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BIG GROVE BREWERY PURCHASES MAJORITY SHARE OF CLIMBING KITES BRAND

Iowa's first cannabis-infused sparkling water beverage shows strong growth in first year

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Iowa City, IA (Feb 20, 2024): Big Grove Brewery has joined forces with Climbing Kites, Iowa's first cannabis-infused sparkling water, with immediate plans to expand Climbing Kites distribution to other states, with agreements currently in process, and continue direct-to-consumer sales in 42 states.

Climbing Kites was launched in early 2023 by the team behind Des Moines-based Lua Brewing and co-founder Scott Selix. Since then, the social THC beverage brand has grown rapidly across the state. "This partnership just made sense for Climbing Kites," said Selix. Combining forces with Big Grove to leverage their scale and route to market "will allow us to keep up with existing demand and continue the growth of the product line up," said Selix.

Climbing Kites "hits on all levels for people looking for a great alternative to some of our other products," said Dave Moore, Chief Growth Officer of Big Grove, who was appointed to a dual role as CEO of Climbing Kites. While financial details of the purchase are undisclosed, the brewery sees promise in the brand as a non-beer alternative to "deliver a different feeling that consumers are looking for," said Moore. Climbing Kites' beverages contain no alcohol and are gluten-free, vegan, and all-natural, with zero calories or sugar.

Big Grove taprooms have seen guests embrace the rising popularity of the Climbing Kites brand. "So many people ask about it, and we're trying to educate them in parallel," said Andrew Mitchell, General Manager of the Big Grove Cedar Rapids taproom. "As an open and social place, we now have this cannabis beverage that guests can enjoy on our patio or take home with them," said Mitchell.

Cannabis-infused beverages were made possible by the 2018 Farm Bill and the Iowa Hemp Act of 2019, which legalized consumable hemp products on federal and state levels. The current offerings from Climbing Kites feature different flavors at 2.5mg, 5mg, 10mg, and 15mg THC with varying CBD levels.

The breweries have been handling the introduction of this new product with intentional care, limiting sales to those of legal drinking age and focusing on staff and consumer education around the products. “It’s a new and evolving product, and we’re handling it as such. As with anything, we’re excited but going about this the right way,” added Mitchell.

Current flavors include Mixed Berry, Pineapple Passion Fruit, Orange Mango, and Peach Prickly Pear. “We’ve been excited to partner and collaborate with Climbing Kites not just for the brands and products as they stand today, but also for innovation within this new space,” said Moore. Climbing Kites plans to introduce a Grapefruit Guava flavor that contains only THC and a Key Lime Kiwi flavor that includes caffeine.

Big Grove has a long-standing history of working with Selix and Lua Brewing, from when Selix began his professional brewing career at Big Grove. Both breweries will continue their normal operations, and the partnership only extends to the Climbing Kites brand. “We’re excited to go on this journey together,” said Moore, “now we forge a path into the future together with Climbing Kites, this innovative and emerging brand.”

“I’m excited to see it fly high,” said Moore in a final comment.

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About Big Grove: Big Grove Brewery is among Iowa's top craft beer producers and ranks in the top 3% for barrel production nationally. In 2013, the brewery started as a 3.5-barrel brewhouse in Solon, Iowa, and focused on freshly made craft beer and elevated pub cuisine. The brewery now operates taproom locations in Iowa City, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids. Big Grove has received multiple craft brewing medals, including a gold medal for Easy Eddy, its flagship Hazy IPA, Citrus Surfer Fruited Wheat, and most recently, a Great American Beer Festival silver medal for Festbier, a Bavarian-style Märzen.

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About Climbing Kites: Climbing Kites was launched in 2023 by the team behind the award-winning Lua Brewing in Des Moines, IA, and partnered with Big Grove Brewery in August of that year. Climbing Kites is Iowa’s first cannabis-infused social beverage. Climbing Kites prides itself on Quality Over All. We utilize the finest ingredients and cleanest hemp-derived CBD and THC to provide a truly unique social beverage. Zero Alcohol. Zero Sugar. Vegan. Gluten-Free. All Natural.

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