



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB
JANUARY 2016

The Prez Sez

by Peter Hall



Big changes are happening, all while we have a full calendar ahead. The leadership of the GNBC is going through a big shuffle, the January party has had a bit of a shakeup, and the ownership at our meeting site has

changed. I'm greatly looking forward to the year ahead for the GNBC. We have many opportunities to carry on traditions, as well as set the foundations for new relationships. Many thanks will be shared over the next month. I need to give note to a number of big events on the calendar as well.

It has been a while since the last newsletter came out. I apologize if anyone has felt left in the dark. There has been very little member and officer interest in contributing to the newsletter lately and I felt sending out a newsletter that included only a prez sez and a secretary corner was inappropriate. I'm happy to have more this time around and have information that needs to be covered. If you ever have an article you would like to share with the GNBC, please email the president at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org. Submitting a little piece about your own homebrewing experience, beer travels or other sudsy adventures adds a lot of value and a refreshing feel to the newsletter. Yeah, our editors put it together and publish it, but the GNBC newsletter is really your document to bring some life to.

Elections happened way back at the November meeting. I was positively overjoyed to have more than one person running for several of the positions. An election is a lot more fun when you have more options. The new leadership that will take over as of the January meeting is as follows:

Officers
President – Kevin Sobolesky
VP – Mike Fisher
Secretary – Jim O'Toole
Treasurer – Peter Hall

Board members

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Kat Karabelnikoff is back to run membership
Julie McDonald is continuing to be the person behind our social media presence.
Newsletter Editors: Debbie Grecco and Jim Roberts.

The club can only maintain its robust presence in the community with both active membership and leadership. Thank you to Jodie Mack for keeping our books straight! Thank you Jeff Shearer for working as the Secretary up to the day you left state, but even then continuing to contribute to the club in other way anyway. Thank you to Sean O'Dowd and Ken Killian for stepping up to help run the club, even if only for a while.

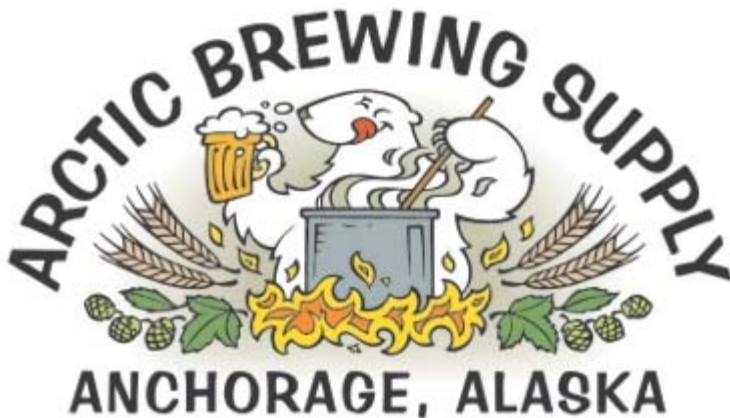
We know just as well how to send out the last year with a bang, as we know how ring in the new year with gusto. December started with some of the GNBC longest traditions. On the 4th we made it out to the Alaska Zoo to party with the staggering "The Usual's". The Zoo has been a tremendous host and we will be back again in the future. On the 5th we were at Sub Zero for the Humpy's Big Fish competition. This competition tends to be one of the best for participation. It may be partly of what great hosts Humpy's always is. Thank you to Billy Opinsky and Susynn Snyder for inviting us back again, and Nik Sawatzky for hanging out with us. Britt Reed came away with the Best of Show for an amazing Bock and I know he is already in contact with Midnight Sun to brew a big batch to share.

Planning the Beer Week January meeting has been a big undertaking this year. There are many dimensions that have made it a juggling act. We needed to be on the same page as the new leadership at the BGA and make sure we were all looking for the same things in an evening. There were a few ideas tossed around for where our meeting may be hosted, but it has been work over the last month to nail down a site and the particulars. I happened to be sharing a beer with John Burket of Odom during the 12 days of barleywine at Glacier Brewhouse on the evening that the sale of the Snow Goose was announced. He contacted the new owners from 49th state brewing about hosting us, and we had an enthusiastic yes. Getting the particulars figured was the next challenge that took another 2 weeks. Please read the article that I have prepared all about the Beer Week meeting on January 21 down below.

One of the biggest changes we currently face is a change of ownership at the Snow Goose. Gary Kopfler and his staff have been tremendous supporters of the brew club for many years. The GNBC may have been a little lackadaisical at a point in the past and our relationship strained. The Snow Goose continued to support us and we all came to a much better understanding of how our meetings run. Insurance for the GNBC was long overdue, and some of those meetings helped push us in the right direction. Thank you Gary, and the Snow Goose! We now have a chance to build a new relationship with the owners of 49th State Brewing. I'm very much looking forward to working with them in the future.

Being president of the GNBC has made a positive difference in my life. It has helped me to be more social and meet many new people. The people I have met and become friends with are part of a magnanimous community of brewers and beer aficionados. I often find it amusing how little I have in common with the friends of mine that I can spend a long weekend with and have a great time. I would not have been able to do this job for the very active GNBC without the help of the board, active members, and the beer community of Anchorage and of Alaska. Thank you all for letting me talk at you for the last 3 years. I will still be around, of course, and even bring along my wife and son as often as they will accompany me. I know you all like me because of them anyways.

I have had a lot to say here. Many words were due by now, but have a feeling that I may have missed something. There are a few more articles to interest you in the newsletter. Please let me know, and/or Kevin now if you are looking for any info missed, or have something you would like to contribute. You can contact the president at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org
 Keep your brews hot and beers cold
 So many thanks!
 Prez Peter



EVENTS

Every First Thursday
Moose's Tooth First Tap

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

15-24.....Alaska Beer Week

21.....GNBC and BGA Meeting
 7pm - 11pm at the Goose

22 - 23 Great Alaska Beer and Barleywine Festival



CAFE



AMSTERDAM

Secretary's Corner January 2016

By: Jim O'Toole

Holiday season



How far back was it when those words didn't involve alcoholic beverages for any of us?

Just from the nature of why I'm communicating with you through a homebrewer's club newsletter I have to assume that we have all been around the sauce for a while. Much of that time for me was a search for something to replace the US beers that made me sick which put me on a little spiral over 18 year old Scotch Whisky, followed by a 10 year period of self-imposed prohibition, followed by an appreciation of fine and semi-fine wines.

One of the things about those fine wines is that it is sometimes possible to find one really cheap. There was a time when there was a five or so year period of tremendous wine production so wineries were dumping their product cheap just to get rid of it. Sometimes it managed to find its way into big bottles on the bottom shelf of the liquor stores or even in boxes in the far back. The search for that stuff was kind of fun and resulted in the finding of some amazing deals on some really good wine.

But those days are far beyond me now with beer being a favored beverage just about everywhere we go and I love that is available in mass quantities and styles just about everywhere we go. This occurred to me a while back as I was wondering what beer I should have with my dinner and realized how many choices I have just in my garage. There are even several ciders out there and I don't do ciders very often.

So, with the kickoff of the "holiday season," that being Thanksgiving Day, I had a lot to be thankful for in many areas of my life but where beer is concerned it was just another day. I had filled a couple of growlers and had all that other stuff in the garage but I wasn't spending much time around the house.

I've been a fan of the Great Alaska Shootout for a long time and have volunteered with booster clubs with both the men's and women's programs and, for several years, photographed the games and everything else going on for the Seawolf coaches. This year I didn't have anything to do but watch games and drink beer, with an old friend of mine from Juneau in town for the games, we watched a lot of them. And drank plenty of beer.

I've been a little pissed off at UAA for years because people pay for access to their Shootout and hockey booster rooms and one of the benefits is a number of drinks before games and between periods but the beer they serve in those rooms is the same beer that used to make me sick. The fact that the beer is donated is the reason I'm given when I ask about this so my only recourse has been to not drink anything at UAA hockey games or the Shootout.

But things have changed a little. Not quite to the level like the hockey arena in Huntsville, Alabama where there were 8-10 craft beer stands but better than past years.

The Shootout moved from the Sullivan Arena to the on-campus Alaska Airlines Center(AAC) last year and, overall, I'd say it's been a good move. The parking is much more limited and the arena is smaller than the Sullivan but it really is a great basketball venue. It doesn't have the big-time tournament feeling as the old days at the Sully as they aren't drawing the big-time teams like they used to but it IS basketball played by some great athletes that we wouldn't ordinarily see so true basketball fans show up and many of us go just to support the UAA teams playing in the tournament.

The AAC has the Varsity Sports Grill on the top level with floor to ceiling windows so you can look down onto the court. The food in the grill is as good as anything else you'd find in a sports grill and the beers range from Alaska White to Midnight Sun's Sockeye Red with a cider at the end of the tap line. Seven bucks a beer up there and it really is a place where someone could hang out at a table or the bar where the court can't be viewed and just have a good beer. We did this a couple of times.

The main change in the AAC is the beer and wine available on the floor inside the arena in a designated alcohol area where security checks almost everyone's ID's going in either entrance. There are probably a thousand seats, most with cup holders, in this section as well as a railing up top that conveniently is flat on top so you can stand and watch the games.

Once again, the beers available there were mostly local (Juneau is local) so between periods of some games my buddy and I and anyone who wanted to join us would head there for an Alaska Winter or Icy Bay IPA. The Shootout lasts five days.

So my holiday season got off to a roaring start and it continued while I worked on something I'd never seen before; a case of 24 sixteen ounce German beers in a Christmas Advent case, decorated like a Christmas present with each beer being designated for consumption daily from December 1 to 24. These things were stacked in the Costco liquor store on Dimond in early November and I bought one for me and one for each of my two sons. It didn't take long for them to disappear from the store.

My oldest kid, a beer snob to the max, got started on his and reminded me about it a few days into the month so I got busy trying to catch up. My son said he thought the first beer was pretty good but he was disappointed with the next few but it picked up and he's been enjoying them since. I didn't get that same feeling and enjoyed all of the beers I've tried so far including an Irish Red that someone on RateBeer commented on regarding the irony of a German brewery making an ale let alone an Irish Red. It was a Publiner Dunkles Exportbier from Herdnbrau Brewing in Ingolstadt, Germany and it should go without saying that I've never heard of it, let alone had one in the past. I managed to get caught up after a few days and then I was cruising through the rest of the month with a completely new experience every day. On Christmas Day, my kids and I went through the 2 liter growler my oldest son brought me after his visit to Bell's Brewing in Kalamazoo, Michigan a few months ago. I'm sorry but I don't remember what I put in it.

So my holiday season was filled with great beer, great friends and family including the two greatest grandsons on the planet and, hopefully we can carry some of that spirit into the new year with some general peace in the world.

I hope all of you also had a great season full of all of the things you enjoy and that your favorite beer glasses were always full of all of the appropriate beers for those styles you love.

Happy New Year!

Calendar Of Upcoming Events

1/10/2016
Deal With The Devil release
Anchorage Brewing
\$50 per bottle
12:00 Noon

1/15-1/24/2016
Alaska Beer Week

1/21/2016
GNBC and BGA GABBF party
49th State Brewing (formerly the Snow Goose)
7 – 11pm
Must be a member of the GNBC, BGA, or specifically invited guest for this private party

1/22 & 1/23/2016
Great Alaska Beer and Barleywine Festival
Egan Center

4/2/2016
Anchorage On Tap Beer Festival
Denaina Convention Center
\$40-60.00
5:00-8:00PM



January 21, 2016 meeting!

- By Julie McDonald and updated by Peter Hall

Please pay close attention as there are many NEW items this year!

First and foremost, and this will be repeated several times in this announcement:

This is a GNBC member and BGA member event ONLY. Visiting brewers and dignitaries are also welcome as BGA and GNBC guests.

There will be two parts to the meeting:

7-9 pm (you can arrive as early as 6:30)

- Club Business: Upcoming events, Award presentation, and your new board members
- Beer Tasting: Many to choose from! But you have to contribute to make it a success.
- Education (speakers):
 - Garret Marrero of Maui brewing and Fred Bowman of Portland Brewing
- Raffle: We will have donations from all of our club members, and our friends at Odom and probably from Specialty and K&L as well. Please be sure to bring something for the raffle: anything beer/mead brewing related goes!

9-11:30 pm

Social Gathering

Cash Beer Bar *****(14 taps and participating breweries have been encouraged to bring something special. \$4 pints after 9)*****

Music from the Rolling Boil Blues Band

This event is NOT open to the general public. *****UPDATED** Your GNBC Membership card and current photo ID it required for entry. BGA must be able to identify who they are with, and we will make a running list of breweries that have arrived. Photo ID required for all entries.

MEMBER DUTIES:

- * be responsible and have a ride home if you are going to drink.
- * If anyone can arrive between 6:15-6:30 to help with set-up that would be amazing. We also need a small crew to stay after 11:30 to help with clean-up.
- *And last, there will be NO potluck this year. ALL food is being provided by the BGA and the GNBC through 49th State Brewing.

PLEASE READ THIS BOTTOM SECTION A COUPLE OF TIMES TO BE SURE THAT YOU ABSORB AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF YOU:

- THIS meeting is co-sponsored with the Brewers Guild of Alaska. This meeting is a private tasting/educational speaker event exclusive to GNBC members and Brewers Guild members (and their invited industry members/guests) only.
- GNBC members may bring one additional guest at the time they check-in through security (e.g. spouse, significant other, best friend (please no pets, ok?))

- YOU must show your GNBC membership card and a valid and clean driver's license (e.g. no red stripe) to the security guard. ABSOLUTELY, NO EXCEPTIONS.
- PLEASE wear your lanyard with GNBC ID visible.
- THERE will be security at the door to check both IDs.
- WE will have a board member at the door to make sure everything is flowing well.
- PLEASE make sure that this person sees you. We are working to make sure we have an accurate count of the numbers of members participating in this event. We will certainly be able to accommodate new members. **UPDATED**
- THERE will also be a few GNBC members at the door collecting your awesome raffle donations.
- PLEASE LABEL YOUR HOMEBREW with your name and beer style at minimum before you come
- YOUR raffle donations will be lovingly taken to the stage and proudly displayed (thank you!) by one of our GNBC volunteers.
- **UPDATED!!!!** We have been welcomed to share our homebrew and commercial beers this year. We ask that you maintain control of what you are offering at all times. We have done this before, and I know we are very capable. Now is the time to set a good example for our new hosts! ******UPDATED******
- DO NOT bring any outside glassware or cups to the meeting All glassware/cups will be provided at the Goose.
- THERE will be plenty of water available to cleanse your palette between tastings.
- THERE will be all kinds of amazing commercial beer on tap for you to taste as well.
- THERE will be a LARGE quantity of food available this year due to a significant increase in the food budget by the Brewers Guild (Thank you!), and 49th State's generosity (Thank you!!!).
- BECAUSE of the increase in food, please do not bring any potluck items.
- ALL beer will be available for tasting from approx 6:30-last call. We will not go all night, but we will have plenty of time to share.
- WE will hold the raffle at approximately 8:45. Bags will be available for easy transport.
- PLEASE remember that no beer in cups/glasses may leave or enter the theater area.
- LAST call is at 11 p.m. Upstairs bar may still be open at that time.
- PLEASE go back to the top and read all of this again. There are not as many requirements as before, but you still need to be familiar with that is requested.

On behalf of the GNBC, Brewers Guild of Alaska, and 49th State Brewing we want everyone to have a great time. We ask that you think when your drink and definitely plan ahead for a safe ride home, whether you are driving yourself or other pre-arranged ride.

I think that covered everything, though I'm sure it really didn't. Please **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO EMAIL ME** at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org if you have any questions or concerns. Watch out for more emails in the near future!



Beer Judge Certification Program 2016 Class by Kevin Sobolesky

Howdy folks! It's time for another BJCP class!

As some of you know, this class is intended to train the student to judge homebrew competitions in the manner and technique of the BJCP in preparation of taking the BJCP tasting exam. This class will teach BJCP tasting and grading methods as well as the history of brewing and regional beer styles over the 10 classes. At the end of the class, there will be a 12 seat BJCP Judging Exam in May and Written Proficiency Exam on May 7th.

Each class will have a lecture portion about some aspect of beer history, production, and/or ingredients, and during the class we will taste several beers exemplifying the classic styles as defined by the BJCP and teach the judging and scoring methods. Mostly what we will end up doing is trying to disambiguate the flavors of beers using consistent terminology.

Exams:

May 7th - Beer Written Proficiency Exam (12-seat)

May 15th - Beer Judging Exam (12-seat) - AKA Tasting Exam

Seats for the exams are open for enrollment now, just email me at metkonig@gmail.com to get your seat. Please note that, unlike last year, there is a fee for the exams. Tasting exam seats are \$40 for new takers and \$15 for retakers. Written exam seats are \$25. Please note that fees are due when you sign up for the exam, not the day of the exam.

Note that you need to take the Online Entrance Exam (which costs \$10) before you are eligible to sit for the tasting exam, and then you require a passing score on the tasting exam before you are eligible to sit for the written exam. Also be aware that the Entrance exam result is only good for a year after taking it, so it's recommended only to take it once you've secured a seat for a tasting exam. Also, you require five (5) experience points from judging events before you can sit for the written exam.

More details can be found here: <http://www.bjcp.org/examcenter.php>

Experience Points:

These are awarded for judging in BJCP sanctioned homebrew competitions, and can be retroactively applied to your judge rank if you judge prior to taking the exam(s). Judging home-brew events is the best way to prepare for the BJCP class and the exams, so please participate! Even if you've never judged before, it's a fun and informing experience and well worth the cost of free beer!

Style Guidelines:

The 2015 Style Guidelines are now official. There are major changes to how beers are grouped and several additional and renamed styles. We will be teaching the BJCP class using the new guidelines.

How to sign up:

Contact Kevin Sobolesky at metkonig@gmail.com or in person at one of the home-brew club meetings. The class is capped at 30 people, on a first come first serve basis. We will start a waiting list if anyone does not show up for the first class. If you have any questions please direct them to Kevin.

Where:

Cafe Amsterdam (Next time you see Ken and Shauna, say thanks!)
503 E. Benson #3

Cost:

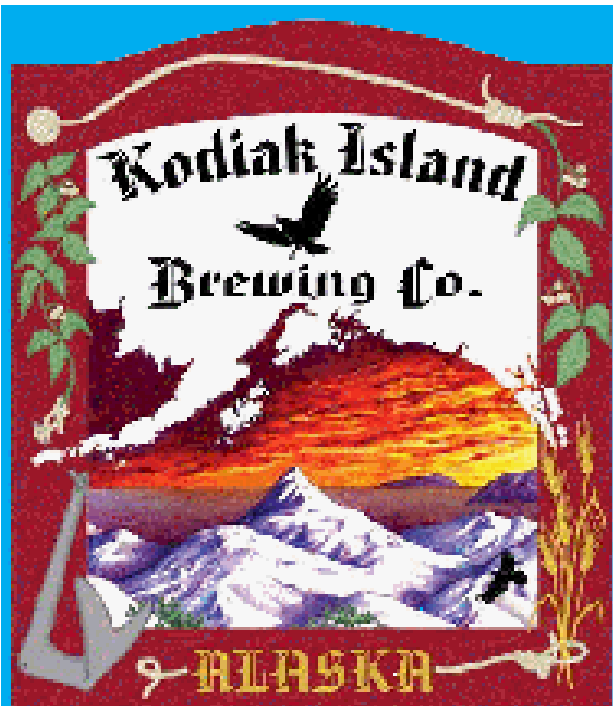
\$50 a person due at the first class

When:

Sundays at 5pm, starting on February 14th

Current schedule:

February	21, 28,
March	6, 13, 20
April	3, 10, 17, 24
May	1



HBOTY 2015	Fur Rondy	Break up	Anchortown	Equinox	Big Fish
Total					
Ted Rosenzweig	4	6	10		20
40					
Jeff Shearer	18		8	6	6
38					
Rory Marengo	10	10	6		8
34					
Mike Cragen		14	10		6
30					
Mike Fisher		4		6	18
28					
Jamie Stehn		10	8		
18					
Pete Devaris				14	
14					
Jed and Jake Wade	10				
10					
Willie Creamer	8		2		
10					
Kevin Sobolesky				8	
8					
Grant Lidren	4				4
8					
Jarod Cappon	6				
6					
Ken Killian	6				
6					
Samuel Moore	6				
6					
Karl Morgan				4	
4					
Scott Griffith				4	
4					
Tim Hiddleston			4		
4					
Chris Venot			4		
4					
Steven Kunemund				2	
2					
Chris Ferguson	2				
2					
Chris Hilliard		2			
2					

Home-Smoked Beer Experiment: Part 1

by Mike Fisher

Part 1: Overview and Smoker Build

In the summer of 2015, I had the idea of smoking my own malt at home to use in a smoked beer. Beechwood and peat smoked malts are readily available, but I wanted to try some other varieties. Since

I didn't have a smoker and didn't expect to get enough use out of one to justify the cost, I decided to build my own. This article, broken into three parts, covers my journey from start to finish. This article talks about the smoker build. Part two will talk about the smoking process. The third and final part will talk about the resulting beer.

Smoker Build

In the fall of 2015, I purchased materials and built my smoker. I decided to build the smoker out of standard cedar fence boards, with a minimal internal structure using some leftover 2x2s. Using separate boards for the sides does raise the issue of air escape (more on that later), but I chose to use them because they are cheap and have a nice rustic look. Cedar is naturally resistant to degradation from the elements, and while it's not used for smoking malts it is used for planks for grilling fish, veggies, and other foods.

I first built four identical walls with the fence boards, three boards wide with two shorter pieces at the top and bottom to hold them together. Next, I cut 2x2s to run up the corners most of the way and connected the walls, overlapping them so that I had a rectangular cross-section.

To address the airflow issue, I used folded-over heavy duty aluminum foil to cover most, but not all, of each wall on the inside. The foil served a dual purpose of not only blocking gaps but also to reflect heat back.

I put 2x2 cross-pieces near the top and bottom for shelving. I used two pieces of the leftover fence board for each shelf. I secured the bottom shelf but left the top one loose for access to the lower section and to allow for airflow adjustments. I created a lid for the smoker with similar construction as the main smoker and then installed handles on the sides of the smoker (for transport) and the lid.

I cut a notch in the bottom of one of the walls for my electric burner's cord. The idea was that I would place an electric burner on the bottom shelf and a pan of some kind on the top shelf to hold the malt. The shelf pieces on the top block a lot of the area, but they could be swapped out for something else if needed.

People who already own a smoker could skip this step and go to the smoking process. However, for someone without a smoker and no other plans for one, this was a much less expensive way to do it and the materials could be reclaimed for another use if needed. Plus it's a DIY project that fits perfectly with the spirit of home brewing and experimentation.

Coming up in Part 2, I discuss the process I used for smoking four pounds of 2-row.





Above: Exterior of smoker



Below: Notch on bottom of smoker



Above: Inside views of the

smoker and lid

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



The *Northern Brewer* welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. You can contact the editor, Debbie Grecco at:

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**NEXT MEETING: Thursday January 21, 2016
7pm at the Snow Goose**