

Wichita Chamber Business Accelerator

Episode 77

Patrick Pelkowski

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Don: [00:00:00] Welcome to another exciting addition of the w C B a powered, of course, by Evergy. Don't forget to like us love us. Share us. We truly appreciate you checking us out today.

We're excited to have in the studio, Pat Pelkowski from Shaken or Stirred bartending. Welcome.

Patrick Pelkowski: Thank you.

Yeah. it's great to be here. Good morning.

Don: You bet. we're glad you're here.

first, tell us about you. Tell us your story.

Patrick Pelkowski: Well, I grew up in Erie, Pennsylvania, born back in 1964, which makes me a, ripe young age of 58, grew up there. I spent 18 years of my life. I say, trying to get the heck outta my hometown and then the rest of my life, trying to get back to it.

Okay. but, yeah, graduated high school there and I, decided at that point that I wasn't college material.

So I joined the United States Air Force, which I'm very proud of. I I went through basic and tech school and everything. My first job in the Air Force, I was loading bombs or painting bombs and counting bullets That is what I say.

Don: Whoa. Well, thank you for your service. How, how long were you in the military?

Patrick Pelkowski: About seven and a half years.

Don: Seven and a half.

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah, about four years into it. When I was trying to decide whether I should reenlist or not, an opportunity came up for me to cross train over to air traffic control. And so I



did that for the air force for about my last two and a half, three years. And I was thinking about making the Air Force a career with that move.

And that's when President Clinton came along and they had to do a reduction in force of the Air Force. So

he offered me 10,000. I said, see ya.

Don: Wow. Excellent. Excellent. So once you so seven and a half years, and then you got your, 10 grand yeah. And then, what happened after that?

Patrick Pelkowski: Well, it wasn't so much that money at the time. But with the air traffic control background, I had the opportunity to be hired on by the Federal Aviation Administration.

So that helped me just kinda get through the transition.

yeah. Went to the FAA. they trained me down in Oklahoma city. My, first assignment was Clarksburg West Virginia, which was a very interesting assignment. but again, I put in a lot of voluntary applications to move and after clarksburg West Virginia, I I took Wichita. They offered me a job here in Wichita, which was a fantastic move.

as far as air traffic goes, they were, what at the time was a level three facility. They had five levels at that time.

Patrick Pelkowski: Five being the busiest. And about two years after I got here because of the military activity, we moved up to a level four facility. so it was a very, intriguing move for me I had a good time.

here. was always planning on moving on, but just kind of fell in love with Wichita in the area and decided to make it home.

Don: Let's stop right there. What year was that? When you come to Wichita?

Patrick Pelkowski: Oh, geez. You're testing my memory now.

Don: people do that to me, so I figure out it,

Patrick Pelkowski: I go on the age of my kids and my daughter was born in 93, so I was here in 95,

Don: 95. So when you, when they said I Wichita was a choice, or was it a choice you made to come to Wichita?

Patrick Pelkowski: Yes. I mean, I, so the FAA had certain jobs around the country. I put in for several. Wichita offered me this one. So I chose this one out of my other offers.

Don: Okay. Help us understand what at that time made you choose besides a job. What, is there anything about Wichita in 1995 that made you say, Hey, I wanna hang out in Wichita.

Patrick Pelkowski: I'm gonna be totally honest with you. I knew hardly anything, about Wichita before I took it.

The, the job was the most important thing in my mind, you know, providing for the family, making sure I could progress in my career.

However, the, the facility was very impressive. the air traffic being in Wichita. if you're an air traffic controller. You get to work just about every aircraft. out there because you know, we are the, aviation capital of the world. So, that was intriguing. It was wasn't until after I got here that I learned to really love the area and, and feel at home here.

Don: I learned to really love. Excellent. Excellent. So 95 you got here, went to FAA. And they upgraded from a level three to level four. What happened after that?

Patrick Pelkowski: Well, really I got involved a lot at work, different things. I, you know, air traffic controllers, they say have class A personalities, you know? And so, but it's a unique job in that you only go to work for eight hours normally.

and So [00:05:00] when you get home, you still have that energy. Whereas entrepreneurs, business owners you know, it's hardly ever an eight hour day, you know, you're still taking it home and doing things.

Patrick Pelkowski: So I got involved at work. I became a union leader. I did, that for years.

I got involved legislatively with work and then later on I started to enjoy volleyball. So I started coaching volleyball in the area with juniors. I did a lot of officiating and line judging.

Patrick Pelkowski: So I found things to kind of take that, take that extra energy I had at the end of the day.

Don: Excellent. So how long were you at the FAA?

well, total federal service I had over 30 years. FAA. I had about, 26 years, 25, 26 years.

Don: Whoa. That's that's impressive. So, you did that. Let's let's, get into this entrepreneurial thing you started doing. How did, how did that come about? I mean, you're air traffic controller

Patrick Pelkowski: Again, I think it's those, those personalities. Always, I always love education. I always loved learning new things.

so while I was still in air traffic control, I went back to school, went back to Wichita State and I got my degree in entrepreneurship. And i, I had that, I loved the university. I stayed close to it, and I just had never done anything with all of my education while I was still a controller. You know, I mean, controlling took a good portion of my time, more so than it would take to run a business. on the. As I got closer to retirement, which controllers can retire early, just cuz of the nature of the job.

Don: I bet

Patrick Pelkowski: We started thinking about things and my wife said, well, you better find something to do. So, you know, we always enjoyed entertaining at home and I found myself behind the bar more often than not, not even being a trained bartender, just enjoying making different, things for the, my, my guests. So

Don: Hold on a sec. I mean, before we get into that, cuz we it's a great story.

What made you, choose entrepreneurship to at WSU? What, why entrepreneurship of everything they offer?

Patrick Pelkowski: Entrepreneurship? Well, you know, actually I started off at WSU with a couple of their summer courses, their two week. Expedited courses. Mm-hmm

I really didn't even know what I was doing. I just kinda saw it advertised Dave Dahl.

Don: Oh yeah.

Patrick Pelkowski: You know, he

Don: Yeah. Oh

Patrick Pelkowski: a couple of those

Don: Shout out Dave Dahl. Voice of the Shockers.

Yeah.

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah. Ron Christie at the time, who,

Don: Kris.

Oh my God. You're bringing up great people. He was one of my, consultants. Oh yeah. For my business. So yeah.

Patrick Pelkowski: Had the marble ice cream. place. yeah, and Don Hackett. so,

Don: Oh my God.

Patrick Pelkowski: Don Hackett was a big mentor to me coming through. So I met all them in this two week course that I took and it just kind of excited me.

And I was just like, you know, I wanna learn more. I want to keep going. And the more active you are, the, more that group accepts you and they just keep drawing you in. It's just kinda like this big ball rolling down the hill.

Don: Wow. That's oh man. Wichita is too, too small. I mean.

Wow. Don Hackett and Ron Christie and Dave Dahl.

Wow. Great, great, great folks. So, okay. So back to, after you got your, you and your wife talk, well, I think you didn't talk, she told you you need to do something. So what happened after that?

Patrick Pelkowski: Well, her thinking was just gimme something to do once in a while on the weekend or the evening, but I don't know I just kind of took off on it.

You know, we got our liquor license and. So the first year 2015, we had about six gigs, which was fine, cuz I was still controlling and I was still learning. And then 2016, I kind of grew some more. We went up to about 36, 37 gigs somewhere in that range. And I was getting really kind of tired of the shift work, for air traffic control, cuz. air traffic always have a crazy schedule.

I mean, you're, you're You come in in the evenings, you're on your Monday, on your Tuesday. It's another evening on your Wednesday. It's a midday shift on your Thursday. You come in at 6:00 AM, work till two, and then you turn right around, come back in at 10 in the evening, and work a mid shift. And when I was young, it was great.

Cuz it'd be like a three day weekend, and over time.

And then as I got into my forties and my wife's telling the kids look daddy alone for the first few hours this morning. I was like, yeah. so, yeah, so I looked for something different. and, started off with, somebody had mentioned that, Hey, you always wanted to start a business.

Did you ever think about this? We started thinking about it. and I told my wife, I said, we have to make a decision. That's not based on that person because that person's not gonna be there in

two or three years.

it's gotta be long lasting. So we really took probably about seven to eight months before we decided to actually jump into actually going after our liquor license and everything.

Don: Let's start with, I let a story. Let's start with the name. I mean, what, okay. Well, you said you decided you wanted to do bartending cuz you like entertaining and things like that. How'd you come up with the name? I mean, I got an idea, but what made you choose that name?

Patrick Pelkowski: So it's, it's kind of funny. I dunno if it's interesting to everybody or not.

Don: It's your story.

Patrick Pelkowski: I still remember sitting at my desk and, and my wife sitting at her desk in, in, the office at home and going through all this process and all of a sudden it's just like, wait, what are we gonna call it?

You know, and I went through all these iterations and the first thing in my head [00:10:00] was whatever it is, it's gonna be shortened probably at some point to what the abbreviation would be.

Right. And I, for some reason, in my head, it was was like SOS.

When you, when you have a party and you need some help really quick, you're gonna make an SOS call and you know, and so shaking a shirt just kind of fit into that.

And we threw bartending at the end of it.

And that's how it

Don: and that's a beautiful thing I want our listener is to realize how entrepreneurship takes place and your thought process on that.

I hope will be inter I hope it will be enlightening to folks to see, you know, you never know how that's gonna happen. So SOS Bartending, I wouldn't have guessed that, but, you told the story. So you come up with SOS Bartending, you had five or six gigs in the first year.

Patrick Pelkowski: I think we had about, we had about six gigs. Six yeah, six gigs. Yeah.

Don: So so tell us what sOS bartending does. We, we see the name, but

Patrick Pelkowski: Sure

Don: what, what, how, how would you describe your company

Patrick Pelkowski: According to the State of Kansas? I am a, licensed liquor caterer.

Being a licensed liquor caterer that gives me the ability to go into a venue or a location that doesn't already have a liquor license. And then bring my liquor that I've purchased from a licensed distributor for sale to the public or to a private party, depending on how there's several ways that that works.

But yeah, basically that's what we do. So we provide all the servers. We provide all the bartending. when we roll on site, we have our own bars. We bring our own ice cups, napkins. Basically, if you hires to do a job, then we bring everything in with us.

Don: Wow. That's pretty cool. So I take it. You did some research.

Feel okay. Here's a niche here that we can feel, or how did that work or are there other folks doing it?

Patrick Pelkowski: There are other forks student. We have some, I have some great competition in town. when we first started out and I was researching the whole thing, you know, first off is would this be worth it for me to do this in town? And since at that point I was looking at doing it small scale. I was like, I found out quickly. Yeah. I, I mean, I could bartend for different, for different small parties and stuff.

In that process. I saw what my competitors were doing, cuz I was doing the research on 'em and I saw everywhere they were at.

And I well, this is, this is bigger. If I want to go bigger in town, the demand is, is bigger. my competitors were filling those, that demand fairly well. I went in and I, I did a search for what type of other bar tending companies are out there.

Don: Mm-hmm.

Patrick Pelkowski: What I found is our niche. what I wanted our niche to be was to be.

That ultra professional company.

you know, there's a lot of great companies in town that provide that party experience and they do it very well. I wanted to be that, that bartending company that came in in black polos and black pants and faded into the background. We weren't going to be the show for that party.

Patrick Pelkowski: We were going to be the service that, provided. that provided your, your guests with a very comfortable, very professional bartending service.

We've since grown, so we will do the party atmosphere as well. but our niche in the very beginning and still to this day is just a professional bar service with, plenty of variety in our alcohols that we bring with mature bartenders.

Don: Excellent. Excellent. So before, before we roll into a break, have you, from the time you started this business to now, have you had to course correct far. You were, you thought something was a hit, but it ended up not being, it ended up being a flop and you had to kind of redo your business plan or did you have a business plan or how did that work?

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah, that's funny. I, i, I should be embarrassed and I, I we started working on a business plan. many times and as we all know business plans, are living documents, right. I mean, they're meant to be changed. They're meant to be morphed. and every time I would start writing this up and spending time. on it, we'd get another influx in business, and that would get pushed to the side, you know, have to work it. So we do have a working model. I have yet to put down on paper, a full business plan. We put enough down to follow the guidelines. One of the things I really, really love probably about in business in general, cuz you could start anything.

But the one thing I've loved since I've started doing shaken stirred was just a learning curve. I mean, I look back at where we were and how we started and the changes that we've made in the business or. maybe not even changes, just things we've added to the business to make it successful were all because of mistakes right.

You know, wife likes to say, when are we gonna be old enough to stop getting those life learning you know, experiences. I'm like, well, yeah, I get your meaning. But yeah, the learning curve has been fantastic for this, everything from how we transport to a gig. I mean, we now realize that everything we take has to be on wheels. Right.

We put everything on wheels so that we can roll in and roll out quickly. because of that, what I had mentioned earlier, are variety of liquors, and alcohols and everything that we bring to make the party complete.

That's a lot. And so if it can't be done quickly, then you're not being efficient. So yeah, there there's other things that we [00:15:00] realize there's, there's certain events that we won't take. Okay.

just cuz we realize we're gonna get a lot of problems with that event. One of the things or several of the things that my wife told me when we started this is that my wife is very anti litigious. So it's like, we are not gonna get sued for anything is I wanna sleep at night.

Patrick Pelkowski: Which I totally understood. So we worked very hard at staying legal. I was worried in the beginning that maybe I wasn't going to be able to take the business I needed to get started, but that wasn't the case.

I mean, I've been able to stay ultra legal. And been able to turn away business that maybe that was gonna lead me down a wrong path.

And so, yeah. Now, now it's, it's super easy with our learning curve to say, yes, we want this event. No, we don't want that event. you know, in the end, it's my liquor liability license. It's my insurance, and it's my staff.

My staff is ultra important to me. I'll give back money to people. It doesn't matter. But if I have to not use that staff member or if I lose my liquor license and that staff member loses a source of income, that, that would hit me hard.

Don: Excellent. Excellent. I mean, and that just shows you not all good.

Not all business is good business, so I'm glad you, shared that with our audience. Well, folks, we're gonna take a break, pay some bills and we'll be back with Shaken or Stirred. Mr. Pat Pelkowski.

Welcome back folks. We're here with Pat Pelkowski Shaken or Stirred Bartending. You know what I happen to be in the audience a few days ago and you won this award from the Wichita chamber. Tell us about that experience.

Patrick Pelkowski: Oh, man, that was an exciting day. I mean,

Don: an exciting day. I

Patrick Pelkowski: you,

You know, we had gone through the two month process to, apply. And then when we went over to Friends University for the visit, we had there with everybody and setting up our booth, being named a finalist, there was highly exciting. I mean, I didn't know if we were gonna make it or not. And we were so busy, that I was only able to put in so much effort to it. So we became a finalist and I was excited, my two lead staff were like really excited.

And that just, that just got me even more jazzed I was just like, okay, this is, this is big, everybody, everybody else thinks it's huge. So let's go on. And then, so we went through the whole process of the video at our new building and the visitation by the judges and everything.

And then yeah, on May 25th for the lunch, I'm like, okay, I have a chance, not sure how much of a chance I'm up against some really good competition.

you know, Stacy from the hopping note, I've known her for years. she runs a fantastic business. So community involved, what was funny is sitting at the table, my wife and my lead staff who are also my work wives are sitting closer to the stage than I was. And so I'm sitting in the back of the

table and I'm waiting for him to read that.

Patrick Pelkowski: They're already smiling because they can see that the name is long on his card. so I'm like, oh, they're just trying to make me feel good, you know? And then he reads off shaking or start bartending. And I was just like, whoa.

whoa. You know? and I, was just excited and everything becomes surreal at that point because you stand up and you gotta walk to the stage and you've got all these people congratulating you and shaking your hands.

And. And you really, you don't, you can't really even enjoy all those congratulations and heart and sincere thank yous, you know, and congrats because you're, you're just hyped. Everything's happening very, very quickly. so, yeah, I was just super excited. Got up there. I wasn't even sure where to stand when we got the award, you know, they're, they're trying to move me around to get me in the middle of, and I'm like, where am I going?

And so, yeah. my thank you speech was kind of off the cuff, as you heard. My wife told me to be prepared and I was like, eh, so that

Don: eh, yeah, that was good. That was good. So you mentioned, before the break about your employees and you just mentioned them again, apparently they're smart. They're intuitive. Tell us about your employees.

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah. I mean my whole staff, are, are fantastic, everybody. from The oncoming bartender all the way up to my, my lead ops and my lead admin, year, probably about four years ago. I can't remember Now, five years ago. I had my first staff member come on, working with me on the business, not just bartending until then I was doing everything

and she, her name is Tara Whitt and she became my lead and it's funny because she kept saying, well, Pat, I can do more. I can do more.

Patrick Pelkowski: You know, she's a, she's a mom of four, you know, she's at home all the time but she's just had this energy about her, you know, she kept wanting to do more and and once I gave her a few things and realized she could do more, then I started piling on and all of a sudden she's like, whoa, hold on.

But we worked it out having her take things off my plate just made shake and her stirred grow even more. And I just started, I knew the value of staff beforehand, but everything that she was doing was bringing that to the forefront for me, it was just like, okay,

Patrick Pelkowski: Need to trust, you know, need, to need to just, just like the speaker said during the, luncheon you know, you gotta trust, you gotta love you know, and. and

Don: shout out to Ryan Bond.

Patrick Pelkowski: yeah. Yeah. Thanks Ryan. And then, about a year and a half ago, two [00:20:00] years ago, Tara ended up bringing me someone because our operat. was needing a lot of attention and it was just tearing me away from everything else I needed to do. I mean, I don't, I wouldn't say that she started everyone through a slow part, but there was, it could have kept going faster if I had not still been carrying cases of beer and washing dishes and doing all that stuff. And so my lead ops came in and then I started hiring people underneath her and she just started managing it all, Shonda and, Shonda Cruiser. and she just, she took over everything in the garage for me. And so literally there were times when I'm still bartending that I get up from the computer, put my shake on their stud shirt, on, walk out to the truck and that's all I had to do.

I just had to jump in the truck and go, cuz she had it already.

so yeah, those two staff members in general, and of course my wife, who, like I said, she likes to call herself my silent, not so silent partner quite often true.

Don: Excellent. So how many folks you got over there at shaken?

Patrick Pelkowski: So those are the four. So I'm the four main members, Tara, sh Tara for admin, Shonda robs.

Jody, my wife takes care of all of our inventory. She's an economics professor at Wichita state with, behavioral economics and she has, she just helps. us Tremendously when we're coming up, everything from signature drinks and cocktails and what people might want at a certain area

Patrick Pelkowski: she's fantastic with that bartenders wise and operations folks.

We have over 30 people on our, on our, w twos.

Don: Wow. I figured you'd had to have that. Let's talk about based on your growth starting in 2015, I think I remember six gigs.

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah.

Don: How many gigs do you wanna share?

revenue. Tell us, tell us a story.

you know, the revenue, I'm not trying to hold back. It's just hard to remember those numbers altogether.

Patrick Pelkowski: I, you know, and I always relate it to events. And, and my whole thing is, is

that is if you worry about the events, the money comes and it, and it does. Right. So I worry about pulling off the event before I worry about how much the event's gonna bring us.

Don: Okay.

Patrick Pelkowski: Except in except in certain situations.

Right, But, yeah, 2015, we started off, I'm still an air traffic controller, so I'm doing this on the side we had six gigs. I think my very first gig was going down to the, Wichita River Festival, volleyball Tournament down at OJ Watson park and setting up a tent there. I still have a picture of my first dollar that we ever took. in.

Don: Wow.

Patrick Pelkowski: We got a couple weddings and then a New Year's Eve event and it turned in to be a word of mouth thing. So 2016, we grew a little bit more. I was still an air traffic controller. We had about 36 gigs that year and somewhere in the middle of that. year I was eligible for retirement and my wife. Jody just looks at me and says, you know, pat, you've done a good job saving for retirement. You know, you've, you've, you've got a good nest egg going, if you wanna get out and see what you can do with Shaken or Stirred, You know, we can do it.

And I was just you know, it, it took me a long time because when you're an air traffic controller for so long, it's like, that's who you are.

Right. And so what am I gonna be if I'm not an air traffic controller, but I decided, yep. It's the time.

So I retired January or December 31st, 2016. And as soon as I did that, I think I remember one or two nights sitting at home on the couch with a Manhattan reading an entrepreneurship book.

And after that, I didn't have that time anymore. It just took off.

wow. We went up to 120 gigs in 2000, 17, 2018. I think we did somewhere around 160 2019. We went up To two. 200 somewhere around there, 20 of course was COVID. so we didn't do much there. And finally, last year in 2021, we did over 230 events.

Don: Whoa,

what's amazing about that number is the fact that we didn't have the first quarter, the whole first quarter of 2021 COVID. So we didn't really start doing anything until end of March. So that whole 230 gigs came after that time period. So basically nine months. So if you annualize that out, that could have been over 300 gigs, if You would've had that quarter.

Don: Wow. That is so impressive. My man. Congratulations on that. So do you, do you worry about growing too fast or do you feel you had a controlled growth?

so.

Patrick Pelkowski: The term term was once said to me, you gotta pick the grapes when they're ripe, you know?

And my staff will sometimes get frustrated with me cuz I have a hard time saying no, I've gotten a lot better at that. So I'm getting, whereas the growth was just going when we were handling it. now it's more controlled. cuz now I'm trying to say, okay, we can do this at this point, our new building, which is going up and hopefully we'll be in that in about three weeks to a month.

that will increase our capacity exponentially.

Don: Let's talk about that real quick. What's what's this new building about?

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah, so, I mean, we were really just working out. just kinda like every great entrepreneurial story. We were working out of our third car garage.

We, you know, We, we retrofitted it. We did everything that we could do to make that as efficient as possible.

But with the growth that we experienced, especially last year, it just was no longer feasible to do that unless we were gonna stop growing. [00:25:00]

And of course, if you know, you stop growing, you start dying. so we decided, yeah, let's go ahead. Let's go forth. Let's think about a new building. I am blessed enough to have owned five and a quarter acres where I live. And so we just built a building on the back four acres. There

Don: There you go.

Patrick Pelkowski: So

Don: Excellent. So is it, is it done? Is it complete?

Patrick Pelkowski: It's not totally complete. It's We're at that stage now where it's all that slow stuff inside. You know, the electrical's being finished up, the plumbing's being finished up. We're putting in cabinet. painting's all done the concrete ceiling's gonna get done next week. I'm buying some steel pallet, shelving that we're putting in excited about that. My staff is super excited about that. The biggest thing my staff is excited about is that they're gonna have their own bathroom.

Don: Oh, Hey, that makes a big difference. And earlier you mentioned about the wheels. Everything you have is on wheels.

Are you talking about like carts? Yeah,

Patrick Pelkowski: We probably have, you know, 20 Coleman wagons and, and different wagons that we use. Probably 10 different dollies. We even utilize the old milk coolers that you would see in middle school, you know, open up that silver thing. reaching.

Don: Oh my God. Yeah.

Patrick Pelkowski: I'll go to the auctions for the schools and stuff when they're selling them. and I I'll I'll buy those.

And so, again, another luck thing about entrepreneurial, entrepreneurialism. I, I just happened to be at a party one with a gentleman who was selling a box truck that had a Tommy lift on it.

I bought it cuz he made me such a great deal. I didn't need it at that time. It was so early and Shaken or Stirred, but now, but then it became a necessity, but that tommy lift allowed me to use those milk coolers because now I could just roll the whole milk cooler out of the building, onto the truck, take it to wherever I'm going.

Patrick Pelkowski: Roll it in the building, plug it in. And I had chilled beer the whole night.

Don: Wow. Excellent. And help, help me understand. When you go to a site, are you setting up in the folks at the venue's own kitchen or are, do you have a food truck, like thing set up or are you can you, can you do it all? Can you do whatever?

Patrick Pelkowski: Every, every venue is, is different.

Don: Exactly.

Patrick Pelkowski: You were asking about how the different areas that we've gone into, right? know, now we would do outside venues. We do indoor do mixology. We do all this stuff right.

So we've learned, and we are compiling a book, where we have all these venue specifics written down with pictures so that we can send that out to a bartender.

Who's doing a gig and here's your setup. You know, this is where you're gonna go. So we just know now, okay. You know, At this venue, we, we can't get that milk cooler in. So we have to put everything in white Coleman coolers after it's, after it's chilled.

Okay. know, this venue has got a huge kitchen with big catering doors.

We can roll the cooler in there at this venue. We want to be in this location and the corner. Let's talk to the bride, let's talk to the customer about that saying this is gonna be your best spot for us. so every venue is different. So we have to adjust at. each.

Don: Wow.

you asked about the trucks. We have two bar trucks, two bar trucks,

Don: bar trucks. Okay.

Patrick Pelkowski: know, Tipsy turtle and mobile teeny.

Don: Okay. I, I saw Tipsy Turtle. I think I saw an image of that. So mobile teeny, huh? Okay. Yeah. yeah, that's pretty cool. That's pretty cool. Tell us about this. I think you have a. A relationship with the Chamber, friends of McConnell. Why are you involved with that?

Patrick Pelkowski: I'm a member of several chambers and I love taking part of it. The, the Wichita Chamber and the Derby chamber they've given me fantastic opportunities to become involved. so just being involved in general with the chamber is huge for me. I mean, it gives me opportunities such as this, you know, and I was just in the small business committee meeting before this.

Okay. So it gives me those opportunities to partake in the community and the business world

With the Friends of McConnell. I'm a huge, huge supporter of the military. I mean, not only I've already talked about my military.

My father was a ter gunner on a, on a, B 17 during world war II. My brother was an air traffic controller during Vietnam for the air force and stationed over in Vietnam for a year or two.

And just learned to, to really have that patriotic feeling about me and the friends of McConnell. I found out about it through jack. Here in town. Oh man. Well you just bringing up everybody. I know.

Don: Wow. That's pretty cool. Nice.

Patrick Pelkowski: So, yeah, so that's, I joined the friends of McConnell shortly after that the Derby Chamber came up with, McConnell action group.

So, you know, we joined that. And then have you heard about the bourbon salute?

Don: No, you're gonna tell us though.

Patrick Pelkowski: yeah. yeah. not like I've been afraid of talking
you. Yeah,

Yeah,

Don: nice.

Patrick Pelkowski: So the bourbon salute.

Oh, about three or four years ago, the, commander at the McConnell gave a call to the derby chamber saying, Hey, would we be able to get some folks to maybe donate some money around Christmas time?

we want to take the airman out who are stuck on base. We wanna take 'em out for dinners to see movies and stuff. And not too many people know this, but during the holidays for, airmen, especially young airmen, but everybody's stationed base. Not everybody can leave. Right. We have to have that awareness.

Patrick Pelkowski: We have to have that alert. Ready.

mobility there. And so not everybody can leave and go back home for the [00:30:00] holidays. And so it turns out to be a high DUI time for the military, turns out to be a high suicide attempt for the military. And so the base was doing what they could to try to get these guys out, and take 'em out, keep 'em moving and keep 'em with people.

Patrick Pelkowski: And so they asked for some donations. so, you know, I donated and, we, that was a very successful year for them. as far as getting folks out.

Then it just started rolling through my head after a suggestion from a, a, buddy out in Derby, he said, Hey, you know, we gotta do something with bourbon. We both loved bourbon.

We had to do a tasting or something. And that kind of clicked into my head. What if we ran a fundraiser with bourbon tasting, you know, we'll just make it small. We'll make it exclusive. And we'll donate that money to somebody on base. Jack pulley again came through and he said, Hey, I found you a, a group on base that you can donate to, which is the, McConnell, first Sergeant association.

We have a fantastic relationship with them now. And so we ran our first bourbon salute. We decided, Hey, we're gonna pair three bourbons with three smoked meats. All of our sponsors, just donated everything for free. We didn't have to pay for anything. Derby donated the venue and everything. So that first year we donated like \$3,000 to the first S association.

Ran at the next year. It was like four. And then all of a sudden, because of COVID, they said, Hey, we're gonna move you into a big venue so you can spread. To me that meant sell more tickets. okay.

So, oh, we, we did well that year and then we moved to the Kansas aviation museum last year.

Don: Oh, okay.

Patrick Pelkowski: And it just, it, it amazed me. We blew 'em out. We were able to donate over \$22,000 to the first sergeants association that year. And that's changed their operating practices. It changed things how we do for that, but it. It was just huge for me and, and all our, the sponsors who support the military in this area to make that big of a contribution and have such, such a successful event.

Don: Excellent. Excellent. Well, before we wind up here, is there anything on the horizon that you want to give us? give us a scoop on that's going on with, Shaken or Stirred.

Patrick Pelkowski: Well, let's see here as far as shaking her shirts going, we are, looking at expanding our mixology classes out in Derby, the Derby recreation center and their new Hubbard's art center out there is contracted with us.

We'll be doing a mixology class once a month from July on. and, what I just mentioned, the bourbon salutes coming up in August this year. It's gonna be at the Mid-American all Indian center on August 19th. So those tickets are on sale now. Autobi is coming up on July 9th, down here on Douglas We'll be serving that.

So that's gonna be. huge.

Don: Okay.

Patrick Pelkowski: Yeah. we've lots of exciting things.

Don: Look like you're all up in the community. Well, we appreciate you coming through, but there's one last thing you have to do. We have this thing called word association and I asked you one word, you give me one word back. It's not wrong, cuz it's your word?

Are you ready?

Patrick Pelkowski: Yes.

Don: Excellent. How about success?

Patrick Pelkowski: Happiness. Running something that other people, well, you only want one

word.

Don: you got it. Happiness was cool. College. What was it? College

Patrick Pelkowski: Education

Don: Failure.

Patrick Pelkowski: Non-option

Don: Excellent entrepreneur

Patrick Pelkowski: Growth. There

Don: There you go. Hero

Patrick Pelkowski: selfless

Don: fun

Patrick Pelkowski: business.

Don: There you go. Family.

Patrick Pelkowski: Everything.

Don: The chamber.

Patrick Pelkowski: leaders.

Don: now that you mention it back to leader

Patrick Pelkowski: Chamber

Don: there you go. And, vacation,

Patrick Pelkowski: not there,

Don: not there.

Patrick Pelkowski: nice.

Don: And last but not least. And you gotta tell the truth about this one beverage.

Patrick Pelkowski: Liquid

Don: Liquid favorite. Okay. You got 'em all. Okay. Excellent. Well thank you for coming in. We truly appreciate you hanging out with us. Hope it wasn't as, as painful as folks might have said, it would be.

Patrick Pelkowski: Just that last part.

Don: That last part was pretty painful. Excellent. Well, you just heard from Pat Pelkowski, with Shaken or Stirred.

That's your show for today? Make sure you like us. Love us. Share us on Facebook. Also share this with your friends until next time. Peace.