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**Section:** Business

### Marketplace: Entertainment comes from the Top Shelf

*Andrew Kirk, OF THE RECORD STAFF*

Casey Metzger lives for the moment when people pat him on the back and say, "Thank you, we had a blast tonight." To Metzger, hosting a party is a joy. He said he loves showing people a good time and catering to their needs. That's why he got into bartending.

"I'm a wicked bar geek," he said.

The look of the bar, the mixology of cocktails, being the center of the party ? it gives him a thrill. Metzger said he strives to impress; that's the goal that drives him.

After spending years at The Spur and 350 Main, he recently became a family man and had to switch gears.

Now he runs Top Shelf Professional Bar Services. He was getting asked so often to run bars at special events like the Sundance Film Festival that he decided to turn it into a private business.

Top Shelf will run a bar at any birthday party, wedding, holiday bash or fundraising gala. Metzger also uses the company to offer his expertise in things like how to best use the bars built into so many Park City homes that too often go unused. He also offers himself as a consultant to groups with beer gardens or wine tastings during their events. He can walk them through the license-application process and the management of a bar to make more money from the offerings.

With his reputation in bartending circles, Metzger said he's been able to contract many retired bartenders to work for him. It's not been uncommon for him to have 25 years of collective experience behind his bar.

"The people I work with understand my passion and they go get it," he said.

It's Metzger's bar that he likes to brag about most. It has interchangeable panels so he can alter it to fit any setting and accommodate any party theme.

He's even had vinyl stickers made of the logo of the host so he looks like he's retained instead of hired for the night.

It's going that extra mile and employing creativity that both makes his job more fun and gets the reaction he enjoys.

"I'm a chameleon; I customize to every event," he said. "I don't just go into someone's home and pour wine."

Given enough information, he'll even customize the menu to fit the event. At weddings, he'll find out the favorite drinks of the bride and groom and create special cocktails for them.

Customizing his act to the event is so important, he said, because whether they want to be or not bartenders often end up becoming de facto hosts of events.

"If they're going to bring us into their home or to their wedding, we're going to look out for their best interests. We also want to make it a safe event," he said.

An aspect of his services that really took off during the Sundance Festival is building Bloody Mary Bars.

One year he was told to offer drinks during the early afternoon and had no idea what to serve. Bloody Marys were a good fit, but he isn't a fan himself; that's a problem since people can be very particular about their Bloody Mary. That's when the idea came to him.

Since the drink is kind of like a meal in a glass, he created a buffet set-up of everything people like with their drinks from pretzel sticks to Slim Jims. "Make your own Bloody Mary" was a huge hit at Sundance and has been since. He built one at **Maxwell's** in Newpark that is well used, he said.

He can also help homeowners host "Stock your bar" parties. Knowing what to stock, what tools to have and how to mix drinks can be intimidating to a homeowner. Metzger can come in, find out what kind of drinking or hosting the family likes to do, and help them purchase the right beverages. He'll then create an easy-to-use menu they can keep at the bar, show them how to mix those drinks, and then be there while all their friends come over so the homeowner can get comfortable serving. Top Shelf

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[Photo:](#)

[Bartenders with Top Shelf are experienced, licensed and insured. Photo by Grayson West/ Park Record](#)

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