



# THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

MAY 2012

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## Prez Sez

by *Tim Strayer*

Yes again, another month has passed us by....the good news? The snow is about gone! The bad news? None! We have nothing but warmer weather ahead, which we all know means camping, tourists, fishing, bears, tourists, hiking, tourists, traveling, and hopefully some time left over to do a little home brewing in between all of those activities!



I don't know about you, but I am seriously delinquent in the brewing area. This year has been my busiest year to date since I moved here in 2007 (yes, I am barely a legal Alaskan by most standards, but hey the First Lady of Brewing has been here for almost 25 years, so I guess I qualify by association). I always wish I had more time to brew, but there is always next winter! Club activities combined with work, family, and home projects fill my plate quite full.

Talkeetna Beer Trippin was a HUGE Success once again! Thank you to Denali Brewing Company/Twister Creek for all that they do to make this club event bigger every year. Stay tuned to next month for Joe Michael's Talkeetna wrap up article.

I would like to pass on sincere thanks to Dan Bosch for running the annual Snow Goose Breakup Competition for the club, and thank you to all that entered and participated as judges. Check out this month's newsletter or the club website for the final results. And don't forget that there are now new totals tallied for the HomeBrewer Of The Year (HBOTY) award as well on the website at <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org>.

The club brews were bottled at last. We had a 2 year old Flanders Red and a 1 year old Russian Imperial Stout. It was a great day of team work as always. And we are ever grateful for Dennis and Dena Sessler for being such fantastic hosts for this club event. Its not easy to commit your garage to years of storage for beer. So, the next time you see them be sure to buy them both their favorite brew – they deserve it!

As some of you may have heard Joe Michael has stepped down as Treasurer of the club due to time constraints. We wish him the very best and look forward to his ever creative involvement with all the club activities. He is a true asset! And please welcome Tim Bisson as your new club Treasurer. He has been a prior board member, winner of many competitions, and long time club member. He will do a fine job keeping the clubs books in order! Thank you Tim.

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As for the month of May and beyond? Hang on tight, because it's filled full of good stuff: House Crawl, Brew-A-Thon, Haines Brewfest, and another Club Brew! We will also be holding our final meeting of the year on May 15. But don't worry – there will be many summer activities to keep us all connected. Check out Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/gnbc1> for all of the details, watch your email inbox for announcements, or contact anyone of the club board members.

And last, but definitely not least, was the wedding of John and Rose Craig. I hope that you had a chance to attend this event – I believe that we had very near 100 people! The ceremony was definitely the most passionate and unique I have ever witnessed. Incredible food, decorations, music, and goodwill were enjoyed by all. Never underestimate the power of people to donate their skills and time for a good cause – especially when it's in the name of love (and the love of beer)! John and Rose wanted me to extend a very genuine and heartfelt thank you to everyone involved. They were truly moved by everyone's involvement.

So what are your big summer plans? As for me and my lady, well, come late June we are embarking on a 4000 mile travel trailer adventure from Michigan across the lower 48 to Alaska with my two daughters. I sincerely hope to make brewery visits and craft beer as high on the list of destinations as Mt. Rushmore! I am sure when I return I will have many beer photos to share. I hope your summer will be just as adventurous.

Until next month, I wish you tight lines and cold beer my friends.  
Beer on!

Flame out,  
Prez Tim



### **Secretary's Corner**

*by Julie McDonald*

Meeting Minutes: April 17, 2012

#### **General Biz**

- Prez Tim Strayer called meeting to order at 7:13p.
- We had 5 or 6 new members attending. A rough count found 53 total members attending.
- Tim suggested that if any members had homebrew that they wanted to get feedback on to be sure to work the room during social time to let others taste their brews and offer feedback.
- GNBC snifter glasses were offered up for sale, \$5 a piece.
- Club raffle was discussed and bringing commercial brews for the raffle was encouraged.
- The keg raffle was mentioned. Ticket sales to continue through Brew-a-thon in May. Karl Morgan offered his modification skills for converting kegs to brew kettles in return for good beer.

#### **Old Biz**

- Dan Bosch recapped the Snowgoose Break-up Homebrew Competition
- May 19 House Crawl - Check our Facebook event page for the latest information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/258127877612590/>

## New Biz

- Brew-a-thon information can be found on the club's Facebook event page. This takes place May 5. Please check this link for all the details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/336448519748992/>
- Next Club Brew – Wee Heavy – complete information for this event can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/219160934860158/>
- GNBC May Beer Dinner:  
Date: Saturday May 12  
Time: 6pm show up and sit down at 7pm  
Host: Ira Edwards, South Anchorage (actual address will be provided to the dinner guests at a future point)  
Theme: "Flame On!!!" - food must be burned/blackened/flamed in some manner during some part of it's preparation- BBQ, gas top range, broiler, get creative!!! (i.e... don't EVERYONE bring the same BBQ dish...) Ira will have his BBQ, turkey fryer, and gas stove available and a variety of Cast iron dishes as well, or the prep work can be done at home...  
No specific beer challenge other than to find a beer that pairs well with your course

**We still have 3 spots open (at the time I wrote this, April 24).** Dinner sign-up works like this:

1. it's first come, first served.
2. Read the details of the dinner
3. Pick a course and then reply to my email at [juzy@gci.net](mailto:juzy@gci.net) ASAP with your course selection
4. Have a second selection in your email, should your first already be taken.
5. Include how many will be attending (i.e.: yourself +1 or just yourself)

Then simply sit back and design your course and pairing. Simple as that. Here are the details:

Welcome beer –

Salad – Rachel, Chris, & Steve - food & beer TBD

Appetizer – Pat & Mark – food & beer TBD

Appetizer – Fil & Tim - food & beer TBD

Entrée –

Entrée – Ira - Roasted pork roast or Elk/Moose burger Sliders w/beer TBD

Dessert – Rachel, Chris, & Steve - food & beer TBD

- 20th Anniversary of the Great Alaskan Craft Beer and Home Brew Festival in Haines is coming up. The festival is held May 25 and 26, 2012 (U.S. Memorial Day Weekend) for more info on the festival, events, how to get there, etc. go to their website at <http://www.seakfair.org/beer-fest/>

This festival also hosts a homebrew competition. Please continue reading for all you will need to know about this:

You can go to this website and scroll down for all of the homebrew comp rules: <http://www.seakfair.org/beer-fest/>

If you need more info contact Rob at [hainesbrewfest@gmail.com](mailto:hainesbrewfest@gmail.com) or 907 766-2755

NOTE: Anchorage area home brewers, If you want to submit entries to the competition, but don't want to drive, we got you covered! Karl Morgan will be taking entries down on the club's behalf.

# EVENTS

*Every First Thursday*

*Moose's Tooth First Tap*

*Every Friday*

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

05.....*Brewathon: Kevin Soboleski's House*

05.....*Zymurgist Borealis Homebrew Competition - Fairbanks*

12.....*May Beer Dinner: Edwards 7:00 PM*

12.....*Goblets of Gold Mead Competition - Ring of Fire Meadery*

15.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the Goose 7:00 PM*

17-18.....*Deadline for Entry Submission For Haines Homebrew Competition -Arctic Brewing*

19.....*GNBC House Crawl Noon - 7:30*

25-26.....*Great Alaskan Craft Beer and Homebrew Festival - Haines*

22-23.....*GNBC Camp Out at Eklutna Lake Noon Friday June 22 - Noon Saturday June 24*

10.....*Summer Picnic at the Loughrey's 6-10 pm*

- You must drop your entries off at Arctic Brewing Supply between May 17, but no later than 1 p.m. on Friday May 18.
- You MUST have an entry form completed for each entry (3 bottles). And each bottle must have a bottle ID form rubber banded.
- AND you must have a check attached with your total entry fees (\$5 for first, and \$3 for each additional) - made out to Robert Miller.

Links for BJCP forms:

Entry Form: [http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP\\_EntryRecipe.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf)

Bottle ID Form: [http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP\\_BottleID.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_BottleID.pdf)

- Alaska Run for Women – GNBC Team Brewbies. Please check out our event page and, women, sign up for our team. Men, sign up to volunteer! Remember that signing up on our event page DOES NOT register you in the event. You have to go to the Alaska Run for Women website to register. All of the info you will need can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/157578387701410/> We are currently working on a date in which to craft our own t-shirts. That will be announced once we have decided.
- Eklutna campout on June 22-23. A Facebook event page has been created and additional information will be added to it as it becomes available: <https://www.facebook.com/events/314872828580008/>
- Summer BBQ at the Loughrey's: <https://www.facebook.com/events/103344833134598/>
- A volunteer coordinator is being requested for the Christmas party. If you are interested please contact me or any one of the board members. You can reach me at [juzy@gci.net](mailto:juzy@gci.net)
- Some things to keep in mind:
  12. Website overhaul was brought up with volunteer, Joe Saunders, in attendance. More info to come later.
  13. Big Fish Side Challenge will be HAC (High Alcohol Content), stay tuned for more details.
  14. When receiving a spam email from the club DO NOT REPLY TO THAT EMAIL. It goes into a digital black hole never to be seen again. Please read the email carefully and reply to whoever is requesting information, etc. We always provide a "reply to" email address.
- Ira Edwards was in attendance and we were able to honor him with a plaque for his past Prez duties for the club. Thanks, Ira!

Break for food and refreshment.

8:15p - reconvene for guest speaker, Kevin Burton, head brewer at Glacier Brewhouse, who gave us a glimpse into his eisbock brewing knowledge. Thanks, Kevin!

9ish meeting adjourned.

The next GNBC Club meeting is slated for May 15, 2012, at 7 pm. This will be our last Snowgoose meeting until September.

A - J Clean-up

K - P Food

Q-Z Set-up (arrive 6:30ish)

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## 2012 Homebrewer of The Year Categories

### Fur Rendezvous HBC

- Category 7
- Category 10
- Category 13
- Category 15
- Category 18
- Category 23

### Snow Goose HBC

- Category 4
- Category 5
- Category 6
- Category 9
- Category 14
- Category 20

### Anchor Town HBC

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 3
- Category 11
- Category 16
- Category 21

### Equinox Mead HBC

- Category 24
- Category 25
- Category 26
- Category 27
- Category 28

### Humpy's Big Fish HBC

- Category 8
- Category 12
- Category 17
- Category 19
- Category 22
- Side Challenge



## Miscellaneous

TAP (Training for Alcohol Professionals)

Upcoming TAPs classes held at CHARR's Charlie H. Selman Training Center located at 1503

W. 31st Avenue, Suite 101 Anchorage.

Remember this is required if you plan to volunteer to steward at any fests or competitions

or tastings this year. Here's the latest schedule:

05/02	Wednesday	9:00am
05/07	Monday	1:00pm
05/11	Friday	9:00am
05/16	Wednesday	1:00pm
05/19	Saturday	11:00am
05/21	Monday	1:00pm
05/21	Monday	1:00pm
05/23	Wednesday	9:00am
05/29	Tuesday	5:30pm
05/31	Thursday	1:00pm
06/05	Tuesday	9:00am

Renewal certification is available at the CHARR office Monday through Friday 10:00am to

4:00pm. Renewal testing is also available with proof of previous training following Saturday classes at 2:00pm

## MEETING SETUP

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



## Spring Shopping Made Easy!

by Julie McDonald

Get Your GNBC Logo Gear for gift giving or for yourself! Spring is in the air and it's time for some fun, warm-weather GNBC logo gear. Check out these two options:

1. Alaska Textiles – We now have a webstore at Alaska Textiles. Items are still being added to the store, but you can go check it out and if you don't see items that you want let me (Julie) know and I'll contact them and see about getting them added to our store.

- check it out online at <http://gnbc.alaskatextiles.com/>
- Embroidery cost varies, depending on the number of stitches. For example a baseball cap with front logo and back logo will cost the price of the cap plus an additional \$16.29. For a shirt, the price of the shirt and an additional \$21.56. If things are ordered in multiples the cost of embroidery is discounted.

2. Land's End Business Outfitters – Get hats, fleece, Ts, bags, water bottles, scarves, aprons, etc. Our Company Store is up and running... all YOU have to do is use it! Here's how:

- Log on to your Internet Explorer browser, their websites do not run on Mozilla Firefox, they run best on IE.
- Enter this URL: ces.landsend.com/gnbclub there is no need to add the http:/ prefix to this, just cut and paste it as is.
- You will need to register before you can order, it's a simple procedure, doesn't take long. Just click on "Sign In". It brings you to a sign in page, click "register with us" and voila, enter your info.
- There are no restrictions on what we can order. But keep in mind that some products are only available in bulk quantities. So be aware of that before placing your order.
- Embroidery cost is between \$13.00 and \$14.05 per application depending on which fabrics/products we order.

So there you have it!

Now get busy getting your club gear ordered and on it's way!!!! You know you want to sport a new club logo vest, hat, or hoody at all of the club functions this summer!



## The Annual GNBC House Crawl: May 19th

**W**ith Spring just around the corner, it is time to get prepared for the annual house crawl. This is a member-only club event that is not to be missed! This year's house crawl is set for Saturday, May 19th. If you haven't participated before, this is a fun day spent with other brewers and a great chance to bust loose and get to know some folks and their homes and homebrew.

There will be five stops and we are looking for a volunteer to host ONE more stop. It's a lot like a pub crawl but we will be going to the homes of homebrewers and sampling their fine beverages. There are snacks at each stop and the mandatory goofy beer game.

There wasn't a shortage of laughter last year when it came to the various games. Just ask anyone who participated. Points are kept for each game throughout the day and the three top scores will be awarded prizes.

Itinerary:

Noon, at the home of Mark & Pat Ryan

1st stop: Midnight Sun Brewing where Barb will host us with some special stuff.

2nd stop: Fil & Tim's house

3rd Stop: We still need a third stop, so if you are interested contact Lisa (contact info below).

4th stop: Lisa's and Pete's house which is our dinner stop and will be slightly longer than the rest.

5th and final stop: Ira Edwards house, around 7:30 pm.

Participants will be responsible for a cab ride or designated driver pickup from the last stop.

We will be traveling around Anchorage on a 29 passenger Magic Bus, but there are only 16 spots left so reserve your seat early.

The cost will be \$35 per person. Each year we pick a theme for the day, last year was a Hawaiian theme, I am looking for suggestions for this year. (Prizes will also be awarded for best attire.)

Call Lisa, weekdays at Arctic Brewing Supply 561-5771 or her cell 350-0376 if you have questions, would like to volunteer to be the 3rd stop or would like to reserve a spot on the bus.



# History Corner: Remember the Reinheitsgebot!

by Aaron Christ

April 23 was the 496<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of the Reinheitsgebot in Bavaria. We've all heard about this mysterious 'law' from the Middle Ages, but what was it really all about? It was a pretty simple document. It was and is still only a single page long. Most of the text regarded pricing regulations for the two beer 'seasons' (September to April was half as expensive as May to August) along with some wording on what might happen if you violate the law. Another section regulates the resale of beer by innkeepers. The single sentence that everybody latches on to is the one that limits ingredients in beer to "barley, hops, and water." We know now that yeast is essential, but that was only figured out about 350 years after Reinheitsgebot was put into law.

I've heard various stories about why this law was enacted. One tale you'll often hear is that it was enacted to protect beer consumers. But the real reason behind the law was pure and simple: power and money. These were the days of strong guilds, and there had been an ongoing clash between the brewer guild and the baker guild. Both were paying fees to the Bavarian Duchy, and the bakers were forced to buy their yeast from the brewers. Of course, bakers had a different concept of what yeast was, and bakers were just as clueless about the microbiology, but they knew if they tossed this goop in bread dough, it would make it rise.

Through the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Duchy benefited financially from the monopoly of grain fees run through the brewer guild. The unique flavors of different combinations of herbs and spices made it easy for guilds to protect their turf and punish imposters. But then someone figured out that hops also had a desirable preservative effect on beer. Problem is, yeast with hops tastes like hops, while yeast with grain tastes like the spices. Bakers were not enthusiastic about being forced to use yeast that made their bread taste bitter. So brewers were mad because they couldn't tell if people were brewing with *their* hops or someone else's, and bakers were mad because they were being forced to use yeast that tasted bad.

To add yet another twist to the ongoing conflict, the city council of Munich had certain rights to regulate (and therefore extract fees and taxes from) brewing and baking in the city. The co-ruling Dukes-no, not Bo and Luke, but rather Bill and Lud (Wilhelm and his little brother Ludwig) hatched a plan that would not only get the powerful guilds in their pocket, but would expand their control over brewing and baking, and reclaim certain powers from the city council. The Reinheitsgebot was only one of several documents that outlined the brothers' agreement on how they were to share power. Regulation of beer was now through the whole of Bavaria, so all the little brewers in the countryside had to pay fees to the guilds, and hence the Dukes. The city council lost their control, too.

Brewers were happy to strengthen their monopoly as well as take control over a previously unregulated production base. In one of the associated documents with the Reinheitsgebot, bakers were released from their requirement to purchase yeast from the brewers and could produce it themselves. Presumably the only reason the brewers didn't cry foul over that change was because lost revenues were offset by all these new folks in the countryside to extort, not to mention the profitability of a monopolizing cartel.

The Reinheitsgebot of 1516 was by no means unique. Similar edicts were pronounced hundreds of years earlier (1156 Augsburg, 1393 Nürnberg, 1434 Weisensee/Thüringen, 1447 Regensburg, 1363 München, 1493 Landshut) each with their own particular angle. Some were indeed to denounce scandalous brewing practices, some to protect dwindling grain reserves, some to protect the income of the ruling elite and the guilds. Hopefully with a little more digging and some luck in the library we can later take a peek at the reasons behind some of the lesser known German beer purity laws.

## References:

K. Hackel-Stehr "Das Brauwesen in Bayern: vom 14. Bis 16. Jahrhundert, insbesondere die Entstehung und Entwicklung des Reinheitsgebotes (1516) " Berlin: Technische Hochschule Dissertation 1987

D. Thomas and P. Leeson "The Brewer, the Baker, and the Monopoly Maker" Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy 1(1) 2012: 84-95

G. Thömmes "Jetzt gibt es kein Bier, sondern Kölsch- Das etwas andere Lexikon vom Bier" Selbstverlag, Perchtoldsdorf 2005



## Ask Foamy

by Foamy

Howdy Campers!

I know, I know, it's been quite awhile since you've heard from me. Sorry about that, but sometimes there are demands in life that supersede what we may wish to do. I've kept promising that I'll start up the column again and now is as good of time as any, so here we go. Start thinking of important, pertinent questions for today's professional drinker and send them to [askfoamy@yahoo.com](mailto:askfoamy@yahoo.com). Remember, if you don't have any questions, I can't give you any answers!

For those of you that remember, and for those of you that don't, Ask Foamy is an article from whence the source of most of my wisdom comes from Myrna the Psychic Cat. It saddens me deeply to say that she has stepped on a rainbow and moved on to her next existence. Personally, I think she'll come back as a high school librarian. Hell, she was grumpy enough for it. But when all is said and done, we had a good run with me being her person for the last twelve years. And seventeen years old was a ripe enough old age for a cat. Answering your questions may be a little more difficult without her unless I can find a medium to channel her grumpy old self from beyond, but I'll do my best.

So, send in professional drinking questions (notice the word "drinking" rather than "brewing," and "professional" doesn't really matter either) and I'll write the column again.

This just in: a reader asks: What was Myrna's favorite beer? Did Myrna drink from your glass, or did you decant her special rations into a special bowl or did she drink from your hand? Where did she get her foamy wisdom?

To this I respond:

"Myrna's favorite beer depended upon what her visions were telling her to drink. On the whole, they tended to Mirror Pond but she was also quite fond of Old Rasputin. She imbibed her libations from her favorite mug. Since she had a semi-opposable thumb she could hang on to it handily. She never did share the origins of her great wisdom. To remain one of the greater mysteries of our age I suppose."

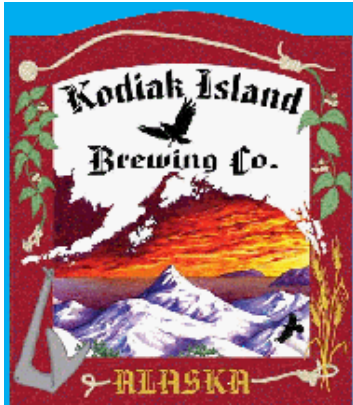
And, while your mind is being inundated by an almost infinite number of questions that you undoubtedly have, hoist a glass or twelve for Myrna. You know she's probably watching and keeping score, so no cheating!

Drink On!

Foamy







## We Need You!

by *Scott Stihler*

We need BJCP judges and/or experienced brewers to help judge the E. T. Barnette Homebrew Competition!!!

Judging experience is not absolutely necessary. If possible, we will place inexperienced judges with at least two experienced judges.

Judging will take place on Saturday, July 14th at the Silver Gulch Brewing and Bottling Company located in Fox, Alaska (a small mining community ~11 miles north of Fairbanks).

The seven judged categories will be: Pilsner (2A-C), English Pale Ale (8A-C), American Ale (10A-C), Porter (12A-C), Stout (13A-F), India Pale Ale (14A-C), and Fruit/Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer (20 & 21A).

Once again out of town judges can pre-register and hand carry their entries thereby saving on the shipping costs. All they need to do is fill out the Entry forms and mail it to us along with the corresponding fee payment. On the day of the competition the judges simply show up with their chilled entries in hand. Be sure to attach Bottle IDs to each of the bottles with rubber bands so we can distinguish which entry is which.

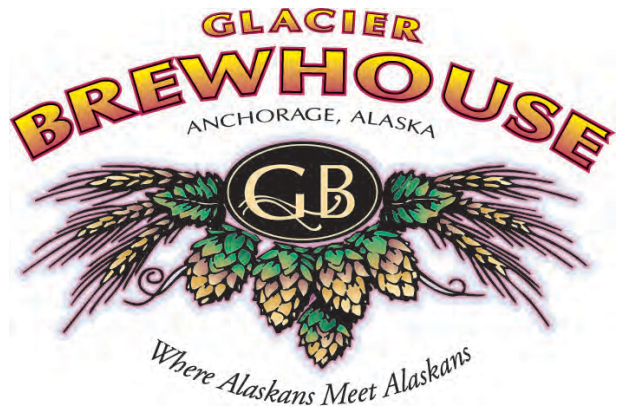
Please mail your pre-registration materials to:  
Chérie Stihler  
P.O. Box 84988  
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Please mail in the pre-registration information etc. early enough so that it is received no later than the entry deadline (i.e. July 11). This will allow us to register those entries along with all the others and be ready when you show up with beers in hand.

I hope you can help us out with judging or being a steward for this year's the E. T. Barnette Homebrew Competition.

For more information about this competition please go to the following URL: <http://www.mosquitobytes.com/Den/Beer/Events/Events.html#ETB>.

If you are interested in helping out please contact me at [stihlerunits@mosquitobytes.com](mailto:stihlerunits@mosquitobytes.com) or (907) 474-2138.



# Free Black Currant Clippings

by *Dennis Sessler*

It's that time of year again. I know that we still have some snow here and there, but summer is just around the corner. I was out in my back yard recently checking out how my hardy currant bushes fared this year after having been buried almost to their tops in snow and ice. It looks like they did better than in years past to tell you the truth. Personally I think the deep snow kept my two dogs from racing through them and breaking off the fruitful branches.

Each spring I patrol up all the broken branches, clip them and get them rooted out in spare pint glasses full of water. By the end of May they are ready to be planted in 1 gallon pots. They spend the summer setting roots and getting well established. I leave them in the small pots healing them into some dirt for the long winter, and in the following summer I plant them permanently. I've been doing this for some 6 years now, and it's almost to the point that I have nowhere else to plant them.

As in past years when I do my annual pruning, I always offer up to fellow club members the chance to obtain free clippings. All you have to do is contact me and we can set up a time for you to venture out to my house and I will cut you off more than you will need.

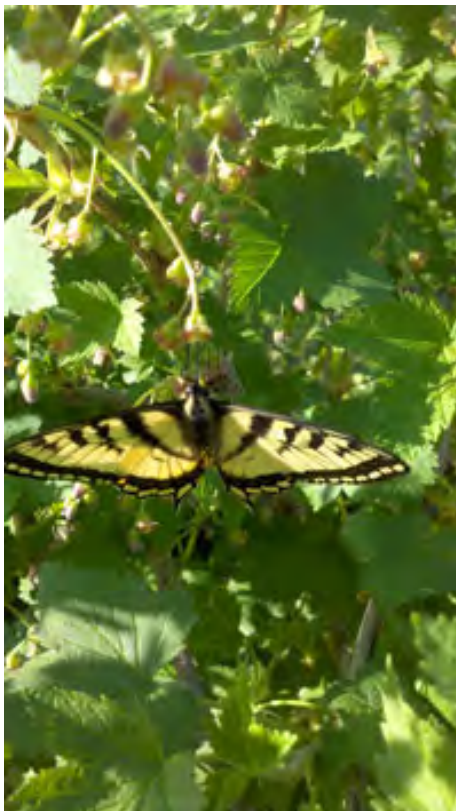
To tell you the truth I really am not sure what variety of black currants I have. All I know is that they grow between 12- 16 inches a year. Within three-to-four years the plant are five-to-six feet wide and just about as tall. Every year, the branches



become so laden with juicy currants that it's best if you plan some kind of stringer/trellis system to tie up and promote the vertical growth of these bountiful plants. Each plant will easily produce one gallon or more of fruit in three years. In fact if there was a book titled, "Shrubs and Bushes for Dummies" the variety I have would be the cover photo.

After the plants are established in small pots, I dig a hole 12 inches around and deep and heal them in with a mixture of bagged manure and topsoil from Wal-Mart. Every spring I pull back my mulch and weed control fabric and spread more bagged manure into the soil. These plants are heavy feeders and respond well to annual feedings. They love shaded areas with lots of moisture. All in all these things are hard to kill.

So please feel free to email me and I will contact you when I start pruning them back before they leaf out and start to flower. Email me at [sessak@mtaonline.net](mailto:sessak@mtaonline.net).



# Messing Around With Wood Flavors

by *Matt Wallace*

I recently brewed a Strong Scotch Ale part of which I plan to age on wood to obtain that classy, barrel aged flavor. But I've got two problems.

First, while I've tasted my share of barrel aged beers over the last couple of years, I find that it's often hard to tell what the oak is really bringing to the table flavor wise. That's especially true when so many of my favorite barrel aged beers are already massive, complex, and layered. A good example is Glacier Brewhouse's Eisbock that was featured at the April meeting. This beer's got a lot going on inside.

Second, I've been nagged by a question recently. What's so great about oak? I know the descriptors (rich vanilla, tannins, and others) but what about other woods? Might there be some awesome flavors I'm missing? After all, barbecue enthusiasts don't limit themselves to smoking with only one kind of wood from one type of tree and since the practical barrel-making attributes aren't really at play for most of us, I figure it'd be fun to mess around with some other candidates. Plus, I'm interested in giving my homebrews a real local flavor. What better way than to try aging beer with locally available woods?

So here's the little taste test I put together.

The Wood:

Oak- I got a small packet of Oak Cubes at Arctic Brewing Supply. These were American oak cubes with a medium toast.

Alder- I picked up a bag of chips at the hardware store intended for use in barbecuing. The chips are of relatively uniform size, are dry, and conveniently clean.

The Toasting:

I figured the oak was ready to go, but the Alder might benefit from some toasting. I spread out a well-spaced layer of chips on a cookie sheet, and popped 'em in the oven. Frankly, I was a little nervous about starting a fire since dry wood heat is a pretty traditional recipe for that phenomenon. So, with fire extinguisher at hand, I started at 200F and went from there. Basically, every half hour or so I cranked the heat up in the oven about 50 degrees. Not much was happening, aroma or color wise until the chips hit about 350F. But once they got going, the aroma really filled the whole house. The smell might be described like similar to the smell you might get by baking cookies in a woodshop.

After about half an hour in the oven at 350F, I pulled half the chips to cool, and cranked the rest up to 400F. The aroma increased quite a bit and just a hint of acidity emerged. I pulled the rest of the chips after an additional 30 minutes or so.

Here's a picture of the results:



# Snow Goose Break-Up Homebrew Competition Results

by *Event Organizer*

This year's Snow Goose Restaurant and Sleeping Lady Brewing Company Breakup Homebrew Competition Results are in. We are honoring Aaron Christ for his Best of Show entrant in the Scottish and Irish Ale category (9D) for his Irish Red. Still, this remains a stiff competition with entries from throughout the club that add testimony that we rage strong when it comes to great homebrewed beer in the state of Alaska.

There were 32 entries in this competition and the largest category populated was the same one that Christ reigned supreme in: Scottish and Irish Ales. 10 entries were submitted in this category. Here are the results:



## Category 4: Dark Lager

Place	Brewer	Cat/Sub	Sub
1	Andrew Janco and Melanie Smith	4C	Schwarzbier
2	Brian Walters	4B	Munich Dunkel
3	Mike Lanzarone	4C	Schwarzbier

## Category 5: Bock

Place	Brewer	Cat/Sub	Sub
1	Dan Bond	5A	Helles Bock
2	Aaron Christ	5C	Dopplebock
3	Steve Jayich	5D	Eisbock

## Category 6: Light Hybrid

Place	Brewer	Cat/Sub	Sub
1	Brian Walters	6C	Kolsch

## Category 9: Scottish and Irish

Place	Brewer	Cat/Sub	Sub
1	Aaron Christ	9D	Irish Red (BOS)
2	Kevin Sobolesky (6)	9E	Strong Scotch
3	Kevin Sobolesky (5)	9E	Strong Scotch



# Brewathon Shotz

*By Fermento*

This year celebrates the 19<sup>th</sup> Brewathon hosted by the Great Northern Brewer's Club. It was a great event, despite relatively frigid temperatures that didn't do anything to dampen the spirits of those that attended and hoisted a toast to National Homebrew Day promptly at 9:00 AM. I don't know the stats: I blew through the event rather quickly. I haven't homebrewed in years, but wanted to show my support for one of the longest standing Great Northern Brewers events in the club. It was good to see regular club members and those that came out new to brew with others that pass on the paddle in their own ways. Here are some pictures from my visit. Enjoy! See you at the next event!



# Weeee Heavy Club Brew Time

by *Dennis Sessler*

**W**ith the first three club brews distributed, it's time to crank up the kettles and brew up some savory suds worth putting to rest in some very useful wood. I blasted out an email to the club membership about a week ago, and have received a few responses. I'm hoping this piece rings a bell and that you email me with your desires to join in on the next round of club brews.

We will be brewing a Scotch Ale, otherwise known as a Wee Heavy. This beer is a monster with an OG of 1.116. This is how it will work. Email me back if you are able to brew a 10 gallon batch of this style of beer. I have the recipe already and I will select seven team leads for this brew. The remaining members who wish to participate can join in with the team leads for this brew.

The individual teams will be responsible for procuring the malts and hops for this beer. I will supply the yeast on brew day. All teams will brew their beer on May 19th. All teams will start early that morning brewing, and then transport their cooled wort out to my house between 4-6 pm. As a group, we will transfer all the wort to a mass fermentor then hit it with yeast.

After the beer has finished fermenting it will be transferred into a special whiskey barrel designated just for this brew for aging.

So, what you will need to do is email me back as soon as possible to get on the list. I will compile a separate email list for those wanting to participate. I will email everyone a list of the seven brew teams and a Google map and contact information so you can join one of the team leads for this brew. After aging has been completed the beer will be racked from the barrel into 10 gallon corney kegs and forced carbonated. A bottling date will be set up to bottle all of the beer into 22 oz. bombers for distribution.

I'm looking forward to this new brew. The last three we did were awesome. There will be another club brew in early June. We will be brewing a Baltic Porter that will be aged in our club's brandy barrel. Following that, a sour style ale will be brewed and aged in the club's "infected" barrel. The sour beer will be hit with black currant juice in the barrel as well. Stay tuned for more updates.

The brew date has been set for May 19. There will also be an all day brew and fermentation party at my house after brewing is finished. Contact me at [sessak@mtaonline.net](mailto:sessak@mtaonline.net) and in the subject line put "Weeee Heavy", so my junk mail folder and my fingers don't dump you)

I know that summer is approaching quickly, so see if you can spare a weekend here or there and help out. Please contact me if you want to be a team lead or if you want to participate and be assigned to a particular team. Hell, email me and just say you want to come to the party at my house. I wanted to also give everyone a quick overview of the bottling/kegging event we held at our home to empty all three barrels.

The Flanders Red, another club brew, was siphoned off into 10 gallon corney kegs. It was primed with dextrose and fresh rehydrated wine yeast, then bottled into waiting bottles and split up amongst the different teams. I want to thank, Tim Strayer, Don Lewellyn, Aaron Christ, Tim Bisson, Julie McDonald, and Frank Bell for all the work they did in taking care of priming, adding yeast and bottling this beer. They did an awesome job.

I, in the meantime, bounced back and forth (as usual) between the kegging activities in the garage and the bottling going on upstairs. I was running around making sure these dedicated brewers had everything they needed. All the Russian Imperial Stout ("RIS") was transferred to waiting kegs and taken home by the team members to be carbonated and bottled. My figures were way off so a couple of teams who showed up later showed up to empty barrels. I think we got a good fix on the amount of RIS to be split so all team members will get their fair share.

Upcoming beers include the Weee Heavy and Baltic Porter. Both will both be very large beers that will age wonderfully in the club's whiskey and brandy barrels. The sour beer that we will be brewing will not have any specific BJCP style that we are aiming for. This barrel has the funk and will always have it. It's impossible to plan and attempt to steer this beer into some said category, so why the hell even try? The Belgians do this best. Their approach has been to always just brew a great beer and let it do its thing. We will do the same. Our funk beer will be lighter in color than the last one and we will add a fair amount of black currant juice from my cellar. I love the possibilities this one might have. After all how do you screw up a sour beer? Ok I know any beer can be screwed up but with good attention we won't end up with vinegar. FYI I'm knocking on wood!

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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: May 15th, 2012  
7:00 PM at the Snow Goose**