

How To Talk Beer In Washington State (If You're A Politician)

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KUOW
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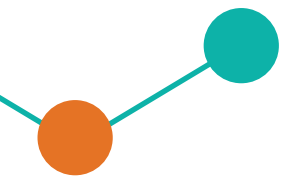
If Larry Adams, a bartender at Blue Moon Tavern, were serving Bernie Sanders, he'd give him cider. A can of Schilling, because that's what they have there.

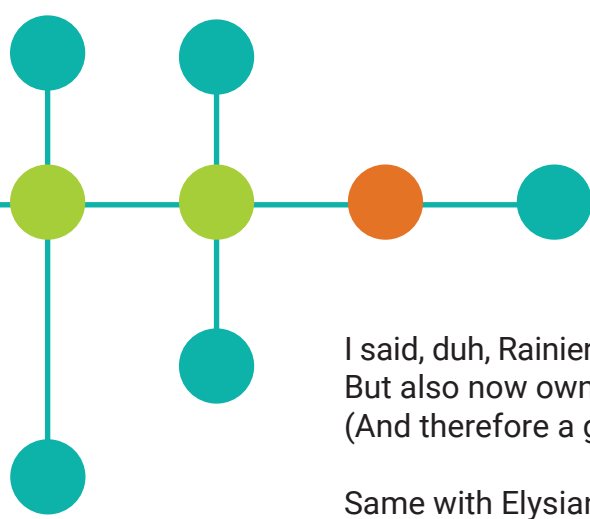
"It just seems real basic, real simple," Adams said, although he noted that he is a "major Hillary fan."

I had asked Adams about beer and presidential candidates, because Hillary Clinton had name-checked Hilliard's Beer to a crowd of Boeing Machinists in Everett the night before.

She had a perfectly sound reason for mentioning Hilliard's – it's obscure, I don't want to get into it, read this story if you care – but the choice of beer might have seemed off to many in the crowd. Hilliard's is a Ballard brewery that sells cans, and it took a while for the company to start producing the Northwest's signature beer, the India Pale Ale.

But it got us thinking: What beer SHOULD presidential candidates mention in stump speeches in Washington state?





I said, duh, Rainier and Olympia – cheap, old school and inoffensive. But also now owned by Pabst Brewing Company, Adams replied. (And therefore a good recommendation for Republicans, he said.)

Same with Elysian, said Bob Brenlin, co-owner of the Fiddler’s Inn in Wedgwood.

“Elysian is still making really good beer,” Brenlin said. “But do you mention them because they are a great brewery, even though they are now owned by Anheuser-Busch?”

Georgetown gets plenty of love, Brenlin said, so how about mentioning Stoup in Ballard?

Kat Turcotte, founder of Collective on Tap, also ranked Stoup top of her list.

“Robyn Schumaker is their brewer, female, amazing talent,” Turcotte wrote us in a Facebook message.

Brenlin also suggested Cloudburst, four months new the scene, next to the Pike Place Market. Everyone is talking about Cloudburst, he said, which merits the praise.

I asked Brenlin if IPA had jumped the shark. A few bartenders recently have told me, with an air of too-cool, that they have no taste for those hoppy beers. And everyone makes fun of the Northwest for its hipster obsession with IPAs.

No way, Brenlin said.

“IPAs are still the best-selling beer that everybody asks for,” he said. “If they’re seasoned drinkers” – someone who has been drinking craft beer for a while – “their palate gets demanding. They want IPAs.”

(Brenlin’s favorite right now is Stone IPA from San Diego.)
(Also, phew.)

So what would he recommend to Donald Trump?

“Donald Trump? I don’t think he’s going to show his face around here,” he said.

