABC staff and members of the NJLBA, including our executive board, our Legislative Representative Jeffrey A. Warsh, Esq. and our Regional and County Directors. This is an excellent time to talk with not only your peers, but those policymakers who play a critical role in our industry's future.

I want to personally thank our convention speakers, convention sponsors, Affiliate Members, our Journal advertisers and industry partners for their support in making this convention possible. I would like to also thank NJLBA President Jim Filler, our Executive Board and County Directors for their hard work and dedication to the Association for the past year, as well as all of the convention attendees who took time out of their busy schedules to join us. Also, I want to thank Jeffrey A. Warsh, Esq. our lobbyist for leading us through this very challenging time in the industry. We need to continue to work together during the lame duck session and into the new legislative cycle.

A little NJLBA History: The New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association (NJLBA) was founded prior to repeal by a group of concerned on-premise licensees who recognized the need for representation in what was becoming a highly regulated and controlled business environment. Its delegates held their first annual convention at the Penn-Atlantic Hotel in Atlantic City in 1933. Mr. Neil F. Deighnan was elected President and William Wellhofer was elected 3rd Vice President. Over the next sixteen years there were several association name changes and a second organization materialized which was an off-shoot of the original. On October 13, 1949, in the best interest of all licensees, the original group and the off-shoot, the New Jersey Tavern Association, whose president was Rocco Bunino merged to form one organization to be known as the United Licensed Beverage Association, of which Mr. Bunino became its first president. Since 1949 there have been 30 elected presidents. In 1955 the group changed to United Tavern Owners of New Jersey and finally in 1962 when the organization incorporated, the name was amended to The New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association.

I look forward to meeting you all this week and having another successful convention. Wishing everyone a happy, safe and prosperous holiday season and New Year! Cheers!

– Diane M. Weiss, NJLBA Executive Director



News from the Lobby

by Jeffrey A. Warsh, Esq.

The Lame Duck Session is Here – Again

New Jersey's current legislative session, the 219th Legislative Session, began on January 11, 2022 and will end, at noon, on January 9, 2024. Before the 219th Legislature turns the lights off, however, that most disturbing of all biennial phenomena will live and breathe again – the Lame Duck Session. The Lame Duck Session began the day after Election Day, 2023 (November 8, 2023) and will conclude at 11:59 a.m. on January 9, 2024 – with the swearing in of the 220th Legislature.

During the Lame Duck Session, it is common for bills that saw no real movement during the regular legislative session to suddenly fly through a rapid committee process, floor votes and reach the Governor's desk. Any bills not receiving a majority in the affirmative in both houses and the Governor's signature are dead bills and the process must, at the sponsor's discretion, start all over again in the new legislative session. In an environment like Trenton, with the big clock ticking loudly away, anything can happen....and it often does!

On Election Day 2023, the NJLBA witnessed many friends winning elections and/or re-elections to the New Jersey Legislature. We did, however, lose a few legislative supporters and it looks like a long-time liquor industry nemesis will be joining the NJ State Senate in January, 2024.

As we all know, Governor Murphy has placed a bullseye on the back of NJ's hospitality sector in the form of a long list of proposed changes - AKA "liquor license reform". In fact, the Governor has made wiping out the Fair Market Value of existing on-premises licenses (estimated to be worth over \$2 billion dollars) and the issuance of an unlimited number of new on-premises consumption licenses for cash advance money to be his "Number One Legislative Priority". When you hear Governor Murphy say "comprehensive reform" hold on to your wallet and put a call into your lawyer. Trouble.

In addition to what we have heard dribbling out of the Governor's Office, the NJLBA has learned that Governor Murphy also wants to create an unlimited number of on-premises wine and beer licenses. Big trouble.

The NJLBA has argued strenuously against the issuance of new, cheap, on-premise licenses in the face of a record-high number of inactive on-premises licenses. Let's reactivate the approximately 1400 inactive on-premises we already have, rather than destroy the value of the existing 5700 on-premises consumption licenses. The NJLBA, having met with 115 out of 120 legislators, knows first-hand that this view enjoys enormous levels of support from both Senators and Assembly Members - whether from the North or from the South. We will stay close to our supporters in the Legislature and maintain and enhance our strong opposition to the Governor's "plan."

During Lame Duck, the NJLBA must face a highly complicating factor. Sitting on the Governor's desk since June, 2023 awaiting his signature, is a bill known as the "Craft Beer Bill". In fact, the bill extends many new privileges to ALL producers of craft alcoholic beverages in NJ, not just the craft brewers. This bill allows the craft breweries to fully function like retail bars and taverns - with the exception of not being able to maintain a kitchen. But these same craft brewers can make arrangements for food to be provided to patrons. The bill essentially converts a manufacturing license into a retail consumption license. It is bad policy in that long-time licensees would assume way greater overhead than new licensees. It creates an inherently unfair marketplace.

Here's the problem. NJ provides its governors with the considerable power of the Conditional Veto (CV). A CV allows a governor to veto a bill on his desk, UNLESS the Legislature agrees to new language the governor has included in the bill – via the CV.

In our case, Governor Murphy has publicly stated that it is his intent to apply the CV to the

continued on next page

News from the Lobby *continued*

craft bill on his desk and include new language to incorporate all of his "license reform" ideas. If, in fact, Governor Murphy carries out his threat, then the bill -with a CV and the inserted "license reform" language - goes back to the Senate and to the Assembly. These houses can ignore the CV'd bill, take no action and the process would have to start all over again in the next legislative session. The Legislature could seek to override the Governor's CV with a 2/3 vote in favor in both the Senate and the Assembly. In the case of a veto over-ride, the original craft bill would become law, without the Governor's added "license reform" language. Finally, the Legislature can agree with the Governor's CV and, by a simple majority of both houses, send it back to the Governor's desk for signature into law.

The NJLBA and its Members must be ready, on a day's notice sometimes, to get to Trenton and testify or to get involved calling and e-mailing your legislators. The General Assembly returns on Monday, November 20th and the Senate returns on Monday, November 27th. Please mark out every Monday and Thursday between now and January 8, 2024 for possible hearings in Trenton. We must show in force.

Right now, there are over 130 bills alc bev bills pending – all with negative impact on our licensed businesses. The NJLBA and its membership face our most serious threats from bills that aim to do the following:

- Allow municipalities to issue as many new on-premise consumption licenses as they want with cash-advance level of investment required, thus collapsing the value overnight of over \$2B of key balance sheet assets throughout the State;
- Creating unlimited, cheap new wine and beer on-premises consumption licenses;
- Allowing craft producers of any one craft product to carry the products of all of the other NJ craft producers. Beer, wine, spirits....it's a bar;
- Allowing craft brewers and distillers to serve food on their premises;
- Allowing craft brewers and distillers to deliver direct to consumers.

While we have many friends in the Legislature, the threat matrix is heavy. Please answer the Lame Duck calls if and when they come and head to Trenton to protect your businesses.

Enjoy the NJLBA Conference!!!



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In Remembrance of Our Friend NJLBA Vice President



Robert P. Lynch

March 14, 1964 – September 19, 2023

The New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association (NJLBA) extends its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of our Vice President Rob Lynch. Rob was the owner and operator of Kilkenny Ale House in Newark, New Jersey. He was an active member of AOH Division 9 of Montclair and the Shillelagh Club of West Orange, enthusiastically assisting in their many charitable events. He was a proud Irish American. Rob was a member of the NJLBA for 14 years and Vice President of the NJLBA for 4 years. He was a very hands-on member and never missed a meeting or event. He was always fighting for our industry and for our members. We will miss his dedication, his smiling face and support, but most of all, his friendship.

*The 90th Annual Convention is dedicated to our friend
Rob Lynch. May he rest in peace.*

New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association 2023 Executive Committee

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Fred Barnes, Vice President
Marco Giancarli, Vice President of Legislative Affairs
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NJLBA Past Presidents' Club

This page is dedicated to the past presidents of the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association.

We recognize not only these very dedicated individuals, but also those who have gone before us. All of these leaders gave so much of their time and expertise in founding and fostering our trade organization which represents the concerns and issues facing on-premise retailers and the beverage alcohol industry.

Members of this distinguished club are:

** Deceased*

* Rocco Buinno	1949 - 1953
* A. H. Geltzeiler	1953 - 1955
* Kenneth McCormick	1955 - 1956
* A.H. Geltzeiler	1956 - 1958
* Joseph Zimmerman	1958 - 1960
* H. George Buckwald	1960 - 1962
* M. Garret Pal	1962 - 1964
* J. Walter Doll	1964 - 1967
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Peter Vanola	1969 - 1971
Arthur Mitchko	1971 - 1973
Peter Vanola	1973 - 1975
* Harry Kandell	1975 - 1977
* Ben Risoldi	1977 - 1979
Jerry Lynch	1979 - 1981
* Jerry Bertekap	1981 - 1983
* Carmen Giletto	1983 - 1985
Dominic Bossone	1985 - 1988
* Harold Freundlich	1988 - 1990
* James Fordyce	1990 - 1992
* Theresa Sorgento	1992 - 1994
Paul Bechtel	1994 - 1996
* Lewis B. Rothbart	1996 - 1998
* Joseph Ardire	1998 - 2000
Robert Scerbo	2000 - 2001
* Frank Zanotti	2001 - 2002
* Richard Bellshot	2002 - 2004
James Hill	2004 - 2006
Melvin Gitler	2006 - 2008
Fred Barnes	2008 - 2014
James Bennett	2014 - 2018

Convention Agenda:

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

9:00 am	Registration Desk Opens – Atlantic 1
10:00 am to 3:00 pm	ServSafe Training – Atlantic Ballroom A&B
10:00 am to 1:00 pm	NJBRASS Server Training – Atlantic Ballroom C&D
5:00 pm	Hospitality Room Opens (Light Refreshments)

Dinner on Your Own

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Resorts Conference Level - Horizon Ballroom

8:30 am to 10:30 am	Continental Breakfast
8:30 am	Registration Desk Opens – Horizon Ballroom Foyer
9:15 am to 9:45 am	Closed Session NJLBA Executive Board and NJLBA Licensee Members Only – NJLBA Business
9:45 am to 10:00 am	Welcome Address - General Session Open to NJLBA Members only
10:00 am to 10:45 am	ABC Compliance Seminar Presented by Bowen Alcohol Compliance
10:45 am to 11:30 am	ABC Attorney Member Panel Discussion
11:30 am to 11:45 am	Break
11:45 am to 12:30 pm	Employment Law Seminar, Presented by Melissa Salimbene, CSG Law
12:30 pm to 1:15 pm	Luncheon – Atlantic Ballroom Speaker – Tim Delaney, President, Delaney Restaurant Realty

Return to Horizon Ballroom

1:15 pm to 2:00 pm	Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control Seminar Presented by ABC Director James Graziano and ABC Staff
2:00 pm to 2:30 pm	Legislative Update, Presented NJLBA Lobbyist Jeffrey A. Warsh, Esq.Partner MBI
2:30 pm to 3:15 pm	Insurance Seminar, Presented by Representatives from: Independent Food & Beverage Insurance Brokers, Inc Progress Brokerage Group LLC Tri- State Hospitality Insurance Inc. World Insurance Associates, LLC
3:15 pm	Trivia Event – Green Room Light Refreshments - Cocktails – Prizes
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Cocktail Reception and Buffet Dinner – Atlantic Ballroom

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Director

November 15, 2023

Dear Members of the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association:

Thank you for the opportunity to address the members of the New Jersey Licensed Beverage Association (NJLBA) on the occasion of your 90th Annual Convention. Your organization has been representing the interests of on-premises retailers since the repeal of Prohibition. I congratulate you on ninety continuous years of advocating on behalf of this important sector of New Jersey's alcoholic beverage industry.

It is my great pleasure to lead the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control and work with the NJLBA on the pressing issues affecting this industry. Through this collaborative relationship, we further our mutual purposes of encouraging a successful, competitive alcohol marketplace that fosters moderation and responsibility in the use and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

I am pleased to announce that there have been a few changes at the Division that will enhance the services we provide to your members. We have added staff in key areas and we are working to modernize our systems in order to make transactions with the Division secure, easier and more efficient. We are also working to update our regulations to address new areas of the law and changes in technology, and to make existing legal requirements clearer. The Division's goal is to be accessible and transparent so everyone knows and follows the rules in this highly regulated marketplace.

The Division values its relationship with the NJLBA, and looks forward to another ninety years of working on the important issues facing the industry and the people of the State of New Jersey.

Very truly yours,

James B. Graziano
Director





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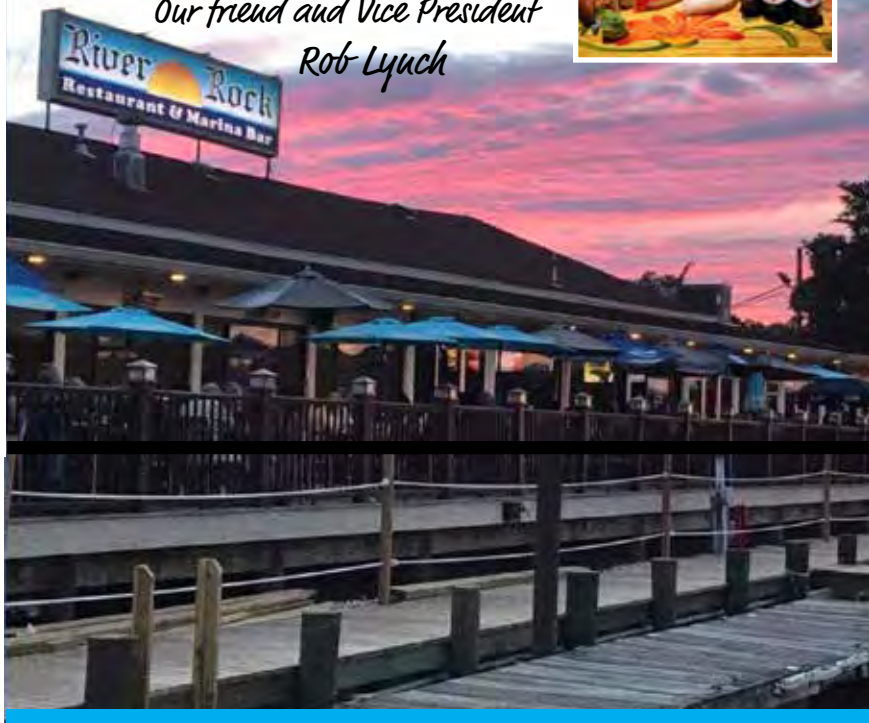
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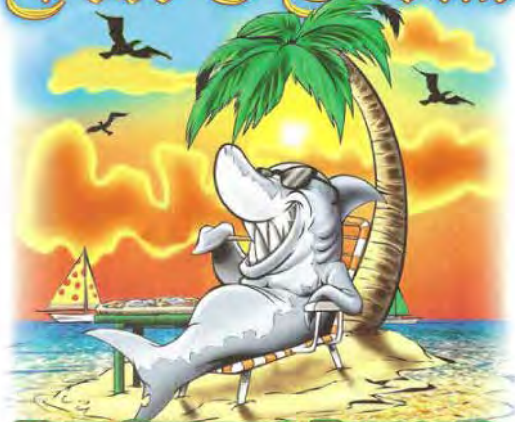
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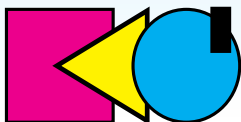
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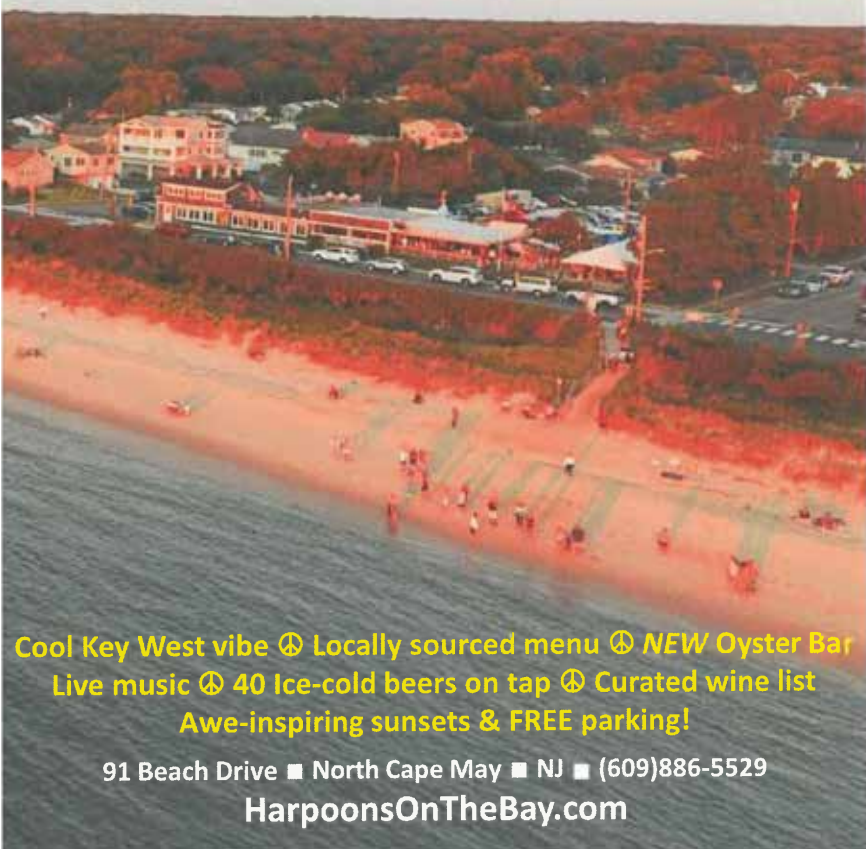


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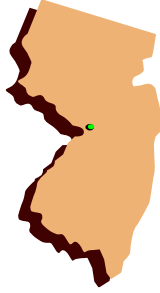
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