

# Beer's alcohol limit could rise

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
 RALEIGH — North Carolina beer drinkers moved closer Tuesday to sipping stronger brews after a Senate committee approved a bill raising the alcohol-content limit.

North Carolina is only one of six states that caps the alcohol content of beer at 6 percent — a law dating back 70 years.

The measure would raise the limit to 15 percent, allowing more foreign "craft brewed" brands to be sold in the state and letting home-grown microbreweries develop new variations of beer.

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity," said Julie Bradford of Durham, co-founder of the "Pop the Cap" campaign to lift the limit. "A lot of brewers in North Carolina are looking forward to expanding their portfolios."

The Senate Commerce Committee recommended the bill to the full chamber after little

debate — a contrast to the hand-wringing within the House before its approval in May.

At the time, the bill was nearly derailed as some legislators tried to raise the tax on higher alcohol-content beers to levels comparable with those on wine and liquor.

Rep. Stephen LaRoque, R-Lenoir, the bill's primary sponsor, told the Senate panel that the microbrewing industry — much like the state's burgeoning wine business — would grow and potentially create 300 jobs if the bill passed.

The Rev. Mark Creech of the Christian Action League of North Carolina argued raising the alcohol limit could open the way to liquor sales at grocery stores, instead of at state-run stores.

Young people also would be attracted to higher alcohol malt liquor beverages that would allow them to become intoxicated faster, he said.

"They like the quick buzz and fast high that it creates," Creech said. "There's no way to win with this legislation unless you vote it down."

Sen. Harris Blake, R-Moore, the only committee member to vote against the bill, said he wanted to stand against the dangers of alcohol abuse by young people.

But these brews are more apt to be bought by adults because they're more expensive than popular national brands and are sought for their exceptional tastes, LaRoque said.

"These are folks that might buy organic vegetables or go to finer restaurants," he said. He added later: "It's a specialty-type product."

The Outer Banks Brewing Station in Kill Devil Hills already offers a rotation of 20 different beer varieties, co-owner Eric Reece said, but they'll be able to make many more if the bill is passed and signed into law by Gov. Mike Easley.

# Bush preps for Supreme Court justice nomination

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court retirement watch is far from over. After Sandra Day O'Connor's surprise announcement last week, the attention is focused again on ailing Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and the prospect of simultaneous high court openings for the first time in 34 years.

President Bush, who is traveling in Europe this week, plans to focus on a handful of prospective replacements for O'Connor over the next few weeks, an aide said Tuesday. That gives Rehnquist more time to ponder his future.

He could join O'Connor in retiring, setting the stage for a double nomination and Senate confirmation fight. Or he could remain on the job, overseeing the court through its first turnover since 1994.

So far Rehnquist, who is 80, has given no hints. His health is the biggest question. He received radiation and chemotherapy last fall

for thyroid cancer. While his condition improved enough for him to return to the bench in March, he's appeared frail in recent weeks.

"My guess is now that O'Connor has stood down, the White House is fully prepared for both possibilities," said Pat Buchanan, who advised Presidents Nixon and Reagan on Supreme Court vacancies.

O'Connor, 75, said Friday she would be leaving after 24 years to spend time with her husband, who is ill. The announcement was a surprise since most attention had been focused on Rehnquist.

It's unclear whether Rehnquist had any advance notice about O'Connor's plans and her action may keep the chief justice on the court longer.

"I would think it (a second retirement) is less likely because the politics would become extremely messy for the president, the Senate and the court," said John Yoo, who

worked in the Bush administration and as the Senate Judiciary Committee's general counsel.

If Rehnquist steps down soon, it would give the president time to name a successor and allow the Senate to hold confirmation hearings in September.

The Supreme Court does not meet again until October.

If Rehnquist retires, Bush could elevate a court conservative like Thomas or Justice Antonin Scalia, and name two new associate justices. It's considered more likely he'll go outside the court rather than elevating Thomas or Scalia.

The last two Supreme Court vacancies were in 1993 and 1994, during President Clinton's first term. Regardless of Rehnquist's decision, liberal and conservative groups are already waging a big-dollar fight over the court's future. Both sides are running advertisements, even though no nominee has been announced.

## ANIMAL CARE

FROM PAGE 3  
 fessionalism of Marotto further, Harvey said.

"We felt that he would bring the right skills that we would need as we introduce the new department," she said. "He was the candidate that we found the most striking in his knowledge, ability and presentation."

Marotto has 11 years of experi-

ence from comparable positions, including serving as the manager for the Animal Care and Control Program in Minneapolis. There, he led all animal control operations as well as all business activities for the program.

"We believe Bob brings a rich background and dedication to animal services," said Orange County Manager John Link in a press release. "We look forward to Bob joining the Orange County team."

The county is currently accepting applications from those who would like to serve on the Animal Services Advisory Board. The board will include volunteers as well as a veterinarian.

Applications can be downloaded from the county Web site at [www.co.orange.nc.us](http://www.co.orange.nc.us) or by calling Monica Evans at 245-2125.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

## BUDGET

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 committee.

"(The Democrats) don't like to add outside input; they like to talk amongst themselves," said Sen. Robert Pittenger, R-Mecklenburg. "It's a very closed discussion."

Even with some private committee meetings, there is still ample opportunity for committee nonmembers to influence the budget negotiations, said Rep. Bill Owens, D-Pasquotank, committee co-chairman.

"The conference committee is not a public meeting per se," Owens said. "There's plenty of public meetings before anything becomes final."

But Pittenger maintained that closed-door meetings on the budget should not be allowed.

"The only way (the Democrats) can succeed is in a hush room," he said. "They succeed in the dark of night."

Bell said the gravitas of the issues could warrant private discussions. "I feel most of the time when you are negotiating big hard legis-

lation like that, you have to be able to speak openly and frankly with people without getting quoted in the newspapers," Bell said.

"It's much more complicated than probably the average person would think."

Finishing the budget will effectively end the current session of the General Assembly, Swindell said.

"Maybe three more weeks or so on the budget and then a week or two wrapping things up."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## WAL-MART

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 Zaffron said a major concern for Carrboro was the Smith Level Corridor, an area which aldermen have tried to maintain in its rural character.

A project of this magnitude, Zaffron feared, could lead the N.C. Department of Transportation to widen the road.

Harrison added that though areas of the highway around Chatham County are being widened to four lanes, the center still could be problematic.

"If it's not done very carefully, you'd have a real messy piece of roadway," he said.

Other concerns centered on how the center could potentially impact locally owned business were it to be built.

Harrison recalled the construction of the New Hope Commons development on the Orange-Durham border, noting that the shopping center resulted in several businesses shutting their doors.

But the fears from officials in Chapel Hill and Carrboro could be unfounded.

Chatham County Manager

Charlie Horne said the project has yet to become a reality.

He said county staff have been told that while Chatham County was a potential site, no application has been received as of yet.

"Until it comes up, we are just speculating," he said.

Horne added that it would be up to the Chatham County commissioners as to how they would respond to the requests of the aldermen and town council members.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

## THE Daily Crossword

By Alan P. Olschwang

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### ACROSS

- 1 Amorphous mass
- 5 Jimmy of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
- 10 Film/flop
- 14 VIP's wheels
- 15 Dogma
- 16 Operatic song
- 17 Hydrox rival
- 18 Start of Jean Kerr quote
- 20 Armored vehicle
- 21 Whitney's invention
- 22 Fox of the Sox
- 23 Tibetan monk
- 25 Idee
- 26 Part 2 of quote
- 29 Alter again
- 33 Half-pints
- 34 QB option
- 35 Game of marbles
- 36 Greek letters
- 37 Part 3 of quote
- 39 Recently deceased
- 40 Schedule abbr.
- 41 Wildebeests
- 42 Eagle's nest
- 43 Microwave setting
- 45 Part 4 of quote
- 47 Woe is me!
- 48 Australian birds
- 49 Skater Dorothy
- 52 Med. scan
- 53 Acacia or baobab
- 57 End of quote
- 59 Strung up
- 60 Indy-winner

### Luyendyk

- 61 Mistake
- 62 Ray of "Battle Cry"
- 63 Anglers' gear
- 64 Diplomat Silas
- 65 Scottish loch

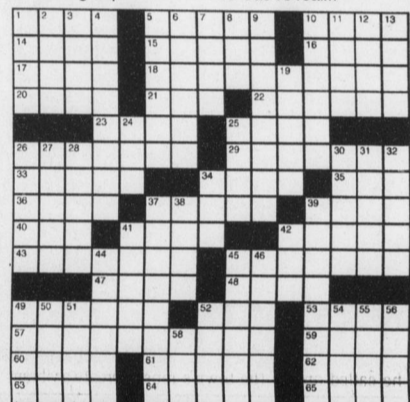
### DOWN

- 1 Ink smudge
- 2 Old Italian bread?
- 3 Harbinger
- 4 Light reading?
- 5 Mark of disgrace
- 6 Strip on the highway
- 7 Party to
- 8 Back row pin
- 9 Most insensitive
- 10 Cried loudly
- 11 Preacher Roberts
- 12 Short skirt
- 13 Moderate
- 19 Second largest state
- 24 Dem. candidate of the '50s

- 25 Lady of the haus
- 26 Tire pattern
- 27 Bizarre
- 28 Devour greedily
- 30 Space Invaders company
- 31 Outdoor dining area
- 32 Twixt
- 34 IBM units
- 37 Like some 38D
- 38 Kernels
- 39 Falling short of
- 41 Gee whiz!
- 42 Island group in the

- Moluccas
- 44 "Hail the Conquering Hero" star Ella
- 45 Dancing Castle
- 46 Political exile
- 49 Icy frost
- 50 Big hairdo
- 51 Robin's Marian, for one
- 52 Actress Sorvino
- 54 As a \_\_\_ (usually)
- 55 Conclusions
- 56 Teamwork obstacles
- 58 Otto's realm

COAT MIDAS ABET  
 HANA ADELA TRUE  
 IFTHECAMEL TURN  
 ORB OPT ENOS  
 ONCEGETSHISNOISE  
 POL OTO SEED  
 ARAB HRE REESES  
 RARER INA MEANT  
 THESEA ARM SURE  
 ESTA CAT DOE  
 TENTHISBODYWILL  
 INIT STL EPA  
 MUNI SOONFOLLOW  
 IRON URANO LORE  
 DIENG ESTER SMEE

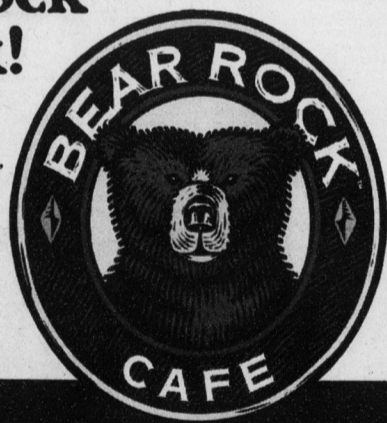


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