

ARK RESTAURANTS CORP
Form 10-K
December 23, 2013
UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

S ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 13 AND 15(d)
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended September 28, 2013

or,

£ TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 13 AND 15(d)
OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

Commission File No. 1-09453

ARK RESTAURANTS CORP.
(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

New York 13-3156768
(State or Other Jurisdiction of
Incorporation or Organization) (IRS Employer Identification No.)

85 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003
(Address of Principal Executive Offices) (Zip Code)

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Registrant's telephone number, including area code: (212) 206-8800

Securities registered pursuant to section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of each class	Name of each exchange on which registered
Common Stock, par value \$.01 per share	The NASDAQ Stock Market LLC

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act: None

Indicate by check mark if the Registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.
Yes No S

Indicate by check mark if the Registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No S

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant: (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No S

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Website, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulations S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No S

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of Registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendments to this Form 10-K. S

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.
 Large accelerated filer
 Accelerated filer
 Non-accelerated filer
 Smaller reporting company

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Large accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

Smaller Reporting
Company

Indicate by check mark whether the Registrant is a shell company (as defined in Exchange Act Rule 12b-2). Yes No

As of March 30, 2013, the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter, the aggregate market value of voting and non-voting stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant was \$37,767,572.

At December 18, 2013, there were outstanding 3,256,395 shares of the Registrant's Common Stock, \$.01 par value.

DOCUMENTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

(1) In accordance with General Instruction G (3) of Form 10-K, certain information required by Part III hereof will either be incorporated into this Form 10-K by reference to the registrant's definitive proxy statement for the registrant's 2013 Annual Meeting of Stockholders filed within 120 days of September 28, 2013 or will be included in an amendment to this Form 10-K filed within 120 days of September 28, 2013.

PART I

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

On one or more occasions, we may make statements in this Annual Report on Form 10-K regarding our assumptions, projections, expectations, targets, intentions or beliefs about future events. All statements, other than statements of historical facts, included or incorporated by reference herein relating to management's current expectations of future financial performance, continued growth and changes in economic conditions or capital markets are forward looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.

Words or phrases such as "anticipates," "believes," "estimates," "expects," "intends," "plans," "predicts," "projects," "targets," "result," "hopes," "will continue" or similar expressions identify forward looking statements. Forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results or outcomes to differ materially from those expressed. We caution that while we make such statements in good faith and we believe such statements are based on reasonable assumptions, including without limitation, management's examination of historical operating trends, data contained in records and other data available from third parties, we cannot assure you that our projections will be achieved. Factors that may cause such differences include: economic conditions generally and in each of the markets in which we are located, the amount of sales contributed by new and existing restaurants, labor costs for our personnel, fluctuations in the cost of food products, adverse weather conditions, changes in consumer preferences and the level of competition from existing or new competitors.

We have attempted to identify, in context, certain of the factors that we believe may cause actual future experience and results to differ materially from our current expectation regarding the relevant matter or subject area. In addition to the items specifically discussed above, our business, results of operations and financial position and your investment in our common stock are subject to the risks and uncertainties described in "Item 1A Risk Factors" of this Annual Report on Form 10-K.

From time to time, oral or written forward-looking statements are also included in our reports on Forms 10-K, 10-Q and 8-K, our Schedule 14A, our press releases and other materials released to the public. Although we believe that at the time made, the expectations reflected in all of these forward-looking statements are and will be reasonable; any or all of the forward-looking statements in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, our reports on Forms 10-Q and 8-K, our Schedule 14A and any other public statements that are made by us may prove to be incorrect. This may occur as a result of inaccurate assumptions or as a consequence of known or unknown risks and uncertainties. Many factors discussed in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, certain of which are beyond our control, will be important in determining our future performance. Consequently, actual results may differ materially from those that might be anticipated from forward-looking statements. In light of these and other uncertainties, you should not regard the inclusion of a forward-looking statement in this Annual Report on Form 10-K or other public communications that we might make as a representation by us that our plans and objectives will be achieved, and you should not place undue reliance on such forward-looking statements.

We undertake no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. However, your attention is directed to any further disclosures made on related subjects in our subsequent periodic reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Forms 10-Q and 8-K and Schedule 14A.

Unless the context requires otherwise, references to “we,” “us,” “our,” “ARKR” and the “Company” refer specifically to Ark Restaurants Corp. and its subsidiaries, partnerships, variable interest entities and predecessor entities.

Item 1. Business

Overview

We are a New York corporation formed in 1983. As of the fiscal year ended September 28, 2013, we owned and/or operated 20 restaurants and bars, 22 fast food concepts and catering operations through our subsidiaries. Initially our facilities were located only in New York City. As of the fiscal year ended September 28, 2013, five of our restaurant and bar facilities are located in New York City, three are located in Washington, D.C., seven are located in Las Vegas, Nevada, three are located in Atlantic City, New Jersey, one is located at the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Ledyard, Connecticut and one is located in the Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston, Massachusetts.

In addition to the shift from a Manhattan-based operation to a multi-city operation, the nature of the facilities operated by us has shifted from smaller, neighborhood restaurants to larger, destination properties intended to benefit from high patron traffic attributable to the uniqueness of the location. Most of our properties which have been opened in recent years are of the latter description. As of the fiscal year ended September 28, 2013, these include the operations at the 12 fast food facilities in Tampa, Florida and Hollywood, Florida, respectively (2004); the *Gallagher's Steakhouse* and *Gallagher's Burger Bar* in the Resorts Atlantic City Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey (2005); *The Grill at Two Trees* at the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Ledyard, Connecticut (2006); *Durgin Park Restaurant and the Black Horse Tavern* in the Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston, Massachusetts (2007); *Yolos* at the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (2007); *Robert* at the Museum of Arts & Design at Columbus Circle in Manhattan (2010); *Broadway Burger Bar and Grill* at the New York New York Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (2011); *Clyde Frazier's Wine and Dine* in Manhattan (2012) and *Broadway Burger Bar and Grill* in the Quarter at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey (2013).

The names and themes of each of our restaurants are different except for our two *Gallagher's Steakhouse* restaurants and two *Broadway Burger Bar and Grill* restaurants. The menus in our restaurants are extensive, offering a wide variety of high-quality foods at generally moderate prices. The atmosphere at many of the restaurants is lively and extremely casual. Most of the restaurants have separate bar areas, are open seven days a week and most serve lunch as well as dinner. A majority of our net sales are derived from dinner as opposed to lunch service

While decor differs from restaurant to restaurant, interiors are marked by distinctive architectural and design elements which often incorporate dramatic interior open spaces and extensive glass exteriors. The wall treatments, lighting and decorations are typically vivid, unusual and, in some cases, highly theatrical.

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The following table sets forth the properties we lease and operate as of September 28, 2013:

Name	Location	Year Opened(1)	Restaurant Size (Square Feet)	Seating Capacity(2) Indoor- (Outdoor)	Lease Expiration(3)
Center Café(4)	Union Station Washington, D.C.	1989	4,000	200	2009
Sequoia	Washington Harbour Washington, D.C.	1990	26,000	600 (400)	2017
Canyon Road	First Avenue (between 76 th and 77 th Streets) New York, New York	1984	2,500	130	2014
Bryant Park Grill & Café(5)	Bryant Park New York, New York	1995	25,000	180 (820)	2025
America(6)	New York-New York Hotel and Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	1997	20,000	450	2017
Gallagher's Steakhouse(6)	New York-New York Hotel & Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	1997	5,500	260	2023
Gonzalez y Gonzalez(6)	New York-New York Hotel & Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	1997	2,000	120	2021
Village Eateries (6)(7)	New York-New York Hotel & Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	1997	6,300	400 (*)	2021
Robert	Museum of Arts & Design New York, New York	2009	5,530	150	2035
Thunder Grill	Union Station Washington, D.C.	1999	10,000	500	2019
Venetian Food Court(8)	Venetian Casino Resort Las Vegas, Nevada	1999	2,050	300 (*)	2014
Rialto Deli	Venetian Casino Resort Las Vegas, Nevada	1999	1,150	150 (*)	2014
V-Bar		2000	3,000	100	2015

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Venetian Casino Resort
Las Vegas, Nevada

Gallagher's Steakhouse	Resorts Atlantic City Hotel and Casino Atlantic City, New Jersey	2005	6,280	196	2020
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Gallagher's Burger Bar	Resorts Atlantic City Hotel and Casino Atlantic City, New Jersey	2005	2,270	114	2020
The Grill at Two Trees	Foxwoods Resort Casino Ledyard, Connecticut	2006	3,359	101	2026
Durgin Park Restaurant and the Black Horse Tavern	Faneuil Hall Marketplace Boston, Massachusetts	2007	18,500	575	2032
Yolos	Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	2007	4,100	206	2027
The Sporting House(9)	New York-New York Hotel and Casino Las Vegas, Nevada	2010	31,000	350	2014
Clyde Frazier's Wine and Dine	Tenth Avenue (between 37 th and 38 th Streets) New York, New York	2012	10,000	250	2032
Broadway Burger Bar and Grill	Tropicana Hotel and Casino Atlantic City, New Jersey	2013	6,825	225	2033

Restaurants are, from time to time, renovated, renamed and/or converted from or to managed or owned facilities.
 (1) "Year Opened" refers to the year in which we, or an affiliated predecessor of us, first opened, acquired or began managing a restaurant at the applicable location, notwithstanding that the restaurant may have been renovated, renamed and/or converted from or to a managed or owned facility since that date.

Seating capacity refers to the seating capacity of the indoor part of a restaurant available for dining in all seasons and weather conditions. Outdoor seating capacity, if applicable, is set forth in parentheses and refers to the seating capacity of terraces and sidewalk cafes which are available for dining only in the warm seasons and then only inclement weather.
 (2)

(3) Assumes the exercise of all of our available lease renewal options.

(4) The lease for this location expired prior to October 2, 2010 and has been operating on a month-to-month basis with the consent of the landlord.

(5) The lease governing a substantial portion of the outside seating area of this restaurant expires on April 30, 2019.

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Includes two five-year renewal options exercisable by us if certain sales goals are achieved during the two year period prior to the exercise of the renewal option. Under the *America* lease, the sales goal is \$6.0 million. Under (6) the *Gallagher's Steakhouse* lease the sales goal is \$3.0 million. Under the lease for *Gonzalez y Gonzalez* and the *Village Eateries*, the combined sales goal is \$10.0 million. Each of the restaurants is currently operating at a level in excess of the minimum sales level required to exercise the renewal option for each respective restaurant.

We operate six small food court restaurants and one full-service restaurant in the *Village Eateries* food court at the (7) New York-New York Hotel & Casino. We also operate that hotel's room service, banquet facilities and employee cafeteria.

(8) We operate two small food court restaurants in a food court at the Venetian Casino Resort.

(9) This lease is cancellable upon 90 days written notice and provides for rent based on profits only. This restaurant opened at the end of October 2010.

(*) Represents common area seating.

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All of our less than wholly-owned restaurants have been consolidated – see Notes 1 and 2 to the Consolidated Financial Statements. The following table sets forth the facilities managed by us as of September 28, 2013:

Name	Location	Year Opened(1)	Restaurant Size (Square Feet)	Seating Capacity(2) Indoor- (Outdoor)	Lease Expiration(3)
El Rio Grande (4)(5)	Third Avenue (between 38 th and 39 th Streets) New York, New York	1987	4,000	160	2024
Tampa Food Court(6)(7)	Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Tampa, Florida	2004	4,000	250 (*)	2029
Hollywood Food Court(6)(7)	Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Hollywood, Florida	2004	5,000	250 (*)	2029
Lucky Seven(6)	Foxwoods Resort Casino Ledyard, Connecticut	2006	4,825	4,000 (**)	2026

Restaurants are, from time to time, renovated, renamed and/or converted from or to managed or owned facilities.

(1) “Year Opened” refers to the year in which we, or an affiliated predecessor of us, first opened, acquired or began managing a restaurant at the applicable location, notwithstanding that the restaurant may have been renovated, renamed and/or converted from or to a managed or owned facility since that date.

(2) Seating capacity refers to the seating capacity of the indoor part of a restaurant available for dining in all seasons and weather conditions. Outdoor seating capacity, if applicable, is set forth in parentheses and refers to the seating capacity of terraces and sidewalk cafes which are available for dining only in the warm seasons and then only inclement weather.

(3) Assumes the exercise of all our available lease renewal options.

(4) Management fees earned, which have been eliminated in consolidation, are based on a percentage of cash flow of the restaurant.

(5) We own a 19% interest in the partnership that owns *El Rio Grande*.

(6) Management fees earned, which have been eliminated in consolidation, are based on a percentage of gross sales of the restaurant.

(7) We owned a 50% interest in the partnership that owns the *Tampa and Hollywood Food Courts* which increased to 64.4% as of December 26, 2012.

(*) Represents common area seating.

(**) Represents number of seats in the Bingo Hall.

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Leases

We are currently not committed to any significant projects; however, we may take advantage of opportunities we consider to be favorable, when they occur, depending upon the availability of financing and other factors.

Restaurant Expansion

On March 18, 2011, a subsidiary of the Company entered into a lease agreement to operate a restaurant and bar in New York City named Clyde Frazier's Wine and Dine. In connection with the agreement, the landlord contributed \$1,800,000 towards the construction of the property (which has been deferred over the lease term), which totaled approximately \$7,000,000. The initial term of the lease for this facility expires on March 31, 2027 and has one five-year renewal. This restaurant opened during the second quarter of fiscal 2012 and, as a result, the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 29, 2012 includes approximately \$1,800,000 of pre-opening and operating losses related to this property.

On November 28, 2012, a subsidiary of the Company entered into an agreement to design and lease a restaurant at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, NJ. The cost to construct this restaurant was approximately \$1,500,000. The initial term of the lease for this facility expires June 7, 2023 and has two five-year renewals. The restaurant, Broadway Burger Bar and Grill, opened during the third quarter of fiscal 2013 and, as a result, the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 28, 2013 includes approximately \$100,000 of pre-opening and early operating losses related to this property.

On November 22, 2013, the Company, through a wholly-owned subsidiary, Ark Rustic Inn LLC, entered into an Asset Purchase Agreement with W and O, Inc. to purchase the Rustic Inn Crab House, a restaurant and bar in Dania Beach, Florida, for \$7,500,000 plus inventory. The acquisition is scheduled to close on or before February 28, 2014, subject to satisfactory completion of due diligence, execution of employment and non-competition agreements, Florida Liquor Authority approval and customary closing conditions.

The opening of a new restaurant is invariably accompanied by substantial pre-opening expenses and early operating losses associated with the training of personnel, excess kitchen costs, costs of supervision and other expenses during the pre-opening period and during a post-opening "shake out" period until operations can be considered to be functioning normally. The amount of such pre-opening expenses and early operating losses can generally be expected to depend upon the size and complexity of the facility being opened.

Our restaurants generally do not achieve substantial increases in revenue from year to year, which we consider to be typical of the restaurant industry. To achieve significant increases in revenue or to replace revenue of restaurants that lose customer favor or which close because of lease expirations or other reasons, we would have to open additional

restaurant facilities or expand existing restaurants. There can be no assurance that a restaurant will be successful after it is opened, particularly since in many instances we do not operate our new restaurants under a trade name currently used by us, thereby requiring new restaurants to establish their own identity.

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Cost Method Investment

On March 12, 2013, the Company made a \$4,200,000 investment in the New Meadowlands Racetrack LLC (“NMR”) through its purchase of a membership interest in Meadowlands Newmark, LLC, an existing member of NMR. In conjunction with this investment, the Company also entered into a long-term agreement with NMR to provide food and beverage services for the new racing facilities at the Meadowlands Racetrack in northern New Jersey. NMR has a long-term lease with the State of New Jersey and the new facility opened in November 2013. The Company’s agreement extends to any future development at the race track site. On November 19, 2013, the Company invested an additional \$464,000 in NMR through a purchase of an additional membership interest in Meadowlands Newmark, LLC, resulting in a total ownership of 11.6%.

Recent Restaurant Dispositions and Charges

Lease Expirations – On July 8, 2011, the Company entered into an agreement with the landlord of The Grill Room property located in New York City, whereby in exchange for a payment of \$350,000 the Company vacated the property on October 31, 2011. Such payment and the related loss on closure of the property, in the amount of \$179,000, are included in Other Operating Costs and Expenses in the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 29, 2012. This lease was scheduled to expire on December 31, 2011.

The Company was advised by the landlord that it would have to vacate the America property located in Washington, DC, which was on a month-to-month lease. The closure of this property occurred on November 7, 2011. The related loss on closure of this property, in the amount of \$186,000, is included in Other Operating Costs and Expenses in the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 29, 2012.

Discontinued Operations – Effective March 15, 2012, the Company vacated its food court operations at the MGM Grand Casino at the Foxwoods Resort Casino in Ledyard, CT. The Company determined that it would not be able to operate this facility profitably at this location at the current rent. As a result, the Company recorded a disposal loss in the amount of \$270,000, which was recorded during the second quarter of fiscal 2012, as well as operating losses of \$155,000 for the year ended September 29, 2012, all of which are included in discontinued operations, net of tax, in the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 29, 2012. Included in the Net Income Attributable to Non-controlling Interests in the accompanying Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 29, 2012 are losses of \$33,000 attributable to the limited partners in this property.

Other – On October 29, 2012, the Company suffered a flood at its Red and Sequoia properties located in New York, NY as a result of a hurricane. The Company did not reopen these properties as the underlying leases were due to expire in the second quarter of fiscal 2013. Losses related to the closure of these properties, in the amount of \$256,000, are included in Other Operating Costs and Expenses in the Consolidated Statement of Income for the year ended September 28, 2013.

Restaurant Management

Each restaurant is managed by its own manager and has its own chef. Food products and other supplies are purchased primarily from various unaffiliated suppliers, in most cases by our headquarters' personnel. Each of our restaurants has two or more assistant managers and sous chefs (assistant chefs). Financial and management control is maintained at the corporate level through the use of automated systems that include centralized accounting and reporting.

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Purchasing and Distribution

We strive to obtain quality menu ingredients, raw materials and other supplies and services for our operations from reliable sources at competitive prices. Substantially all menu items are prepared on each restaurant's premises daily from scratch, using fresh ingredients. Each restaurant's management determines the quantities of food and supplies required and then orders the items from local, regional and national suppliers on terms negotiated by our centralized purchasing staff. Restaurant-level inventories are maintained at a minimum dollar-value level in relation to sales due to the relatively rapid turnover of the perishable produce, poultry, meat, fish and dairy commodities that are used in operations.

We attempt to negotiate short-term and long-term supply agreements depending on market conditions and expected demand. However, we do not contract for long periods of time for our fresh commodities such as produce, poultry, meat, fish and dairy items and, consequently, such commodities can be subject to unforeseen supply and cost fluctuations. Independent foodservice distributors deliver most food and supply items daily to restaurants. The financial impact of the termination of any such supply agreements would not have a material adverse effect on our financial position.

Employees

At December 18, 2013, we employed 1,853 persons (including employees at managed facilities), 1,198 of whom were full-time employees, and 655 of whom were part-time employees; 46 of whom were headquarters personnel, 129 of whom were restaurant management personnel, 1,016 of whom were kitchen personnel and 662 of whom were restaurant service personnel. A number of our restaurant service personnel are employed on a part-time basis. Changes in minimum wage levels may affect our labor costs and the restaurant industry generally because a large percentage of restaurant personnel are paid at or slightly above the minimum wage. Our employees are not covered by any collective bargaining agreements.

Government Regulation

We are subject to various federal, state and local laws affecting our business. Each restaurant is subject to licensing and regulation by a number of governmental authorities that may include alcoholic beverage control, health, sanitation, environmental, zoning and public safety agencies in the state or municipality in which the restaurant is located. Difficulties in obtaining or failures to obtain the required licenses or approvals could delay or prevent the development and openings of new restaurants, or could disrupt the operations of existing restaurants.

Alcoholic beverage control regulations require each of our restaurants to apply to a state authority and, in certain locations, county and municipal authorities for licenses and permits to sell alcoholic beverages on the premises.

Typically, licenses must be renewed annually and may be subject to penalties, temporary suspension or revocation for cause at any time. Alcoholic beverage control regulations impact many aspects of the daily operations of our restaurants, including the minimum ages of patrons and employees consuming or serving such beverages; employee alcoholic beverages training and certification requirements; hours of operation; advertising; wholesale purchasing and inventory control of such beverages; seating of minors and the service of food within our bar areas; and the storage and dispensing of alcoholic beverages. State and local authorities in many jurisdictions routinely monitor compliance with alcoholic beverage laws. The failure to receive or retain, or a delay in obtaining, a liquor license for a particular restaurant could adversely affect our ability to obtain such licenses in jurisdictions where the failure to receive or retain, or a delay in obtaining, a liquor license occurred.

We are subject to “dram-shop” statutes in most of the states in which we have operations, which generally provide a person injured by an intoxicated person the right to recover damages from an establishment that wrongfully served alcoholic beverages to such person. We carry liquor liability coverage as part of our existing comprehensive general liability insurance. A settlement or judgment against us under a “dram-shop” statute in excess of liability coverage could have a material adverse effect on our operations.

Various federal and state labor laws govern our operations and our relationship with employees, including such matters as minimum wages, breaks, overtime, fringe benefits, safety, working conditions and citizenship requirements. We are also subject to the regulations of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. If our employees do not meet federal citizenship or residency requirements, this could lead to a disruption in our work force. Significant government-imposed increases in minimum wages, paid leaves of absence and mandated health benefits, or increased tax reporting, assessment or payment requirements related to employees who receive gratuities could be detrimental to our profitability.

Our facilities must comply with the applicable requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) and related state statutes. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability with respect to public accommodations and employment. Under the ADA and related state laws, when constructing new restaurants or undertaking significant remodeling of existing restaurants, we must make them more readily accessible to disabled persons.

The New York State Liquor Authority must approve any transaction in which a shareholder of the licensee increases his holdings to 10% or more of the outstanding capital stock of the licensee and any transaction involving 10% or more of the outstanding capital stock of the licensee.

Seasonal Nature of Business

Our business is highly seasonal. The second quarter of our fiscal year, consisting of the non-holiday portion of the cold weather season in New York and Washington (January, February and March), is the poorest performing quarter. We achieve our best results during the warm weather, attributable to our extensive outdoor dining availability, particularly at *Bryant Park* in New York and *Sequoia* in Washington, D.C. (our largest restaurants) and our outdoor cafes. However, even during summer months these facilities can be adversely affected by unusually cool or rainy weather conditions. Our facilities in Las Vegas generally operate on a more consistent basis throughout the year.

Item 1A. Risk Factors

The following are the most significant risk factors applicable to us:

RISKS RELATED TO OUR BUSINESS

Disruptions in the overall economy and the Congressional budget issues may adversely impact our business.

Our ability to generate revenue depends significantly on discretionary consumer spending. Any weakness in discretionary consumer spending could have a material adverse effect on our revenues, results of operations and financial condition.

The restaurant industry has been affected by economic factors, including the deterioration of national, regional and local economic conditions, high unemployment levels, and shifts in consumer spending patterns. Disruptions in the overall economy have reduced, and may continue to reduce, consumer confidence in the economy, negatively affecting consumer restaurant spending, which could be harmful to our financial position and results of operations. As a result, decreased cash flow generated from our business may adversely affect our financial position and our ability to fund our operations.

In the U.S., the uncertainty regarding significant mandated tax increases, sequestration and government spending cuts and budget negotiations pose a serious risk for the U.S. economy and consumer confidence. In the event that the U.S. federal government is unable to achieve a resolution of these issues there could be an adverse impact on the U.S. economy with a decrease in consumer spending, which could negatively impact our revenues and earnings.

Healthcare reform legislation could have a negative impact on our business.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”), as well as other healthcare reform legislation being considered by Congress and state legislatures, may have an adverse effect on our business. The impact could be extensive and could increase our employee healthcare-related costs. Significant costs of the recent healthcare legislation enacted will occur beginning in 2015 due to provisions of the legislation being phased in over time and changes to our healthcare costs structure could have a significant, negative impact on our business.

Failure of our existing or new restaurants to achieve expected results could have a negative impact on our revenues and performance results.

Performance results currently achieved by our restaurants may not be indicative of longer term performance or the potential market acceptance of restaurants in new locations. We cannot be assured that new restaurants that we open will have similar operating results as existing restaurants. New restaurants take several months to reach expected operating levels due to inefficiencies typically associated with new restaurants, including lack of market awareness, inability to hire sufficient staff and other factors. All of these factors are relevant to the Company's construction costs of approximately \$7,000,000 to open Clyde Frazier's Wine and Dine during the second quarter of fiscal 2012, resulting in approximately \$1,800,000 of pre-opening and operating losses for the year ended September 29, 2012. We also incurred construction costs of approximately \$1,500,000 during fiscal 2013 in connection with the opening of a new restaurant in Atlantic City. The failure of our existing or new restaurants to perform as predicted could negatively impact our revenues and results of operations.

Our unfamiliarity with new markets may present risks, which could have a material adverse effect on our future growth and profitability.

Due to higher operating costs caused by temporary inefficiencies typically associated with expanding into new regions and opening new restaurants, such as lack of market awareness and acceptance and limited availability of experienced staff, continued expansion may result in an increase in our operating costs. New markets may have different competitive conditions, consumer tastes and discretionary spending patterns than our existing markets, which may cause our restaurants in these new markets to be less successful than our restaurants in our existing markets. We cannot assure you that restaurants in new markets will be successful.

Our ability to open new restaurants efficiently is subject to a number of factors beyond our control, including, but not limited to:

- Selection and availability of suitable restaurant sites;
- Negotiation of acceptable lease or purchase terms for such sites;
- Negotiation of reasonable construction contracts and adequate supervision of construction;
- Our ability to secure required governmental permits and approvals for both construction and operation;
- Availability of adequate capital;
- General economic conditions; and
- Adverse weather conditions.

We may not be successful in addressing these factors, which could adversely affect our ability to open new restaurants on a timely basis, or at all. Delays in opening or failures to open new restaurants could cause our business, results of operations and financial condition to suffer.

Increases in the minimum wage may have a material adverse effect on our business and financial results.

Many of our employees are subject to various minimum wage requirements. Many of our restaurants are located in states where the minimum wage was recently increased and in other states in which increases are being considered. In addition, the one-day strikes for fast-food workers for an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 per hour may result in further increases in the minimum wage which would affect all restaurant workers. Accordingly, there likely will be additional increases implemented in jurisdictions in which we operate or seek to operate. These minimum wage increases may cause us to raise our prices which, in turn, could have a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations or cash flows.

Future changes in financial accounting standards may cause adverse unexpected operating results and affect our reported results of operations.

Changes in accounting standards can have a significant effect on our reported results and may affect our reporting of transactions completed before the change is effective. New pronouncements and varying interpretations of pronouncements have occurred and may occur in the future. See Notes 1 and 2 to the Consolidated Financial Statements related to recently adopted accounting standards.

Changes to existing rules or differing interpretations with respect to our current practices may adversely affect our reported financial results.

Our profitability is dependent in large measure on food, beverage and supply costs which are not within our control.

Our profitability is dependent in large measure on our ability to anticipate and react to changes in food, beverage and supply costs. Various factors beyond our control, including climate changes and government regulations, may affect food and beverage costs. Specifically, our dependence on frequent, timely deliveries of fresh beef, poultry, seafood and produce subjects us to the risks of possible shortages or interruptions in supply caused by adverse weather, food contamination and related recalls or other conditions, which could adversely affect the availability and cost of any such items. We cannot assure you that we will be able to anticipate or react to increasing food and supply costs in the future. The failure to react to these increases could materially and adversely affect our business, results of operations and financial condition.

Rising insurance costs could negatively impact profitability.

The cost of insurance (workers compensation insurance, general liability insurance, property insurance, health insurance and directors and officers liability insurance) has risen significantly over the past few years and is expected to continue to increase. These increases, as well as potential state legislation requirements for employers to provide health insurance to employees, could have a negative impact on our profitability if we are not able to negate the effect of such increases with plan modifications and cost control measures or by continuing to improve our operating efficiencies.

Compliance with existing and new regulations of corporate governance and public disclosure may result in additional expenses.

Compliance with changing laws, regulations and standards relating to corporate governance and public disclosure, including the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, the Dodd-Frank Act, new SEC regulations and NASDAQ Stock Market rules, has required an increased amount of management attention and external resources. We are committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance and public disclosure. This investment, required to comply with these changing regulations, may result in increased general and administrative expenses and a diversion of management time and attention from revenue-generating activities to compliance activities.

Intense competition in the restaurant industry could prevent us from increasing or sustaining our revenues and profitability.

The restaurant industry is intensely competitive with respect to food quality, price-value relationships, ambiance, service and location, and many restaurants compete with us at each of our locations. There are a number of well-established competitors with substantially greater financial, marketing, personnel and other resources than ours,

and many of our competitors are well established in the markets where we have restaurants, or in which we intend to locate restaurants. Additionally, other companies may develop restaurants that operate with similar concepts.

Any inability to successfully compete with the other restaurants in our markets will prevent us from increasing or sustaining our revenues and profitability and result in a material adverse effect on our business, financial condition, results of operations or cash flows. We may also need to modify or refine elements of our restaurant system to evolve our concepts in order to compete with popular new restaurant formats or concepts that may develop in the future. We cannot assure you that we will be successful in implementing these modifications or that these modifications will not reduce our profitability.

Many of our operations are located in casinos and much of our success will be dependent on the success of those casinos.

The success of the business of our restaurants located in Las Vegas, Nevada, Atlantic City, New Jersey, Tampa and Hollywood, Florida, and Ledyard, Connecticut is substantially dependent on the success of the casinos in which the Company operates in these locations to attract customers for themselves and for our restaurants. Casinos in Atlantic City have experienced a significant decline in revenues in recent years. As more states approve casino gambling, our business in our existing geographic regions may continue to decline. The successful operation of the casinos in these locations is subject to various risks and uncertainties including, but not limited to:

--The risk associated with governmental approvals of gaming;