



LIFE IN LIQUOR

A community reaches its breaking point and protests liquor stores invading their neighborhoods.
 words by ALAURYN MOORE • design by AMAL HASSAN

On the morning of July 30, Louisville citizens took to the streets, even though it was cloudy and raining, and headed toward the closest Family Dollar to object to the corporation's application to sell liquor in 23 locations throughout Louisville's western and southern neighborhoods. Protesters stood in front of the stores with picket signs in hand and a demand for change.

The communities of the West End did not want these 23 Family Dollars to join the 175 stores that already sell alcohol. Of those stores, more than half of them are located west of Ninth Street.

Now, "stores" doesn't refer to restaurants with a classy wine menu or hotels with a bar in the lobby. In fact, it doesn't refer to bars at all; it just refers to liquor stores whose sole purpose is to sell alcohol. When Family Dollar submitted those 23 liquor license applications, West End residents decided they'd endured enough.

If you were to walk down the street in the east end, you

would find grocery stores with fresh produce, sit-down family restaurants, and coffee shops. If you were to walk in the West End, you might see a liquor store every few blocks, mostly fast food restaurants, and if you're in the right spot, maybe one of two Kroger locations.

The slew of liquor stores has been a common complaint among West End residents due to the abundance of businesses that sell alcohol. Adding more liquor stores is not ideal when it comes to the revitalization of the neighborhoods because it serves as a continual roadblock for the recuperation of these communities.

Jackie Floyd is the neighborhood liaison for the Center for Neighborhoods, an organization that works toward community engagement and education throughout Louisville — but when it comes to the issue of liquor licenses and alcohol sales, she speaks as a concerned West End resident.

"Why do you want to sell in our community? Are you just in our

community to make a profit or are you more concerned about meeting the West End's needs?" Floyd said.

West End residents, including Floyd, find it upsetting that there are more cheap alcohol sales in communities that already struggle with addiction. According to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, there are approximately 88,000 deaths annually due to alcohol abuse. That makes it the third leading lifestyle death in the nation.

"Are you just in our community to make a profit or are you more concerned about meeting the West End's needs?"

-Jackie Floyd, Liaison for the Center for Neighborhoods

So why are businesses increasing the amount of alcohol in these neighborhoods, knowing that people are suffering every day from the amount of alcohol in their communities?



LOCAL ACTIVIST On Oct. 8, Jackie Floyd stands with her grandson, Shaun Cooksey, outside of a Family Dollar on 15th Street and Market Street that attempted to obtain a liquor license. "Why should the community accept the fact that even more liquor is being put into their community?" Floyd said. **Photo by MARSHALL GAULT**



PROXIMITY Advertisements for alcohol, cigarettes, and gambling clutter the street corner of 6th Street and Winkler Street on Oct. 8. **Photo by MARSHALL GAULT**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention stated that there were 1,351 deaths each year in Kentucky due to alcohol abuse between 2006 and 2008. Of the 50 states, Kentucky is the 15th leading state in alcohol death rates per 100,000 people. Furthermore, Louisville has the highest rate of alcohol consumption in the state.

“I hope that one day we can all reach a point to where we can all be on the same page in terms of revitalization.”

-Takoda Coleman, 16

However, Louisville isn't the only city facing this issue. Underprivileged neighborhoods in cities throughout the Midwest have seen an increasingly heavy presence of liquor stores.

For example, Family Dollar also attempted to introduce alcohol sales into underprivileged neighborhoods in both Dayton and Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Dayton City commission denied the business' applications, but in Cincinnati, nine locations have received licenses to sell alcohol since September of last year.

To people like Floyd, it's exhausting to watch businesses receive liquor licenses despite little increase in things like grocery stores and family restaurants.

“Why should the community accept the fact that even more liquor is being put into their community if there is already an abundant amount of places to purchase it?” Floyd said.

There is a drastic gap in economic development that different Louisville groups are striving to fill in order to make it equal across the board, no matter what the five-digit zip code is.

Groups such as OneWest – a local nonprofit focused on bringing investment to West Ends neighborhoods – work to revitalize the West End while maintaining its culture and history. They strive to widen the range of retail goods and services as well as transform the streetscape with significant beautification to attract businesses.

They are also working to increase economic prosperity that will help stabilize the housing market, enhance access to services, improve health and safety, and instill a renewed sense of pride in the West End.

According to their website, OneWest plans to reach these goals with the help of individual donors, foundations, corporate donors, and government sources.

Louisville's history helps explain why things are still the way they are. The West End of Louisville has been oppressed through redlining, generational and multidimensional poverty for decades. In 1933 the Home Owners Loan Corporation created redlining maps of residential neighborhoods based on their desirability for investment.

Each neighborhood was assigned a letter grade of an “A” through “D”. Predominantly white neighborhoods usually received an “A” or “B”. While, most black, Latinx, and other ethnic groups were given a “C” or “D”, which abolished their chance of having mortgage insurance or credit for decades. To this day, we still have the effects of redlining in the West End. Redlining is largely to blame for Louisville's ranking as the fourth most segregated city in America.

It's not as if no one's ever tried to reduce these lasting effects. They have. It's just that, oftentimes, revitalization efforts either come up short, or have unintended consequences.

Park DuValle is a prime example of a neighborhood that was renovated and now

the houses and streets look completely different; it was somewhat stripped of its historical character.

Many West End residents, like Takoda Coleman, a 16-year-old junior at duPont Manual High School, are worried that the revitalization of these neighborhoods are coming from people who aren't as knowledgeable about the historical aspects of the areas.

“I hope that one day we can all reach a point to where we can all be on the same page in terms of revitalization,” Coleman said.

If there is no advancement, the rest of Louisville will continue to look at West End neighborhoods as the “poor neighborhoods” of Louisville. Even though neighborhoods are in desperate need of revitalization, they are also at risk of losing their character. These are problems the West End has been dealing with for years: How does a community balance growth of new businesses with the preservation of history? How can it ensure that new investment will affect residents in a positive way?

There aren't easy answers to those questions, but on Sept. 28, West End residents saw a change for the better. More specifically, 23 Louisville Family Dollar locations received letters from the Department of Codes and Regulations, informing them that their liquor license requests had been denied.

The reason? Community protests. Residents said they didn't want more alcohol in their neighborhoods, and the city listened. Of course, for every case of an establishment failing to obtain a liquor license, there are plenty cases of businesses succeeding. However, protesters who were against the Family Dollars selling liquor saw their voices make a direct impact, and to them, that's a step in the right direction. •

TURNING TABLES

This Portland restaurant is giving back to its community, one meal at a time.

words by EVAN SHOWALTER & MATTIE TOWNSON • design by MAGGIE GEDIMAN

was covered in sink water and leftover soup. Thankfully, the shirt that The Table provided protected me from the splashing water flying off the dishes.

Laughter echoed through the kitchen, bouncing off the tile floors and stainless steel ovens. In the back, a worker nicknamed “Money” was systematically washing, scrubbing, and disinfecting the dishes. He bumped his head up and down as he rapped along to music from his headphones. His singing filled the room, mixing with the clanking of pots and pans like a kitchen orchestra.

As my fellow reporter, Mattie, and our photographer, Noah, washed the dishes, the mountain of plates, silverware, and kitchen equipment slowly dwindled down to a smaller pile. Eventually, there was nothing but an empty counter. All of the previous work was worth the tasty reward of my melty grilled cheese sandwich paired with The Table's signature parmesan-sprinkled fries, free of charge.

The Table is a local non-profit restaurant devoted to providing locally grown food to the people of Louisville. To satisfy their mission to serve, share, support,

and provide, The Table uses methods of paying tailored to the customer's needs. These four methods include options to pay what you can afford and then pay the rest through service, pay the full amount of the meal price like a traditional restaurant, pay more than the suggested amount to pay it forward for the next customer, or pay it forward for someone else through your service, whether that be by sweeping, washing dishes, or helping in the kitchen.

Though the restaurant was started through the Church of Promise, their day-to-day operations are not inherently religious; The Table has become a hub for the Portland community. Some people only think of Portland as being a crime-ridden area, but The Table is working to replace these negative images by showcasing Portland's lesser-known but rich culture, diversity, and generosity.

“We have people that live in the community, we have people that work in the community, we have people from downtown, we have people that might be homeless. You just see all people gathered together in one room that normally probably wouldn't be around each other,”

Tara Mattingly, the Front of House Manager at The Table, said.

Inspired by the food insecurity in the area, The Table has made an effort to serve while building relationships with the people through their volunteer process. The Table has found a new way to provide affordable food for the Portland community.

“There's a lot of soup kitchens around Louisville but here, you get to build a relationship with those people,” Mattingly said. “You get to work side by side with them, you get to find out about their life and you get to share life.”

Normally, restaurants are merely a business interaction between customers and the restaurant, but at the Table, there's much more than that. Their mission isn't to make money. Their mission is to serve and support the community. The Table certainly shaped our outlook on how restaurants operate.

We left the Table with full stomachs and a sense of accomplishment. Our backs ached from all the washing, sweeping, scrubbing, and drying. However, none of us complained. The food and inviting aura of The Table made the whole experience worth it. •