

DRINK

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"In today's society everybody wants to put the blame on somebody else. People should have to take responsibility for their own actions," Ewell said.

Roger Meyland, part-owner of Troll's, said he agreed.

"The way to solve the drunk-driving problem is to prosecute the hell out of those people and enforce the laws," he said. "People should also be educated at an earlier age about drinking and driving."

Meyland also said he thought a higher drinking age would put more drunk drivers on the road.

"It's going to take people away from downtown where they can walk where they're going. People will start having keg parties at the apartment complexes and they'll have to drive to get there," he said.

Meyland said Chapel Hill

could not support all the bars that currently serve only beer if the new law is enacted in North Carolina. There are five such bars in Chapel Hill: Troll's, Henderson Street Bar, He's Not Here, The Upper Deck and Linda's.

"This is going to put at least two places out of business," Meyland said. "How can you run a business when you're apprehensive about what's going to happen five months down the road? When you're worried that the federal government might come in and do something that's going to put you out of business?"

Beer drinkers will not only find fewer places to go but will also pay higher prices for their beer, said both Meyland and Upper Deck manager Joe Townsend.

"Prices are going to skyrocket to make up for the business that's going to be lost," Townsend said.

"The federal government doesn't realize how much state revenue will be lost," Townsend said the state would lose one dollar for every case of beer not sold to bars because of the higher drinking age.

The higher drinking age will also leave many employees of bars and restaurants without

jobs. Townsend said The Upper Deck currently employs three people who are under 21. These people would be unable to serve alcoholic beverages because they are under age. Ewell said that about three-fourths of the staff at Spanky's were under 21.

Townsend also said he thought the higher drinking age would put

more drunk drivers on the road. "It's not going to stop anybody from drinking. There will just be a lot more driving around and drinking."

Kim Scott, manager of Linda's, suggested another solution to the problem: "They ought to raise the driving age instead of the drinking age."

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