



STREET PROPHETS

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Bikini Bar Goes Green

by **shakti**

Fri Dec 07, 2007 at 02:43:47 PM PST

In a **Detroit Free Press** article entitled

Three Cheers for Earth, Free Press Staff Writer Margarita Bauza relates the story of a local bikini bar that has installed \$70,000 worth of environmentally conscious upgrades. What, you may wonder, is a story about a bikini bar doing here at SP? I like to draw attention to good things that go unnoticed. The best news is frequently found in the business sections of newspapers. Away from all the sensational drama and gore of the front section, there are often small items along the sidebars about companies that are moving towards more holistic operating practices. Since this article was featured on the front page of today's business section, I thought I would share it with all of you, a little good news for a Friday. In any case, I bet the title got your attention. ☺

shakti's diary :: ::

3 Nick's Tap Room in Southgate makes a statement with its dollar burgers, 50-cent coney dogs and until-6 p.m.-daily bikini girls.

Now the eatery is banking on a different kind of statement. 3 Nick's decided to go green -- a move the restaurant's manager believes will pay off.

Last month, the bar put up solar panels, installed an Earth-friendly roof and swapped out traditional light bulbs for energy-efficient ones. It's also recycling used grease instead of throwing it out.

"We wanted to make a difference," said Manager Philip Brigandi, who came up with the idea.

Brigandi said the adjustments -- worth \$70,000 -- will end up saving the restaurant money. Over the next 15 to 20 years, Brigandi expects a threefold return on the investment.

He also said he's seeing some payback now -- in the form of increased traffic at the bar.

The article was greeted with mixed emotions where I work, though. While people were happy to see the local place get some media exposure, there were sad faces all around as well. "Now everybody is going to know about the 50 cent coneys and the dollar burgers. The place will be so crowded, we won't be able to get in and out during lunch and we'll have to find a new place to go." One wag even remarked in sadness that now his wife was going to know the place he sometimes lunches at is a bikini bar, "Nothing good can come of that," he moaned.

Further, Bauza reports:

Alex Kennedy, owner of the Downriver Office in Wyandotte, said he frequents 3 Nick's and is impressed with the changes. The upgrades have inspired him to make similar changes at his own business.

"I'm stepping on the bandwagon," said Kennedy, who already has started changing all his lights to energy-efficient ones.

Kennedy's 29-year-old business specializes in graphics, signs, printing and specialty advertising. He has four employees.

"It was really simple," he said, adding that now he's looking into adding solar panels to the roof.

"People are coming in to take a look at it and thanking me for trying to make an improvement in the environment," Brigandi said. "Hopefully, other people will do it, too."

The bar will reap a \$30,000 federal tax credit for the recent changes. And of course Brigandi also hopes to recoup his investment, he says he has a working class bar and he is looking forward so he is not selling a \$5 bottle of beer.

...Brigandi contracted the work to Kulick Enterprises in Wyandotte, a systems integration company.

"I think it's exciting to see a small business taking a big step like this," said owner Robert Kulick, saying the cachet of an environmentally friendly bar is going to reflect well on the City of Southgate.

Kulick said selling business owners on Earth-friendly construction hasn't always been easy, but tax credits have made it more attractive.

I hear the food at 3 Nick's is not only cheap but good. If it was just cheap they wouldn't bother with the place, they tell me, but the food is good...and the girls???? Well, they say they are just girls. I am not so sure I believe that last part, but it is nice to see a small business taking the lead in environmental responsibility and that their leadership is inspiring others.