

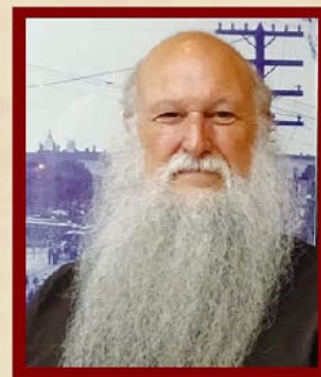
Peter Schemm and Son

BRANCH OF

THE ROBERT SMITH ALE BREWING CO.

TWENTY-FIFTH AND POPLAR STS.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.



President's Message

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Joyous Festivus, whatever you celebrate, be happy.

Using Christmas to sell beer is almost as old as advertising. After prohibition however, when the 21st amendment to the Constitution gave broad powers to the States to regulate alcohol, the anti-alcohol forces began to wage war on using Christmas, especially Santa, as a venue to sell alcohol. By 1936, States began to pass laws against it, and the picturing of Santa "or other biblical figures" was outlawed in most states. They still snuck through periodically. Anheuser-Busch used Santa with the Clydesdales in the 40s and 50s, but when they put a Santa suit on Spuds MacKenzie in 1987, they really stirred things up. Several States banned the advertising as violating the Santa statute, and of course enticing the wee tots to drink beer. Believe it or not, it wasn't until 2005, when several States sought to ban the import of "Bad Santa" that importer Shelton Brothers and the ACLU took the States to court. The States backed down, and now Santa can lend endorsements to all the breweries he wishes. But stay away from that red nosed reindeer unless you want a cease and desist order from the Gene Autry Estate for Christmas.

I have the prohibitionists on my mind lately. Every time I turn on the TV I see the health gurus, whom I generally rank with snake oil salesmen, warning that "the most comprehensive study ever" shows that the slightest drop of alcohol is bad for you. Before you worry about keeling over dead with that next beer and burning in hell for eternity for loving brewery advertising, read at least part of the actual study. Analyzing data from 15 to 95-year-olds, the researchers compared people who did not drink at all with those who had one alcoholic drink a day. They found that out of 100,000 non-drinkers, 914 would develop a health problem such as cancer or suffer an injury. An extra four people would be affected if they drank one alcoholic drink a day. For people who had two alcoholic drinks a day, 63 more developed a condition within a year and for those who consumed five drinks every day, there was an increase of 338 people, who developed a health problem or suffered an injury. By virtue of manipulating statistics, you hear repeatedly that you have a "37% greater chance" of getting a disease if you drink – not that you have a 3/10 of one percent likelihood of contracting a disease or having an accident at the 5 drink a day level (not that you should be drinking that much!).

Professor David Spiegelhalter, Winton Professor for the Public Understanding of Risk at the University of Cambridge, summed it all up nicely: "Given the pleasure presumably associated with moderate drinking, claiming there is no 'safe' level does not seem an argument for abstention," he said. "There is no safe level of driving, but the government does not recommend that people avoid driving. Come to think of it, there is no safe level of living, but nobody would recommend abstention."

Now go have a beer and don't worry about it!



Dale

