



KEEPING YOU INFORMED ON MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

REAL-TIME SALES TAX COLLECTION

In the Governor's budget, there was a provision to direct the Department of Revenue to formulate rules and regulations by 2021 to require third-party payment processors to receive and remit sales tax from retail merchants on a daily basis.

- This passed the legislature last year, but DOR concluded they could not implement in the requested time frame.
- MRA joined a coalition of banks, credit card companies and other businesses in opposing this provision.
- In the most recent budget debate, the House correctly concluded such an undertaking is unworkable and harmful to the Commonwealth's business community and voted to create a commission to study the issue.

#*Together We Win*

STATUS – The Governor has filed legislation recommending repeal of the sales tax acceleration, citing encountered barriers to implementation and is no longer necessary in its current form.

CITY OF BOSTON PETITION TO ADD 152 NEW ALCOHOL LICENSES

This well-known proposal has been before the City Council for more than a year. As filed, it would create 152 non-transferable licenses for the sale of alcoholic beverages to be consumed on premises for the City of Boston. The second section of the proposal will create a so called non-transferable "umbrella license" allowing the city to grant an umbrella license to a real estate development project with total combined gross floor area of at least 500,000 square feet.

- MRA remains supportive of licenses to underserved communities, but opposed to licenses issued to areas that do not need them. Further, the MRA has serious concerns about the creation of an umbrella license.

Status – pending before Boston City Council. If passed by City Council and signed by the Mayor, the proposal would need to start the legislative process all over again at the State House as a home rule petition.

EMAC

Many business owners remain frustrated with Tier II of the Employer Medical Assistance Contribution (EMAC) in both employer cost and generosity of state benefits.

- MRA is part of coalition seeking EMAC relief.
- In a recent letter to Legislature, small business groups are advocating for:
 - **Quarterly EMAC Assessment Cap:** Tier 2 of the EMAC assessment should be no more than \$187.50 per quarter per employee.
 - **90-Day Waiting Period:** Under current law, an employer is subject to the assessment for employees receiving MassHealth or subsidized Connector Care coverage for a period of at least fifty-six days.
 - **Early Sunset of the EMAC Tax:** When first introduced, the EMAC proposal was intended to generate \$200 million per year for 2018 and 2019 to fund the growing MassHealth budget gap. Revenue projections will exceed this amount.

STATUS – Legislators spoke on the Senate floor about the impact that EMAC is having on small businesses. It is important to continue to discuss these impacts with your elected reps and senators.

LEGISLATION PENDING BEFORE THE STATE HOUSE THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED FAVORABLY OUT OF COMMITTEE

Out-of-state ID as valid form of identification:

We continue to push for out of state licenses to be accepted as a valid form of identification for determining if a customer is 21 or over. Massachusetts is the only state that does not allow out of state ID's.

- Our border towns are in fierce competition to attract customers from New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island with many of our hottest economic development destinations only short drives from the border. This current law is a disincentive for an out of state resident to patronize our establishments.

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Pat Lee
MRA Chairman of the Board

Dear Members,

The dog days of summer are upon us once again. It seems every year we say this, but where has the summer gone? We are in full swing with back to school ads, the Patriots are ready to have their first pre-season game, and before we know it the leaves will start to turn. Hopefully you have been able to squeeze in some time with friends and family and enjoy some of the great summer time activities we have in New England.

August is also the time to make certain we are ahead of the hiring curve. As we all know, there will be some surprises to come this month with employees deciding to go to school, or transfer to another school farther away than

being able to hold onto their job with you. This is always a challenge for us, but more amplified this year with the staffing shortage as difficult as it is in our industry. We all know this – never have we seen it this tight. There is no easy answer, but what it does is remind me of, is just how important spending time with our current employees is, making certain we can do whatever possible to make their work experience a positive one.

As a result, cross training our staff is also more critical. Taking dishwashers and training them to be prep cooks, and then starting to work them onto the cook's line quickly. Taking the host/hostess and training them on the floor earlier than we might have in the past, and of course taking servers and getting them comfortable on the bar.

With all the wage changes and other regulatory requirements we have seen thrust upon us just recently as well as prior years, it also means looking at our menus and making them more streamlined than in the past, so perhaps we can run the line with one less cook, or one less prep cook. Like you, I want to offer a broad diverse menu, but by making hard decisions, having less variety of product to handle and streamlining, it is not the labor dollars saving we are grateful for, it is the labor bodies we are grateful to save as an outcome.

We also must start to look at technology more and more to see how that can help our staffing solution. Can adding tablets at the table help facilitate second drink and dessert orders, make cashing out easier, and allowing us to extend four table stations to 6 table stations and still provide great service? I am not certain, but I think sadly I am going to have to start to look at these possibilities and imagine you are also thinking about them.

It goes without saying that ProStart is part of the answer for our staffing concerns as well. Jennifer Almeida has added 5 school districts since joining us, and soon you will be able to get more involved by becoming ProStart mentors at programs near you. This could be a win/win for students and business! At the end of the day, we will get through this time, we always do, because we are restaurateurs, we are resilient, and we always persevere!

One final note, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to congratulate Steve Clark and Kerry Miller from the MRA team, both of whom have been promoted to Vice President. Both have made a significant difference at the MRA, especially at a time of tremendous change to the business and breadth of what state associations must do in today's world. They assist our operators and business partners tremendously and are great resources along with the entire MRA team. Congratulations and thank you, Steve and Kerry!

Pat Lee
MRA Chairman
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- Each state's license requirements are easily recognized in the State Identification Guide, a tool that you will already find behind the bar at most restaurants. These training guides are complete with color photos of each state license and available for operators to use as a reference.
- Massachusetts positions itself as a world class destination. It is time we updated our alcohol identification laws to reflect our global and regional economy. If you are a customer from Finland, come on in, if you happen to be from Rhode Island or New Hampshire, maybe not.

CLARIFY TIP POOLING LAW

This would simply permit an employee to work as a waitstaff employee on days the employee has no managerial responsibility. The employee would not be prohibited from having managerial duties on other days.

- These problems certainly fit under the framework of unintended consequences, and they are having a stifling effect on current earnings and career growth of many hard working employees in the food & beverage industry.
- Would allow employees in quick serve establishments to share in tips if they collaboratively prepared the customers food and all performed the same duties, provided they do not have managerial responsibility.

CURRENT ECONOMIC INDICATORS - MASSACHUSETTS MEALS TAX COLLECTIONS

APRIL 2018: \$95,148,259
APRIL 2017: \$87,198,010

9.1%
INCREASE



MAY 2018: \$97,732,914
MAY 2017: \$91,359,206

0.9%
INCREASE



YTD 2018: \$1,078,812,034
YTD 2017: \$1,031,267,038

4.6%
INCREASE
FY: JUL-JUN



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE (0-150 scale)

	United States	New England
JUNE	128.8	126.3
MAY	128.0	121.1
APRIL	128.7	138.1
MAR	127.7	117.2

UNEMPLOYMENT as of August 3, 2018

Massachusetts:
3.5%
United States:
3.8%

PRICES (YR OVER YR)

Wholesale food prices:
UP 0.5%
Menu prices:
UP 2.6%

MEMBERSHIP - UPCOMING EVENTS

We Never Want Summer to End

~~END OF SUMMER BUMMER~~ OPERATORS GOLF TOURNAMENT



August 14TH, 11am
Pinehills Golf Club: 54 Clubhouse Drive
Plymouth, MA

Cost: \$150 per person including Box lunch, golf and cart, post-tourney dinner and awards, and MRA camaraderie.

REGISTER HERE!

SAVE THE DATE
HARPOON BEERS & BITES: OYSTERS
Monday, September 10th

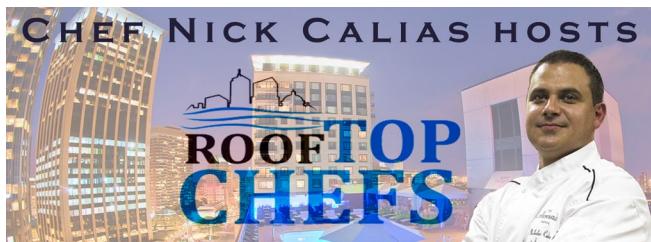


HARPOON

SAVE THE DATE for
BEERS & BITES: OYSTERS
September 10, 2018
7:30PM – 9:30PM
Harpoon Brewery, Boston

Registration will be open at the end of August, so keep an eye out for the ticket link!

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE REST OF THE SUMMERS' HOT LINEUP AT ROOFTOP CHEFS



Alternating Tuesdays through
September 11th

Click [here](#) for more details.





The MRA
Massachusetts Restaurant Association
Access • Influence • Protection

NATIONAL
RESTAURANT
ASSOCIATION

RIHA Rhode Island HOSPITALITY Association
Voice of Rhode Island's Lodging, Restaurant, and Tourism Industry.

2018 PAC FUNDRAISER WITH THE RIHA

Join us, along with the Rhode Island Hospitality Association, as we team up to raise Political Action Committee funds to support our efforts both nationally and within Massachusetts. **EACH STATE RETAINS 100% OF THEIR EFFORTS** - meaning MRA contributions will not flow to Rhode Island, nor the other way around.

September 19, 2018
4:30pm
Apex Entertainment
21 Apex Dr.
Marlborough, MA

CONTRIBUTION LEVELS*

THE STARTING LINE: \$150

THE LEAD AT THE FIRST TURN: \$250

SEPARATING FROM THE PAC(!): \$500

THE CHECKERED FLAG:
\$1,000

** Personal Checks/Credit Cards preferred, but Corporate Checks/Credit Cards are also accepted! Includes great food, camaraderie and non-alcoholic beverages. Adult libations available for purchase.

Please join the MRA Board immediately following our QUARTERLY meeting!

Now more than ever, we need your assistance in raising funds so that we can invest in our messaging and fend off the efforts of those not from within our industry who are attempting to radically change our business.

Join us at APEX Entertainment in Marlborough for great fun, entertainment and networking while helping the MRA fight the fight!

- Two years ago, comedy at the Kowloon Restaurant in Saugus.
- Last year Smerlas, DeOssie, cigars and gambling at Twin River Casino in Lincoln, RI.
- This year - Back home and let's play like kids again. Laser tag, giant games, bowling, and best of all - Electric Grand Prix Race Cars that go REALLY FAST!
- Including the ultimate showdown - Team MRA Drivers Versus Team RI Drivers for the Marlboro 50 Cup!!
- Come join us at the fabulous, brand new Apex Center in Marlborough for a truly memorable event!



REGISTER HERE

And last but not least...great fun, entertainment and networking while helping the MRA fight the fight!

AN ENJOYABLE EVENING AT THE COLONNADE ROOFTOP POOL PARTY

On Tuesday, July 31st, MRA members and friends got together at the beautiful Colonnade Hotel Rooftop Pool. The weather couldn't have been more perfect. Refreshing summer cocktails and - as always - delicious food. We hope you all enjoyed the evening as much as we did. Thanks to all who attended and to the Colonnade Hotel Boston for having us!

Check out more photos of the evening from our Facebook photo album [here](#).





Photo credit:
Cape Cod Times

BOB KERSHAW
Owner



WE ARE THE MRA MEMBER PROFILE

RESTAURANT: Sam Diego's Mexican Cookery & Bar

LOCATION: Hyannis, MA

YEAR FOUNDED: 1982

MRA MEMBER SINCE: 1982

WEBSITE: www.samdiegos.com

WHAT IS YOUR RESTAURANT SPECIALTY?

Tex-mex cuisine and deep-fried ice cream for dessert (we sell over 80 per day).

WHY IS THE MRA IMPORTANT TO YOU & YOUR BUSINESS?

Representing our industry interests regarding the overwhelming legislative issues that are having enormous adverse effects on restaurants here in Massachusetts.

Fun Facts about Sam Diego's Mexican Cookery and Bar

1. We've been serving both local and off-Cape visitors since 1982.
2. We opened our doors on August 31, 1982 out of necessity. We had \$25.00 remaining in our checkbook. Currently, our annual sales in Hyannis averages approximately \$5 million per year.
3. Our Plymouth Sam Diego's opened in 1995 in the historic Plymouth Fire Station located in the center of Main St., "A Block From The Rock".
4. In the year 2000, we expanded our restaurant from a seating capacity of 200 to 285 plus patio seating for an additional 65. We've never regretted it.
5. Approximately a quarter of our property is a rolling landscaped area; the only true "green space" on busy Rte. 132 in Hyannis. In 2001, we were awarded the "Cape Cod Betterment" award by the Cape Cod Chamber of our efforts to beautify this commercial area.
6. Our location in Hyannis is now the oldest existing building located on Rte. 132 in Hyannis.
7. Prior to our existence here, the prior restaurants at this location had a distinct Asian flare... The Cathay Inn, The Goten and The Akasaka Steak House.
8. Much of the eclectic artwork and sculptures throughout our restaurant were created by local artist Barrie Pinske, who now resides in Vermont. Barrie is well known nationally for his "chain saw" wood carvings. He's easy to recognize in Vermont... he's always got a "wood chip" on his shoulder.
9. The Cape Cod Mall, located just east of Sam's, used to be the location of the Storyland Theme Park back in the 1960's.
10. One of the original partners in Sam's goes by the name of "Whitey". He is an old surfer dude who still lives in Hawaii, travels extensively, bikes the volcanic mountain roads, wind and kite surfs and skis the slopes of Sun Valley at the age of 71. "The Dude Abides".

EDUCATION: SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



2018 MRAEF Scholarship Recipient
CELIA LIVOLSI



Name: Celia Livolsi

High School: Learning Prep School
Newton, Class of 2018

Culinary School: Johnson & Wales University,
Rhode Island

Who or what inspired you to pursue a career in the hospitality industry?

I was interested in hospitality before I knew there was a word for it- but have known that I would be majoring in Hospitality for 2+ years.

You're an MRAEF Scholarship recipient this year. Congratulations! What school will you be attending and what will you be studying?

Johnson and Wales, Providence for Hospitality and Hotel Management

If you could meet a well known industry professional who would it be and why?

Mr. Marriott. I have heard such wonderful things. Including the way he is still involved in his company even though he is retired. I have heard stories of how he places a great deal of importance on the "people" of hospitality. Including his employees as well as his customers!

From your experience in hospitality so far, what is the most important thing you've learned?

I am just starting out. I have not taken any classes yet but I am so excited to do so this Fall. I have been working in a family run restaurant for over two years and believe it to be very hard but rewarding work. I have made many connections and I believe that these connections have helped me to understand others better, and to become more tolerant. Not everyone is going to be happy all the time, and I had to grow a thicker skin- but with that, I have become stronger. Not everyone comes to the restaurant in a good mood, but I know part of my job is to do my best to make them comfortable and as happy as I can. In general, learning to approach all with a positive attitude helps me outside of the restaurant as well.

Do you have advice for students interested in pursuing a career in the hospitality industry?

Be yourself. Others will know when you are being fake and will be annoyed. That said, be yourself but put on a happy face. If you are in a bad mood, leave it at home the best you can. Your customers want to enjoy themselves and perhaps if you can bring them kindness and a smile, your bad mood will stay away even longer than you thought!

SAVE THE DATE - 2018 MRA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION SUMMIT



Tuesday, October 2, 2018
9:30 Registration • 10:00 Sessions begin

The Verve, Natick
1360 Worcester St
Natick, Massachusetts

The details are still in the works, but we have an extensive day planned with several sessions including social media, blogging, food trends, staff retention, growing your restaurant, and more!

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS INCLUDE:

LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA TO GROW YOUR RESTAURANT

Tiffany Lopinsky, Founder of Boston Foodies

LEADING TRENDS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF FOODS

Laura Abda, Founder + CEO of Branchfood

PANEL ON EXPANDING YOUR COMPANY

Bergmeyer

ROBOTICS - IS THIS THE FUTURE?

MIT graduates and founders of the world's first robotic kitchen, Spyce, will discuss their vision into reinventing fast casual dining.

CALL FOR INDUSTRY MENTORS



Would you like to help shape the future of our industry?

Volunteer to be a mentor for Massachusetts ProStart Schools! Click [here](#) to fill out the form.

2018 SERVSAFE TRAINING SCHEDULE

SERVSAFE MANAGER

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
September 10th & 17th	MRA	3-7pm
November 9th & 16th	MRA	3-7pm
December 4th & 18th	Kowloon	4-8pm

SERVSAFE ALCOHOL

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
September 17th	MRA	10-2pm
October 15th	MRA	3-7pm

SERVSAFE RECERTIFICATION

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
August 14th	MRA	3-7pm
October 16th	MRA	3-7pm
December 18th	MRA	3-7pm



CLASS LOCATIONS:

MRA:

160 East Main St, Ste 2, Westborough

KOWLOON:

948 Broadway, Saugus, MA

To sign up for a class, call (508) 573-4180.

CHOKE SAVING COURSES AVAILABLE AT THE MRA



Click [HERE](#) to register
and for more
information.

CURRENT CLASS SCHEDULE:

Thursday, October 18, 2018

Thursday, December 13, 2018

All classes are 10-11am.

CLASS LOCATION:

Massachusetts Restaurant Association
160 East Main Street, Suite 2
Westborough, MA 01581

WELCOME NEW MRA MEMBERS!

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATORS

D's Keys Dueling Pianos
391 D Street, 1A
Boston, MA 02210
(617) 531-0707
Robert Morse

Elm Square Oyster Co.
2 Elm Square
Andover, MA 01810
(781) 662-8382
Van Caldwell

Grid Hospitality
50 Franklin Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(781) 635-6127
James Hodgdon II

Lake George Tavern
2 Main Street
Wales, MA 01081
(413) 245-6509
George Karterakis

PUB 6T5 Bar & Grill
736 Ashley Blvd
New Bedford, MA 02745
(508) 995-6065
Richard Trapilo

Ristorante Lucia
11 Mt Vernon Street
Winchester, MA 01890
(781) 729-0515

Royalty Iron Grill
881 Blue Hill Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
(508) 864-1390
Boris Sapozhnikov

Shipwreck'd
PO Box 203
Hull, MA 02045
(781) 910-8438
Susan Regan

Wegmans - Natick
1245 Worcester Street
Natick, MA 01760
(508) 960-0100
Kelly Schoeneck

Wegmans - Medford
3850 Mystic Parkway
Medford, MA 02155
(781) 322-0985
Kelly Schoeneck

BUSINESS PARTNERS

Boston Web Power, Inc. (Website Development)
800 West Cummings Park
Woburn, MA 01801
(978) 505-8931
Xiaoyan Huang

Kirkiles & Associates (Insurance)
273 River Street
Norwell, MA 02061
(781) 659-3300
Elena Kirkiles

The Stonhard Group (Flooring/Retail)
1000 East Park Avenue
Maple Shade, NJ 08052
(800) 854-0310
Rick Dudley

WAND (Menus, Guest Checks, Etc.)
7575 Corporate Way
Bloomington, MN 55344
(952) 361-6200
Mark Rentz

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