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## Free help with taxes

▼ *Volunteers file returns for residents in need*

By SEAN McPHERSON  
*The Mirror*

With tax time coming, help is available for the most cash-strapped people.

The United Way of King County has organized a service called the Free Tax Preparation Campaign for low-income residents to prepare and file their taxes.

See TAXES, page A4



Photos by Andy Hobbs/The Mirror

Jason Olson lines up bottles of microbrew beer for a customer's checkout Saturday at 99 Bottles in Federal Way. Olson, a friend of store owners Craig and Tiffany Adamowski, began a love affair with specialty beers when "I started buying my own beer," he said. "I started on Red Hook, and now I never touch the stuff."

## Police

## Beer hunters pursue wild microbrews

▼ *Craft and import brewers lure connoisseurs and curious palates in a multimillion-dollar industry*

By MARGO HORNER  
*The Mirror*

### WA brews

- 82 breweries operate in Washington. Most are small breweries producing less than 10,000 barrels a year.
- The beer industry in Washington accounts for more than \$25 million in wages and an overall economic contribution of more than \$200 million. The industry also generates more than 18,000 jobs and nearly \$500 million in taxes.
- In 2003, hop growers in Washington produced 40,000 of the 54,000 pounds of hops grown in the United States. Most hop farms are located in Yakima and Benton counties.

Source: Washingtonbeer.com



Federal Way resident Brian Walker scans the selection of specialty beers Saturday at 99 Bottles. "I'll take an import over a Budweiser any day," said Walker, a self-confessed beer connoisseur.

See BEER, page A2

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## BEER

### ▼ *Rare brands are in demand*

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CONTINUED FROM A1

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variety, with more than 400 different beers. They come with names like Hairy Eyeball, Purple Haze and Arrogant Bastard. Some are sweet, some are sour, some are bitter and some are malty.

One beer, Lane Creek's Huckleberry and Honey, tastes like blueberry muffins.

The selections range in alcohol content from 4 percent to nearly 14 percent.

The Adamowskis can tell you about them all. They know which beers taste good with cheese and which beers are used for steaming mussels. They know a few that would be good for dessert.

"We've got some of the world's best beer," Tiffany Adamowski said.

For those who are less adventurous, 99 Bottles does sell Budweiser and Coors.

"You've got people that are used to drinking that, and we don't want to make people feel uncomfortable," Adamowski said.

The Adamowskis got the idea for a specialty beer store when Craig, a beer distributor for grocery stores and restaurants, noticed people kept stopping him to inquire about certain brands of beer.

Rare brands and imports were hard to find without traveling to Seattle or Tacoma. The Adamowskis saw an unfilled demand for more beer.

Since the store opened, the Adamowskis have seen more than 100 customers each day.

People who gathered there Saturday travelled from Maple Valley, Tacoma, Puyallup and Covington in search of better beer.

"Oh my God, this is the coolest place ever," said Mandi Burks of Tacoma.

Puyallup resident Elliot Fager was picking out a selection of German imported beers. He was happy to find some of his favorite brands.

"I lived there for a year and this just brings back memories," Fager said, holding up a bottle of Weihenstephaner. "They've needed something like this for a

long time."

Brent Pennington of Maple Valley was amazed to find a beer bottled with a cork.

"I might buy that just to display," he said. "I think it's cool that they got all the stuff that they don't have in the grocery store."

Pennington's wife, Amy, said now she knows what to buy her husband for Valentine's Day.

"It's a good gift, that's the first thing I thought," she said.

Tiffany Adamowski invites folks to stop by and try a new beer. Even those who already have a favorite beer might find something they enjoy.

"Life's too short to have one kind of favorite beer," she said.

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# Craft breweries thrive in Pacific Northwest

By **ANDY HOBBS**  
*The Mirror*

The Pacific Northwest may unofficially claim the crown as America's microbrewing hub.

Microbrews, also known as craft beers, offer drinkers an alternative to the mainstream light beers whose likenesses dominate sporting events and TV commercials.

An Oregon state law allowing consumption of beer on brewery premises helped kick off the region's microbrew craze in the 1980s. In fact, Portland is home to more breweries per capita than any other U.S. city with 28 and counting, according to a New York Times article.

Washington state features its fair share of independent breweries, each dedicated to putting its own stamp on the beverage.

The state boasts 82 breweries, with most producing less than 10,000 barrels a year. Likewise, Washington's beer industry generates more than 18,000 jobs and nearly \$500 million in taxes, according to Washingtonbeer.com.

Brewers such as Lyle Morse, president of Fish Brewing in Olympia, spend an extraordinary



Andy Hobbs/The Mirror

*Lyle Morse, president of Fish Brewing in Olympia, describes the complexities of Fish Tale Organic Amber Ale during a beer tasting event Feb. 3 at 99 Bottles in Federal Way.*

amount of effort perfecting their beer recipes and treating them like drinkable art.

While pouring samples to customers Saturday at 99 Bottles, a specialty beer store in Federal Way, Morse explained the subtle differences among styles as well

as the science behind them.

Federal Way resident Brian Walker perused the store's selection of ales, lagers, porters and more while sipping a small cup of Fish Brewing beer.

"I'm definitely a beer connoisseur," Walker said. "I'd take an import over a Budweiser any day."

The microbrew culture also satisfies adventurous palates in search of that distinct taste of hops, the flower responsible for much of beer's flavor.

Perhaps it's no coincidence that Washington is also the nation's leading hops producer, cranking out 40,000 pounds of hops annually.

Hop lovers especially relish the intense bitterness of India pale

## Beer facts

- **Pilsener:** A modern pilsener has a very light, clear color from pale to golden yellow. Examples of pilseners include Beck's, Labatt Blue, St. Pauli Girl and Gilde Pilsener.

- **Lager:** The main difference between ales and lagers is that lagers use bottom-fermenting yeast. Examples of lagers include Budweiser, Heineken, Harp, Foster's, Amstel, Moosehead, Negro Modelo, Samuel Adams and Red Stripe.

- **Ale:** Brewed using top-fermenting yeasts, ales are usually fermented at higher temperatures than lagers. This diverse category includes pale ales, India pale ales, barley wines, brown ales, Hefeweizen (wheat beer) and Belgian ales. Examples include Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Dogfish Head IPA, Stone IPA, Newcastle and Red Hook ESB.

- **Porter:** A dark beer that often features a roasted malt, nut, chocolate, molasses or coffee flavor. Examples include Anchor Porter, Alaskan Smoked Porter, Deschutes Black Butte Porter and Sierra Nevada Porter.

- **Stout:** Similar to porters, stouts are dark and strong beers. Examples include Guinness, Beamish, Murphy's and Samuel Smith's Oatmeal Stout.

- **Hops:** The female flowers from this plant are used for flavoring and stabilizing during beer brewing.

- **International Bitterness Units scale,** also known as the IBU scale: This provides a reading of the bitterness of beer. The higher the number, the more bitter the beer. Hops play the prominent role in a beer's bitterness.