



THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

NOVEMBER 2007



The Prez Sez BABY!

by *Steve Schmitt*

It's November and you know what that means – election time. During the October meeting we opened nominations for Officer and Board positions and these nominations will remain open till we hold the actual vote during the November meeting. Refer to the GNBC website and/or GNBC newsletter for the current nominations and absentee voting instructions (if necessary).

Thanks again to Kerri Canepa for organizing the educational topics and speakers for the GNBC this year. During the October meeting Dr. Joe Carson, President of the South Central Bee Keepers Association, talked about bees in Alaska and honey – it was stellar. Kerri has Ben from Midnight Sun lined up this month to discuss food and beer – should be good.

Breck has been doing an excellent job in organizing and updating the GNBC database and membership data. If you are not receiving monthly email updates on a somewhat regular basis regarding club functions contact Breck or myself to verify that we have your correct email address. Our mailing list is up-to-date and what we are using to send email to the club for updates and events.

The Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday, December 8th, at the Snowgoose starting around 7pm. If anyone has a deep-burning desire to organize this event please contact me and I'll hand it off to you. Otherwise, the party will be the same as last year – the theme will be 'BEER', food will be potluck-style (preferably food made using beer as an ingredient), and the entertainment for the evening will probably be provided by beer in some fashion. For people who need a catchier 'event theme' you can think of this party as a 'Static House Crawl' – why get on a bus and go to a bunch of houses when we can bring the houses to a central location? I like the idea – what the hell.

The Humpy's Big Fish home brew competition will take place on Saturday, December 1st and Humpy's. Refer to the October newsletter for additional information regarding this event. Also, remember that the Side Challenge to the Big Fish this year is the Imperial Challenge! To score big at the side challenge you must produce a beverage of epic proportion – worthy of the Golden Garden Gnome. Entering an Imperial Stout or Imperial IPA will immediately disqualify you from the event – I mean – what's so cool about brewing something which has a million recipes available on Google. However, an Imperial Helles would do well, an Imperial Schwarz? – definitely! Imperial Fruit beer – only if we can get Hartman to judge it...

The Prez Sez

2008 Bigfish Homebrew
Competition Update

Get Yer Honey Some Honey
at Celestial Meads

GNBC Nominations and Ballot

2008 Anchorage Fur
Rendezvous Homebrew
Competition Announced

Secretary's Corner

Great Alaska Beer and
Barleywine Festival Needs
Volunteers

Ira's Budget California Beer
and Wine Vacation

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Humpy's Bigfish Competition Update

by Jason Ditsworth

Here's just one last reminder about the 13th Annual Humpy's Big Fish Homebrew Competition. The competition this year will be on the first weekend in December. Entries will be collected on Friday November 30 at Arctic Brewing Supply and the competition will be on Saturday December 1. If you cannot make it to Arctic Brewing Supply on November 30 you can still enter the competition, so please give me a call to make other arrangements for entering your beer. Please only drop off entries early if you truly have a conflict that you can't work around. If you are entering from outside Anchorage you can ship your beer to Arctic Brewing Supply, 5915 Lake Otis Parkway #3, Anchorage, Alaska 99507 (do NOT send it through the U.S. Mail). If you are shipping your beer it must be received no later than Friday, November 30.

There is no entry fee for this competition and all categories of beer, mead and cider are open for entry. Entry and judging will be based on the BJCP/AHA style guidelines, which are available at www.bjcp.org. Once again we will choose a best of show beer and a best of show mead. Cider is still not eligible due to timing of the competition and the limited ability to match apple types. The best of show beer will be brewed at Midnight Sun Brewing Company and the best of show mead will be brewed at Celestial Meadery. It is still possible to win best of show in beer or mead, but still not get your beer or mead brewed because of special ingredients or time constraints (e.g., four years ago, Pete Devaris won Best of Show with a Geuze that would have taken three years to replicate).

You must enter three 12- to 14-ounce bottles, preferably brown, clean of any labels and markings along with a recipe. For mead and cider you may enter one 22- to 30-ounce bottle (need two bottles for carbonated entries), or two 12- to 14-ounce bottles. Remember that because the grand prize for this competition is having your beer brewed at MSBC or your mead brewed at Celestial Meadery it is important to provide a reasonably accurate recipe in case the judges want to know the ingredients.

If you have any questions or would like to help with the event please call me at 338-8828 or send an e-mail to jditsworth@gci.net. I desperately need help taking entries on Friday November 30 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. I started a new job this week and I don't think I can get away that day. I would greatly appreciate your help.

CONTACTS



Celestial Meads Exclusive Honey For Sale

Celestial Meads has the following honeys available for sale. These are left over from the 2006 crop. Most of them have granulated but they still make great mead. As you can see, they are going fast.

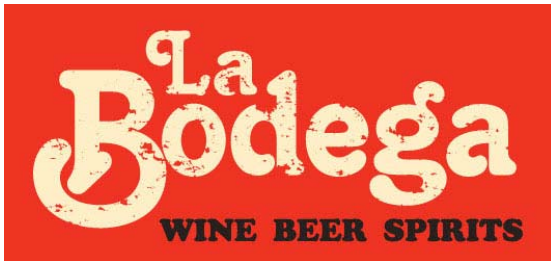
Blackberry/Peppermint 17.5 lbs \$54.80

Knapweed 15.0 lbs \$47.00

Sourwood 43.5 lbs \$170.00

Tupelo (Savannah Bee) 21.25 lbs \$138.00

If you are interested in any of the above, please email or phone 250-8362 and I will arrange to meet you at the meadery. I also have several 5 gal plastic buckets with lids that I will give away for free.



La Bodega's First Wine Event!

Wine Tasting at Ginger Restaurant Nov 11th
We'll be tasting wines from an Oregon winery called La Bete (that's french for "the beast"). These wines are exclusive to La Bodega & Ginger.

Music by Jared Woods

\$30 tickets include 5 wines and paired hors d'oeuvres.

Pinot Noir, Gamay Noir, Aligote, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc

Tickets on sale now at La Bodega & Ginger.

This event will sell out, so please buy your ticket soon.

<http://labetewines.com/wordpress/>

<http://www.gingeralaska.com/>

Tap Root Beer Tasting

November 12th, 7:00 P.M.

Tickets are \$25, tickets on sale now at La Bodega & Tap Root!
Clay, the Brewer for Sleeping Lady Brewing Co., will be presenting each beer.

EVENTS

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Friday

Midnight Sun Brewery Tours and

Brew Debut: 6:00 PM 344-1179

12.....*Tap Root Cafe German Beer*

Tasting: 7:00 PM

15.....*Kinley's/Midnight Sun Beer Dinner*

7:00 PM \$50.00

20.....*GNBC Club Meeting at the Goose*

7:00 PM

23.....*Midnight Sun Arctic Devil*

Barleywine Release: 6:00 PM

at the brewery

30.....*Midnight Sun Pride Release*

6:00 PM at the brewery

01.....*Humpy's Big Fish Homebrew*

Competition Judging at SubZero

08.....*GNBC Christmas Party at the*

Goose

14.....*Midnight Sun Lust Release at the*

Brewery: 6:00 PM

CAFE



AMSTERDAM



GNBC 2008 Nominations

Nominations for the 2008 GNBC Club Elections opened during the October club meeting and will remain open until voting commences during the November club meeting. If you are interested in serving as an officer or board member, please contact me (Schmitt) prior to voting to add your name to the ballot. Additionally, write-in candidates are available for all positions. If you will be unable to attend the November meeting to cast your vote you may send an absentee ballot via email to Steve Schmitt (sschmitt@alaska.com) or through the mail (GNBC Elections, PMB 1204, 3705 Arctic Boulevard, Anchorage, AK 99503).

Current Slate of Candidates:

President: Ira Edwards
Write In _____

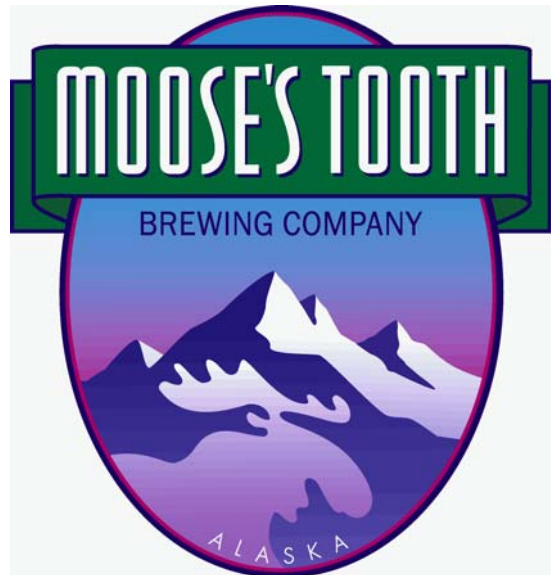
Vice: Keri Canepa
Write In _____

Secretary: Dena Sessler
Write In _____

Treasurer: Breck Tostevin
Write In _____

Board of Directors (vote for 3 Board Members):
Carl Hall

Don Lewelyn
John Trapp
Write In _____
Write In _____
Write In _____





MEETING SETUP

A - J **NO** Food
K - P Setup
R - Z Cleanup

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

2008 Anchorage Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition

by Dennis Sessler

Well ladies and gentlemen, if you haven't fired up your kettles yet, there is still time to brew a stellar beer in anticipation of the 2008 Anchorage Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition. The competition will be held on Saturday February 9th at the Snow Goose. Judging will begin at 10:00 am. And as always there will be a need for plenty of judges and stewards. This competition is an AHA/BJCP sanctioned competition so all beer, mead and cider categories will be open for entry. You can find the current style guidelines at <http://www.bjcp.org/stylecenter.html>. If anybody needs help with filling out the entry paperwork, I will be glad to help. Entries will be accepted at the Snow Goose in the basement on Friday the February 8th. From 11:00 am to 6:00 pm. Entry fees are \$4.00 per entry and you will need to provide three 12 oz bottles for each entry. Mead and cider entries can be three 12 oz bottles or one 750 ml bottle. If you are unable to drop off entries during that time please feel free to contact me to make other arrangements. This year's competition will have a Best of Show beer and a Best of Show mead or cider. There will be special prizes for both of the Best of Show winners plus all the great Fur Rondy ribbons and notoriety. Let's make this a great competition. Dust of your meads, let's cap those beers and lets get ready to "Rondy!" For more information contact me at sessak@mtaonline.net



Secretary's Corner

by *Dena Sessler*

Hello fellow GNBCer's. We met this month on the 16th of October at the Snow Goose, and as always, there was a lot to discuss. We are now totally electronic, so if you didn't receive an e-mail from Steve on Monday the 15th of October, your e-mail isn't current. Please talk to Breck or Steve if you need to update your information. There are still a few people who don't have computers that receive the newsletter in the mail for all others it's electronic. You need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader to download the newsletter. Acrobat Reader is a freeware program available at www.download.com and will enable you to read the newsletter and other "pdf" files that are common in today's electronic communications world.

The annual GNBC Christmas party is the 8th of December at the Snow Goose. It will be the same as last year. The theme is beer, so cook a dish with it and bring lots of it.

The Snow Goose awards are still being delayed due to medals. Next year, the competition will be held the weekend before tax day. This competition will feature six categories within which to enter beer, but they haven't been determined yet. As soon as a decision is made we will get the information out to you.

Fur Rondy is coming up in February. As soon as the date is firmed up, we will get the information posted.

Humpy's Big Fish competition is on the 1st of December. All categories are open and don't forget about the Imperial Beer Side Challenge Competition. . The Best of Show Mead will be made at Celestial Meadery and the Best of Show beer will be brewed at Midnight Sun Brewing Company.

The idea was kicked around to hold another BJCP class this year, but due to lack of interest, it will be held in 2008. Ring of Fire Meadery in Homer will be holding a Beer Judge Certification course The Great Northern Brewing Club will be there to proxy the exam, so if you are interested in taking it let an officer or board member know.

Nominations are open for elections for club officers and board members next month. All four officer positions and three board positions are open. As of now the nominations are as follows: Ira Edwards for President, Kari Canepa for Vice President, Dena Sessler for Secretary, Breck Tostevin for Treasurer, and Don Lewellyn, John Trapp, and Carl Hall are running Great Northern Brewers board members.

Our education portion of the meeting was presented by Dr. Joe Carson, President of the Bee Keeper's Association, who is probably the largest producer of honey in the state at a few tons a year. He has been to 15 countries and 10-12 states working with bees. Honey bees aren't indigenous to Alaska. They are Italian, Russian, Caucasian, or Yugoslavian. Honey bees in Alaska have been wintered up to 65 degrees below zero if they are buried them in the ground. The best way to winter them is put them into a totally dark shed at 40-41 degrees. A honey bee produces 25-30 watts of energy so air movement is important.

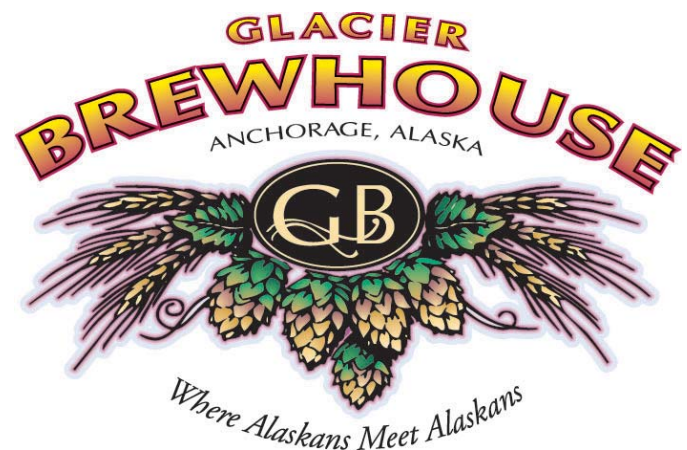
Did you know that a Queen Bee is just an ordinary bee that has eaten royal jelly? She mates with 6-10 drones and never mates again. The poor drone only mates once and then dies since the Queen rips his stinger out after mating. The worker bee works himself to death in about three to six weeks. Dr. Carson told us that there are only two inspectors in New York, where the honey comes into the U.S. primarily from China. None of this honey ever passes inspection, so it is rejected and sent back to South America and blended with other honey, coming back to us as Mexican honey. So if you want the good stuff, support your local honey producers. Impressed so far?

Bees only travel 1 ½ miles in either direction from their hives at a speed of 20 miles per hour. They produce a pheromone that smell like bananas to find their way back to the hive. It takes a lot to get stung, but here is some helpful information. Don't wear dark clothing, as they are attracted to it and hitting their hive with a stick on a cloudy day isn't a good idea either. 29 stings in the face will kill you!

Honey Bees are amazing. If all of the honey bees died off today, 1/3 of the food chain would disappear. 5 years later the rest would die off. For the first time in 2007, fees for trucking honey bees to pollinate exceeded honey sales were imposed.

If you haven't thought that honey bees are invaluable yet, here are some other things that they are accredited with. Bee stings have been known to help with Multiple Sclerosis and other ailments. When the bee's venom is introduced to a site on the body your body's response is to send antibodies to the affected area. If you put honey directly on to a cut, or scrape and wrap it up, it will help it heal better than aloe. A tablespoon of pure honey taken first thing in the morning and right before you go to bed will improve your memory and keenness but you must use pure honey. Honey never goes bad. It is the oldest food being found in King Tut's tomb. When it was discovered, it was as good as new. Never heat honey above 130 degrees, as it will destroy all of the good properties in it.

There was so much more information given to us by Dr. Carson, but I think that you get it, BEES ARE AMAZING! If you have any questions or want to get some awesome honey, please e-mail him at alaskanheavenlyhoney@hotmail.com. That's it for this month; see you all at the next meeting on the 20th of November.



Volunteers Needed at the 2008 Great Alaska Beer and Barley Wine Festival

by Annie Chavez

Hello All! It may only be the first of November, but January is right around the corner. And we all know what January brings...The Great Alaska Beer & Barley Wine Festival. This year Aurora Productions, Inc will be overseeing all the pouring stations previously scheduled and staffed by K&L, ODOM and Alaska Distributors. So if any of you have previously volunteered through a distributor, please contact Aurora Productions instead. But if you haven't volunteered before.....what the heck are you waiting for? Fame, fortune, bright lights await you. Well, not really. But you will be compensated with FREE ADMISSION to the other sessions if you help out this year. Groups of friends or family members who want to work together...no problem.

You will need a current TAM or TIPS card. If you don't have one or need a renewal, festival management will be setting up some classes in December and January or you can always check the CHARR website (alaskacharr.com) for a schedule of classes at Eddie's Sports Bar. So call Aurora Productions, Inc. now! (562-9911) You will be helping a good cause as American Diabetes is a beneficiary for the event and having a great time as well at Alaska's premier beer festival.

2008 GREAT ALASKA BEER & BARLEY WINE FESTIVAL NEEDS YOU!! to help us help the American Diabetes Association!

We need volunteers to help during the two-day
Great Alaska Beer & Barley Wine Festival, planned for

5:00pm - 10:00pm, Friday, January 18

2:00pm - 5pm, Saturday, January 19 (Connoisseur Session)

6:00pm - 10:00pm, Saturday, January 19

at the William A. Egan Convention Center. If you love good beer, love helping
a good cause or just enjoy a good time, then this assignment is for you!

What do you get for volunteering?

Free Admission (\$30.00 value) & 2008 Commemorative Pilsner Glass

- Pourers and Beer Captains** (Current TAM or TIPS card required)
- Helping with Event Programs**
- Passing out Commemorative Glasses**
- Wristbands**
- Wherever help is needed**

What session are you available to work? _____

Name _____ Phone # _____ E-Mail _____

Aurora Productions, Inc.

For more info, call Annie Chavez at 562-9911 or e-mail showpros@alaska.net

Fax application to (907) 562-9889

Beer and Wine, Oil and Water? Hmmm... (a fun trip on the cheap....)

by *Ira Edwards*

It all started when we were moving this summer and found the airline tickets from last year where we got bumped on our way back to Anchorage. You see, these things expire if you don't book the trip within a year, and time was running short. Kara and I were too busy this summer and I was having surgery in September, so Kara said that we should go to Wine Country in October. "Wine Country?" I said, "but I am a beer guy." I have never been to Napa and Sonoma in the fall harvest time, so I started to warm to the idea, as I do like to grow fermentable things. Wine is fermented, so is beer. I guess they are not too different in nature. It is just the people who drink wine that are different and why I am generally against hanging out with wine snobs...(and I have even taken several enology classes.)

Then I realized that we had to go to San Francisco to get to wine country and that is where the Anchor Brewing Company resides...So I told my wife we should go only if we could get a tour at Anchor. It is good that we made our plans in early August, as this is one of those tours that books out really far in advance. It is a free event (a really rare thing in San Fran, apparently) and you get to try a lot of beers. So we got the last 2 spots in a morning tour in Mid October.



Now we had to find a place to stay for the weekend and a way to get around. Hellooo PRICELINE.COM!!! we got a 5 star hotel right in downtown and only a block away from the BART (the Bay Area Rapid Transit, that is a super cheap subway/train around the region) for only \$100 for the long weekend we went down (normally \$350 per night), and a rental car for only \$15 for the day we went to Napa. BART was \$10 apiece round trip from the airport to the hotel (vs. \$70 each way in a cab). We spent more on food and drinks than anything else.

Anchor Brewing company is a really cool establishment with a long and varied history, that I'll let you read on their website, www.anchorbrewing.com. Anchor gives 2 tours per day, Mon-Fri, and our tour guide for the morning tour was Andy Cox. I have traveled a fair amount of the world looking at fine fermented beverages, and for those here in America, Anchor Brewing is a tour not to miss. The only better tours I have been on were at a representative of each of the Budweiser Megaswill facilities. And that was only because I lucked into talking to some of the lower level brewers who got stuck at the tasting room a took me for a tour afterwards. You have to be a really good brewer and chemist to make the same swill in all kinds of places, and still have it taste the same. I learned a lot!!! OK, back to Anchor!

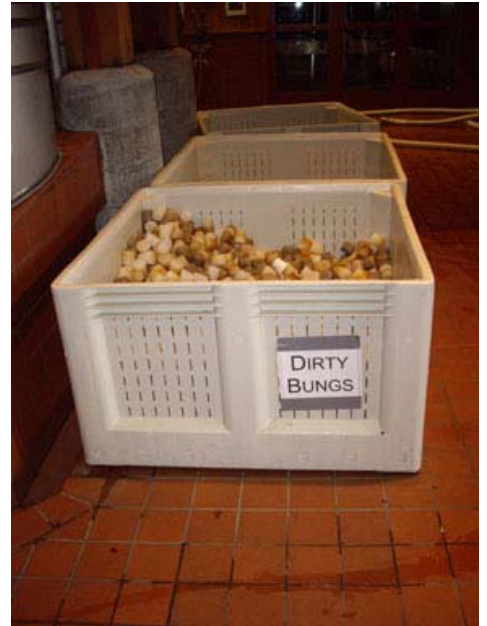
According to tour guide Andy, there are only 2 secrets at Anchor that are never given out, ever: the exact recipe for the flagship Anchor Steam beer and the annual Christmas Ale (soon to be released, so I had to taste last year's version...). Totally enclosed in windows, the lab area was closed off to us, but there were brewers everywhere back there, taking measurements, sampling new brews, and scurrying back and forth doing who knows what. Every drop of Anchor beer comes from this one brewery, which takes up half a small city block, and they seem to have a really cool building and brewing process. The Steam beer is their only lager, which is fermented in shallow open fermenters (in a sealed, filtered air room of course). Most of the Ales appear to be made with more standard fermentation equipment, at least by Alaska standards. They then Krausen the beer to carbonate it. The finished beer is mixed with a portion of that beer that has been fermenting for one day, and then it is set into aging tanks for up to several weeks, is sent through a centrifugal filter and flash pasteurized. This assures that the Yeast remains a secret and we are left to guess if White



Labs and Wyeast are really supplying us with the right yeast to make a copy of the "real" Anchor Steam. We then saw the bottling and packaging areas, which are much like other breweries, and finally headed up to the tasting room. It is a good thing that there was an easy bus route to get back downtown...

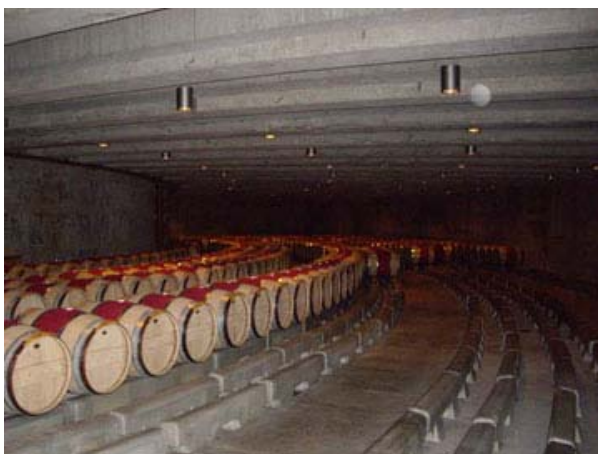
The next day we headed to Napa to visit two wineries that I have heard great things about and even occasionally tasted at functions and wine tastings: Cakebread Cellars and Opus One. I always thought that wine country tours and tastings were expensive. It turns out that that is only for the wineries that sell cheap wine and get lots of visitors. These two wineries are by appointment only and were about \$30 for both of us to go on the tours and tastings. Again, you would normally spend more than that if you went out for drinks before dinner. But you had to make reservations a LONG time in advance. The Mondavi winery cost over \$70 dollars for the full tour and tasting, so even though they make good wine, I could think of better ways to spend my time.

Cakebread was an interesting place that had wine well worth the money, but the coolest thing about the tour was the above picture... Opus One is a place to see if you ever have time to get there. Opus One was founded in 1980 as a joint Venture between Robert Mondavi and a famous maker of Bordeaux wines in France, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, of the winery Chateau Mouton Rothschild. The goal was to make the highest quality American wines possible, and to do so in the Bordeaux style. The winery and vineyards were built with amazing architecture, the winery rests on a large dome of earth that encloses the circular shaped cellar area. They take more care than any other winery I have seen in handling the grapes and selecting only the best grapes to go into the fermentation. The lab where they monitor fermentation and determine which batches of wine to bend in to the final vintage is very high tech, but every part of the process is done by hand and by real people.



I have tasted various vintages of Opus One at some dinners and it was available at a wine tasting I went to, and I will say that it is worth every penny. Unfortunately I don't have enough pennies to pay \$250 a bottle (what they charged at the winery). In visiting the winery, it was obvious that they cared about quality and that care definitely led to high prices in an area where most facilities are trying to churn out enough wine to keep up with demand.

All in all, this was a very educational trip that led to tasting some quality beverages of all types. Definitely something to put on the to-do list. And to top it off, it hardly cost us a thing until we hit the outlet malls...



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 \$25 to:

Great Northern Brewers Club
Attn: Treasurer
PMB 1204, 3705 Arctic Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503

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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:

Online: bushy@alaska.com
Phone: 333-8985
Mail: 6933 Soyuz Circle
Anchorage, Ak 99504

GNBC Web Site: www.greatnorthernbrewers.org



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Anchorage, AK 99503**

**NEXT MEETING: November 20th, 2007
7:00 P.M. at the Goose**