

Weekly Record 2/15/06

Brewfest was managed in responsible manner

To the Editor:

Traditional approaches to reduce high-risk drinking, such as education and alcohol awareness activities, are necessary but insufficient when used alone, according to national research, and partnerships enhance success and safety. Our local experience continues to prove that, with BrewFest 2006 being the most recent example.

Ellensburg's first BrewFest, in 2005, was considered a good event, but the Washington State Liquor Control Board (LCB) cited several areas needing improvement, including overservice of patrons, service of patrons without proper identification, inadequate communication with Ellensburg Police Department (EPD), and drinking in public (outside of venues).

The 2006 BrewFest Planning Committee remedied these issues through collaboration with the Campus-Community Coalition, the Liquor Control Board, and the Ellensburg Police Department. A mandatory training requirement was instituted for BrewFest volunteers regarding ID checks and overservice. The day of the event, six LCB and several EPD officers patrolled the

venues and supported volunteers. The result? According to this year's LCB report, "There was a world of difference between last year and this year's event. The committee addressed every issue that we brought to their attention." In addition, the report stated that "the volunteers were awesome and very organized with a focused mission."

The BrewFest provided a winter boost for downtown businesses while taking steps to guard against overservice and ensure that minors were not served. This partnership is working to enhance the success and safety of events in our community.

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