

WINNERS SELECTED FOR NEW RESTAURANT BEER AND WINE LICENSES IN HELENA, EAST HELENA

HELENA, Montana – Governor Brian Schweitzer drew the names of the lucky individuals and businesses who will receive the 8 new restaurant beer and wine licenses now available in Helena and East Helena. The lottery drawing was held at the City/County Building earlier today.

"It's a big day for restaurants in Helena and East Helena," said Dan Bucks, director of the Montana Department of Revenue. "These licenses will allow restaurants to serve a glass of beer or wine with dinner. It will make these businesses more viable and help our economy grow."

The individuals and businesses who will receive the 8 new restaurant beer and wine licenses are:

1. High Plains Pizza, Inc. (W. Kent and Michael Colvin, Tracy L. Colvin Irrevocable Family Trust Agreement, shareholders) 2. WHC 820, LLC (WHC 820-M, LLC, sole member) 3. Emrye Enterprises, LLC (Tim J. Kennedy, sole member) 4. James Beck 5. Las Casa Fiesta, Inc. (Deb Lindsey, sole shareholder) 6. Genki, Inc. (Jerry Lai, sole shareholder) 7. Sarah's Blue Ribbon Porkies, LLC (Robert M. Ronan Sr., Mary Sarah Ronan, and Robert M. Ronan Jr., members) 8. Ellen Mary H. Beck

More than 40 applicants vied for the new licenses in Helena and East Helena. Statewide, a total of 531 qualified applicants are entered in the lottery vying for a chance at one of the 124 new licenses available.

"We have seen a lot of interest in these licenses, because offering beer and wine with dinner provides economic opportunity for the businesses" said Bucks.

Restaurant beer and wine licenses are on-premise licenses that allow for the serving of beer or wine with a food order. Wine or beer may be served between the hours of 11 a.m. and 11 p.m. At least 65% of the restaurant's gross income must be derived from food sales. The restaurant cannot have gambling on its premises.

The 2007 Legislature passed Senate Bill 296, essentially doubling the number of restaurant beer and wine licenses in cities with a population of more than 5,000. Cities with a population under 5,000 receive an additional four licenses for each quota area. The legislation was the first significant change in these licenses in ten years.

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