

# Business

## Okanagan breweries hopping

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Typically the beverage of choice for many in the Okanagan is wine as they coo over the plentiful vineyards, but the barley and hops isn't so bad either.

Not that the local breweries feel slighted in any way by their wine-making friends.

"We feel very privileged to be a micro-brewery in the middle of wine-country. We have a saying here at the Cannery Brewing Company that it takes a lot of good beer to make a fine bottle of wine," said Patt Dyck, Cannery Brewing manager. "That is a very true comment because our very best customers have been vintners of this valley. When a winemaker goes home at the end of the day he is looking for a beer."

Two Penticton breweries were recently named among *Business in Vancouver* magazine's top-25 largest breweries in the province. Included is Cannery Brewing Company ranked at number 17 and Tin Whistle Brewing at 25.

The rankings were based on 2008 sales volume at B.C. government liquor stores. Other Okanagan breweries recognized are Kelowna's Tree Brewing ranked at number 10 and Vernon-based Okanagan Springs Brewery at number four.

"The more people that are out there making good beer, the more the customer gets to drink good beer and they get used to drinking good beer. It cycles around and it reinforces the craft brewed industry as a whole, so when any of us can grow it's a positive thing," said Dyck.

The Cannery Brewing Company was formed in 2000 when a



Mark Brett/Western News

**MANAGER PATT DYCK** of the Cannery Brewing dispenses a mug of the company's finest at the local facility. The business along with Penticton's Tin Whistle Brewing were among the top 25 breweries in BC based on sales named recently by a Vancouver magazine.

**"... it takes a lot of good beer to make a fine bottle of wine."**

— Patt Dyck

couple of like-minded brewing-enchanted folks came together. Ron and Patt Dyck were operating Country Squire Restaurant in Naramata and wanted a new direction.

It was then that brew master Terry Schoffer convinced them to join forces with him and they brewed their first batch of beer in the Cannery on April Fool's Day in 2001.

Now they have a col-

lection of nine different beers, including two seasonal beers and a one-shot beer they made in the fall called the Wildfire Indian Pale Ale that is a tribute to the firefighters of the Valley. The brewery is now preparing a Maple Stout that is a winter seasonal in huge demand.

At Tin Whistle Brewery they are busy brewing six different beers and are working on a limited edition Chocolate Cherry Porter

for the winter season.

"I think that the Okanagan should be known for its breweries too. I think the wine industry has helped the breweries because we do get people coming in for beer tastings that are also doing wine tastings, but I do think that people need to look at beer differently. Beers are now available in many different kinds and they pair up with foods just like wines do," said Tin Whistle Brewery owner Lorraine Nagy.

Amongst Tin Whistle's selections include two fruit beers. Because they brew in small batches it gives Tin Whistle more control of the beer, and in return, a higher-quality beer.