



THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB
SEPTEMBER 2014

The Prez Sez

by *Peter Hall*

The sun still somehow managed to come out for me when I wrote this article.

The weekend had wonderfully warm days with the sun's rays trying in vain to tan my cheeks one last time. I should probably stop talking about it. A wind will blow to level the playing ground.

My penance will come due and the skies will close in. I guess that isn't all bad. It is a season of change, and cloudy days usually mean warmer weather next season.



It certainly is a time of change, change of more than one variety. The nights are cooling and I am less apt to spend all the time I have available outside. The brews have more favorable temperatures to expand into available spaces in my home, and the garage is actually warmer now that I have turned the furnace back on. It is also a new year (of sorts). The membership year has come around again. For an amount comparable to pocket change, you can enjoy all to benefits of the GNBC for another year.

There is more than one option to renew your membership. You could go to <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html> right now and pay using paypal. It's quick, easy, and very procrastinator-friendly.

You can also show up to the first meeting of the new membership year with your yearly dues and Kat would be happy to get a card to you very soon. Kat, I, and at least a few other GNBCers will be meeting up for that meeting at the Snow Goose basement at 7pm September 16th. At the meeting I will be recapping all of those wonderful benefits available to the club.

A huge thank you goes out to the Levinsons for hosting the GNBC August BBQ. I sadly was not in attendance. I very much want to make it to all of these events, but things like hunting trips occasionally get in the way. Rick and Eileen are magnanimous hosts who are always eager to help the club. I know that good times were had. Thank you!!!

Competitions are again on the horizon. There are a few here and there through the summer, but the ones the garner HBOTY points are concentrated around the "everything but summer" season. Up first is the Anchortown homebrew comp on September

The Prez Sez

Secretary's Corner

Anchortown Homebrew
Competition

Celestial Meads Equinox Mead
Competition

Eagle River BrewFest

Sud's Corner

Membership Renewal

Common Civer Recipe

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

DEBBIE GRECCO

14, hosted by King Street. Up the very next weekend is the Equinox Mead comp on September 20. Please check out the articles below. My eyes were working a little better than my brain at newsletter time last month. The information was intended to be included with the newsletter but I couldn't seem to pull my act together. Ideally, I will do better this month. Valdez homebrew comp is also coming up in October. You are generally well rewarded for winning brews in competitions, but the Valdez comp is especially rich. See the form below for entry info.

Elections are right around the corner, and I'm getting a little itchy. I want names, sooner rather than later. You may have caught in the last article that I do not intend to run again for president. It has been a great ride, but I feel two years is enough for me at the top spot. Hopefully I will be able to win a board position though. I want to quell any fears that people may have, and to have the ballots fill nicely well in advance of the November elections. We do have work to do, but I promise that it has its benefits. Please email me if you have any particular question/comments/concerns at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org.

Keep your brews hot and beer cold,

Prez Peter



Secretary's Corner

by Peter Hall

I got out everything pithy I had to say in the Prez Sez article. Jeff is hard at work and unavailable this month to fill in the Secretary Corner. I have updated some of the events. If you have questions, contact me at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org or Jeff at secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

Jeff did some early work and wrote out a great cider article. Check that out below.

Rules of Conduct:

All GNBC Members have been asked to sign an updated Rules of Conduct form. Please contact Kat/Membership Coordinator for a form or you can obtain a Rules of Conduct form at our next GNBC meeting. This implementation will continue at each meeting for the current year/ annual membership.

We will have some new procedures for our events and meetings. Our monthly meeting will now have a designated start and ending time, as well as a last call to serve homebrew at 9pm. Lights out, closed up and a final walk through will be conducted at 9:45pm by a GNBC officer/ board member.

GNBC Glasses for Sale:

Glasses are available for purchase with two options available. We still have a few of last year's glasses available for \$5 each. This year's glasses are available for \$7 each. Look for them at each club meeting or contact us to order yours.

There are big changes in the pipeline for club merchandise. Get the glassware while you can!

Events:

Denali Beer Dinner

September 19 (check out the flyer)

"2014 Alaska's finest beer dinner at Denali Brewpub)

Eagle River Brewfest

October 10 (check out article)

Fund Raiser for the Boys and Girls Club of Eagle River

Upcoming Competitions:

Anchortown Homebrew Competition

September 14 (yes, Sunday) – see newsletter or check Facebook for details

Thank you John Trapp for making this happen!

Homebrewer of the Year points going to categories 1, 6, 10, 11, 18, and 22

Equinox Mead Competition at Celestial Meads

September 20 – see newsletter or check Facebook for details

Breck and Michael run a great competition; this one is worth entering and judging – open to all meads and ciders.

Homebrewer of the Year points going to categories 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28

Valdez Homebrew Competition

October 17-18 (check out the article, again)



EVENTS

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Friday

*Midnight Sun Brewery Tours and
Brew Debut: 6:00 PM 344-1179*

12.....*Capital City Brewfest Dinner
6-8 pm Juneau*

12.....*Silver Gulch Brewing Company
Oktoberfest (time/cost TBD)*

12.....*Anchortown Entries accepted at
Arctic Brewing Supply 11:30 - 6 pm*

14.....*Anchortown Homebrew
Competition at King Street
Brewery 10 am Judging*

16.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the
Snow Goose 7:00 pm*

19.....*Denali Brewing Company Beer
Dinner 7 pm \$69pp*

20.....*Celestial Meads Equinox Mead
Competition*

20.....*Talkeetna BrewFest
2-6 pm (cost TBD)*

10.....*Eagle River BrewFest
6:30 pm \$50 pp*

11.....*Arkose 10th Anniversary
Celebration (time/cost TBT)*

21.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the
Snow Goose 7:00 pm*

29.....*Bodegafest Beer Dinner at
Kinley's (time/cost TBD)*

Miscellaneous:

TAP (Training for Alcohol Professionals) classes are held at CHARR's Charlie H. Selman Training Center located at 1503 W. 31st Avenue, Suite 101 Anchorage, AK. This certification is required if you pour or steward at any fests or competitions. For the latest training schedule, check out their website: <http://alaskacharr.com/training/tap-schedules/>

Remember if you have ideas for educational segments or guest speakers, or beer/ homebrew related events feel free to post them on our Facebook page or contact me at shearer.jeff@gmail.com.



Sixth Annual (?) Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew Competition

by John Trapp

WE'RE BACK!!! There were some coordination and timing conflicts last year that got in the way of this glorious competition; so we took a sabbatical and I'm happy to say the sixth annual Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew competition will be held on Sunday September 14th.

The judging will take place at King Street Brewery Starting at 10:00 a.m. and should finish up by mid afternoon. Entries will be accepted at Arctic Brewing Supply on Friday September 12th from 11:30 until closing (6:00 p.m.). Along with the plaques, medals and ribbons for placing, King Street Brewery **may** be picking a beer from the best of show round and brewing up a professional batch, so please fill out the recipe sheets completely. Notice how I said "may"? Well, there is no specific category to brew for the competition, it's entirely up to KSB to pick a winner and brew it if they like it enough and it fits their style. After all, it will be on-tap at King Street and Café Amsterdam. That's some pretty good bragging rights.

There will be an awards ceremony sometime in October where we might just be drinking the KSB winning beer. The prizes for this competition are pretty good. There's the coveted Brass Tap Award, given to the highest averaging score sheets. Once again, in order to average the sheets, there needs to be more than one. Plus plaques, gift certificates, medals and ribbons. We are not including Meads in this competition due to the celestial meads equinox competition the following weekend. All beer categories are open and there's no entry fee, so plan on dropping off your beer at Arctic Brewing Supply on September 12th and then help judge on the 14th. Good luck to everyone.





Seventh Annual Celestial Meads Equinox Mead Competition

by Breck Tostevin, M.B.

Attention Mead and Cider Makers and Judges! The Seventh Annual Celestial Meads Equinox Competition is Saturday, September 20. Get those meads and ciders bottled and ready!

Entries will be accepted at Celestial Meads on Friday, September 19 from **5:30-7:30 pm**. Please bring two 10 to 14 oz bottles or one 750 ml bottle and an AHA/BJCP recipe entry form for each entry.

Entries shipped from out of town must arrive at Celestial Meads by Wednesday, Sept. 17.

This competition is open to BJCP categories 24 (Traditional Mead), 25 (Melomel), 26 (Other Mead), 27 (Standard Cider and Perry), and 28 (Specialty Cider and Perry). You can enter more than one mead or cider per subcategory.

The Equinox Competition is an official Brewer of the Year Event. So don't get left on the long ship on this one. The Best of Show of Mead may be made by Celestial Meads as deemed appropriate by Meadmaster Mike Kiker.

We need judges and stewards. If you are interested in learning the differences between judging mead and beer, or you are simply a mead lover, this is the event for you. We can team inexperienced judges up with more experienced judges. If you are interested in judging, please send me an email. Come sample the beverages of the Equinox!

Judging will be held at Celestial Meads, 600 W. 58th Ave., Suite B. in Anchorage from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, September 20. Please contact Breck at 884-1819 or keegan@gci.net for more information.



Eagle River Brewfest

by *Dennis Sessler*

October 10th 2014, mark your calendar, the date is fast approaching for the annual Brewfest that's sole purpose is to raise donations for the Eagle River Boys and Girl Club. I along with a small group of GNBC members have been attending this quiet little beer festival for years.

So here are all the details that you will need to obtain the coveted tickets to this year's event. The tickets are on sale at the Eagle River Boys and Girls club. There are only 300 tickets available and believe me they will go fast. For the last three years this annual event has sold out weeks before the event. The cost of the ticket is \$50.00. 100% of the money from ticket sales and from the auction goes to keep the B&G club open for another year. This is their primary source of funding that allows them to keep the doors open for 350+ local children. Last year's Brewfest raised \$18,000.00 which went to playground purchase and construction.

You might ask what the paltry \$50.00 gets you. The events is held at the Eagle River Lions Club, the Lions club rents the facility at a reduced price to the Boys and Girls Club for the event and cooks up a buffet style array of foods fit for a king. I'm not privy to this year's menu, if I had asked I'm sure I could have obtained it. Just trust me you will be treated to items like prime rib, halibut, salmon, etc. You need not worry about eating dinner before arriving at the festival. You will be given a logo inscribed pint glass upon entry, along with the required tickets. The Lions club facility is a small building and when all 300 fest goers are present it will be elbow to elbow with locals socializing, dancing and partaking in an auction that will consume the masses.

So here is a list of the attending breweries and meadery.

- Alaskan Brewing Co.
- Arkose Brewing Co.
- Midnight Sun Brewing Co.
- Glacier Brewhouse
- Sleeping Lady Brewing Co.
- Moose's Tooth Brewing Co.
- Denali Brewing Co.
- King Street Brewing Co.
- Celestial Meadery



What you will need to do is contact the Boys and Girls Club in Eagle River to secure your tickets. Their address is 11700 Old Glen Hwy. Eagle River. It's the bright blue building right next to Arby's on the main drag in Eagle River. I would call before making the venture out to Eagle River; their phone number is 694-5437. You can purchase your tickets over the phone via credit card and your tickets will be on will call at the door the day of the event. If by chance tickets are available at the door the cost is \$60.00

On Friday October 10th the doors at the Lions club located on Eagle River Rd just west of Walmart, will open at 6:30 pm, I would suggest that you arrive early to get a quick seat and grab a bite to eat. The seating is limited and after eating everyone gets up and starts hitting the attending breweries, sampling their wares. The silent auction is ongoing and towards the end of the evening the live auction will start. It's a fun auction getting all the attendees into the donating mood. Bring your wallets and remember this is a fundraiser. At 9:30 pm they will start corralling all the masses out the doors. You will want to preplan your evening. They will be taxi cab rides available from this location, or better yet plan a ride home from a designated driver. I hope to see you there on October 10th supporting a very worthwhile organization.

MEETING SETUP

A - J Setup
K - P Cleanup
R - Z Food

A - J Cleanup
K - P Food
R - Z Setup

A - J Food
K - P Setup
R - Z Cleanup

Suds Corner

by John Craig



Damn...I love Alaska sunshine. I'm going to bottle some and save it for the next winter. With the tough-and-go mosquito landings on my bald head, this solar panel is cooling down with a light summer brew.

Did you know that home brew is a good source of B-complex vitamins and calcium, just like brewer's yeast tablets?

I pour the sludge from the bottom of the bottle on my dog's food. It seems to keep the fleas off his hairy hide. Once in a while, I rub the sludge on my skin head. It doesn't make my hair grow but I do howl at the moon a lot and I'm known to bite ankles of good looking women.

Garlic is another natural food source. It keeps mosquitos at a distance without using nasty bug dope. Once, many years ago, I made a batch of garlic beer. It was great with anchovy pizza. I ate so much pizza and drank so much of the beer that I felt like a burned out dough boy.

If you had a hot date on Saturday night you didn't dare drink any of this garlic beer. You had hoagie-breath for days and the smell of garlic would work its way out of your skin pores even from under your arm pits. It was pure nasty stuff.

I had to stop drinking that beer in the city. People seemed to be avoiding me. It was great for camping. I would stash a few bottles in my back pack before hitting the trail. I would look around to see if any humans were near. If the coast was clear, I would pop open a bottle and smear it on my body from head to toe. I never had a problem with any living thing as long as I had my garlic beer protection on. No one would mess with me. Noseeums, mosquitoes, moose, and even grizzly bears headed for the hills.

The very best part about that beer, though, was at night, when it was time to light a camp fire, I would just breathe on a piece of wood, then light a match to it. Instant flames. The fire burned all night too.

Damn that garlic beer!

Don't worry, be happy!





Membership Renewals

by Kat Karabelnikoff

September is here which means it is time to RENEW your membership! If you didn't already know our current membership year will end this month and if you renew **before September 13th**, you will be able to pick up your new 2014/2015 membership card at the September meeting, along with three free tickets for the raffle. You can contact me Kat Karabelnikoff at membership@greatnorthernbrewers.org or go online our website to renew and pay via paypal: <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html>

If you can't make it to the September meeting no problem, because any cards not picked up will be mailed out that week to the address on file.

The cost for membership is \$30.00 per household (and don't forget to include your spouse's name so they can have their own membership card and get the benefits too.) You can renew online with your credit card, or send a Check or Money Order (made payable to Great Northern Brewers Club) to:

GNBC Membership Coordinator
c/o Kat Karabelnikoff
PO BOX 210923
Anchorage, AK. 99521

Please don't forget to include your Name, Address (street, city, and zip code), Phone Number, and Email.

Look forward to seeing all the familiar and new faces at the September Meeting!

Cheers,
Kat K



Common Cider

I have fond memories as a kid helping my grandparents gather apples from their trees each October and running the harvest through the cider press. Someday I hope to have my own little backyard orchard with several varieties of apple trees to satisfy my cider making needs. Until that day, here is a cider making process I've been following with decent results.

In the simplest sense, apple cider is fermented apple juice. Thus, for your first ingredient you need apple juice. Ideally, you would take a couple empty carboys to your local cider mill and get freshly pressed juice. Unfortunately, in Alaska that is much easier said than done. You could buy your own apples and run them through a juicer. But, most apple varieties sold at the grocery store do not make the best cider (see last paragraph for further explanation). For most of us the next best alternative is to buy apple juice. I try to find apple juice that was not made from a concentrate, but even juice from concentrate will work. Again, it is not as ideal as something straight from the mill but acceptable. Read the label, you want to avoid apple juices with sulfites added. Sulfites will inhibit yeast activity. For the money, apple juice from Costco works pretty well. Did you strike gold and find a local source of freshly pressed apple juice? If the juice was pasteurized, you're good to go. If not, you'll want to kill any wild yeast before adding your cultured yeast. Add one crushed Campden tablet (per gallon of juice) and let the juice sit for 24 hours before proceeding further. This should prevent any wild yeast from taking over your fermentation.

Next, pour your apple juice into a clean and sanitized carboy. Recall all that time and effort spent on brew day making wort? You just skipped all those steps. That's one of the beauties of making ciders (and meads); your brew day is cut from hours to minutes. For a 5 gallon batch of cider, add 1-2 teaspoons of yeast nutrient (or Fermaid-K). Shake the carboy until the yeast nutrients are dissolved. Now oxygenate the juice just as you would a batch of wort. If you're making a common cider, you'll want an original gravity somewhere between 1.045 and 1.065. Most apple juices should have a sugar content in that range, so there's no need to add other sugars or dilute with water. Just use your hydrometer to verify.

Now you are ready to pitch the yeast. You have a variety of options and I encourage you to experiment. Both Wyeast and White Labs make a cider yeast. Many people use a neutral wine yeast, such as Lalvin 71b. You can even use beer yeast. I've had good luck with White Labs WLP002 English Ale yeast. Just about all the sugars found in apple juice are simple sugars, so they're easily fermented. In fact, on a batch of cider I made last fall with WLP002 (typically a lower attenuating yeast strain), the final gravity still went down to 1.000! I've read others have had good results fermenting a cider with Trappist Ale yeast.

When making a cider (or mead) there are a couple extra steps to consider that you may not be familiar with if you've exclusively brewed beer up to this point. Given that apple juice is mostly simple sugars, chances are it will ferment dry. If you like dry ciders, no problem. If you want some sweetness to your cider, you will need to add some juice to your cider. But first you need to inhibit whatever yeast is remaining in your cider from any further fermentation. To do so, add 2 teaspoons each (per 5 gallons of cider) of potassium metabisulfite (i.e. Campden tablets) and potassium sorbate (to a small amount of water, dissolve, add the solution to your cider, and wait 24 hours. Now you're ready to back sweeten your cider.

As with the yeast selection, you do have options for back sweetening. For a common cider, just use apple juice (I like the Knudsen's organic brand). But you can also back sweeten with cranberry juice, grape juice, cherry juice, or pretty much whatever juice you think tastes good. The best approach is add a small amount, tasting as you go, until the desired sweetness level is reached. That's it, you're done. Keg, force-carbonate to the desired level, and drink.

But wait, what if you can only bottle your cider? Once again, you have some options (and some limitations). When you bottle condition your beer, you're relying on the remaining yeast to consume the priming sugar and produce carbonation. If you want a dry cider that is carbonated, then skip the potassium metabisulfite / potassium sorbate step above. Just add a measured amount of priming sugar to your cider and bottle as you would a beer. Caution! If you're making a sparkling cider (3 – 6 volumes CO²), do not bottle in standard beer bottles. Standard beer bottles are not designed to withstand higher pressures. Use heavier Belgian beer bottles or champagne bottles instead. This may require that you cork and cage your bottles as standard bottle caps usually do not fit these styles of bottles. If you want a sweetened cider that is still (i.e. not carbonated), then follow the potassium metabisulfite / potassium sorbate step, sweeten to taste and bottle.

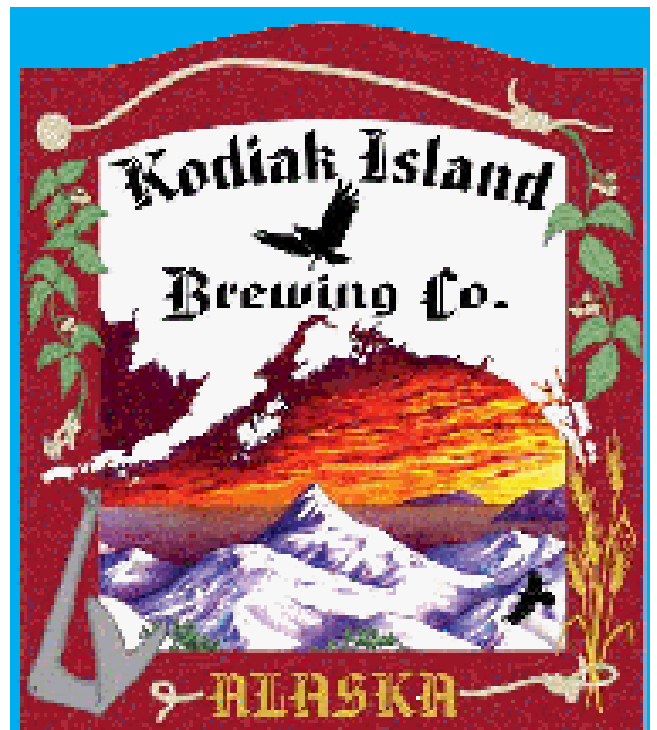


Are you looking to bottle a sweetened cider that is carbonated? This is where the limitations come into play. Recall in order to back sweeten a cider (or mead), you need to inhibit any further yeast activity. Thus, you've added potassium metabisulfite and potassium sorbate and therefore, you cannot rely on yeast activity in the bottled cider to produce carbonation. If a back sweetened / carbonated cider in a bottle is what you want, your best option is to force carbonate in a keg and then transfer to a bottle.

You can take this whole cider making process even farther. Interested? Then read on. Perhaps you've noticed your cider is a bit 'thin' in body or lacking in 'sharpness'....? This may be especially so if you used store-bought apple juice. Certain varieties of apples have higher bitterness and sharpness levels than others. Tannins provide mouth feel and bitterness in a cider. Most tannin compounds in apple juice are found in the apple skin. Freshly pressed apple juice is high in tannins but by the time that juice is filtered, pasteurized, and makes it to the store shelf many of those tannins are stripped out. Additionally, some mass produced apple juices (brand names withheld to protect corporate egos) are produced from sweeter, less bitter apple varieties that do not necessarily make the best ciders. You can purchase wine tannins in powdered form (dried up, ground grape skins) to add to your cider. Start with 1 teaspoon (per 5 gallons) and increase slowly until you find the desired level. Malic acid can be used to add a certain level of sharpness to your cider. Again, start with 1 teaspoon (per 5 gallons) and increase slowly until the desired taste is reached. Wine tannins and malic acid are readily available at your local homebrew supply store.



That's it – drink and enjoy! You just made a wonderful beverage without crushing malt, weighing hops, or handling boiling liquids.



The Northern Brewer is a monthly newsletter published by the Great Northern Brewers Club for distribution to all club members. Subscriptions are a part of club membership and may be obtained by joining the club. Membership is open to everyone over the age of twenty-one. Please send \$30.99 to:

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*The Great Northern Brewers Club and
the American Homebrewers Association
remind you to....Savor the Flavor Responsibly*

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**NEXT MEETING: September 16th, 2014
7:00 PM at the Snow Goose**