



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

OCTOBER 2015

The Prez Sez

by Peter Hall

Cool crisp air abounds and I'm eagerly awaiting all the late fall shenanigans my family annually participates in. Halloween is like a gateway to get through before the real rough and tumble times of winter and the

holidays. I embrace it whole heartedly. Different beer style are becoming more readily available and the yearly stalwarts are returning. The GNBC has a number of great events on the horizon that will help keep energy high.



Hopefully I started on a bright enough note to now talk seriously about upcoming elections. I'm dragging my feet terribly. I have short-timers syndrome. Leading this article with elections is how I am working because I am not getting a response. I will not be back as president. Hopefully I will be allowed to help in another way, but I don't even know where that is yet. I was hoping to fill a spot that was not receiving enough attention. Please be assured that I will still be here to help. I became president at a time that the last president was leaving state. Hopefully I can be here to more easily help whoever precedes me. Please contact me if you are interesting in helping the club as president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and two board positions. This is aimed at those currently serving too. I need to know if you would like to be back. Contacting me can range from sending me an email at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org to shouting at me out your car window as we pass each other. I'm happy to hear from you.

We are now firmly within the 2015-2016 GNBC membership year. The board (and even more specifically Jodie, our treasurer, and Kat, our membership coordinator) have made it easier than ever with credit card readers. Jodie, Kat, and I are all able to run your card in person for another fanatical year of GNBC benefits. Even easier (I think) you can go to our website and use paypal here: <http://greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html>

The Prez Sez

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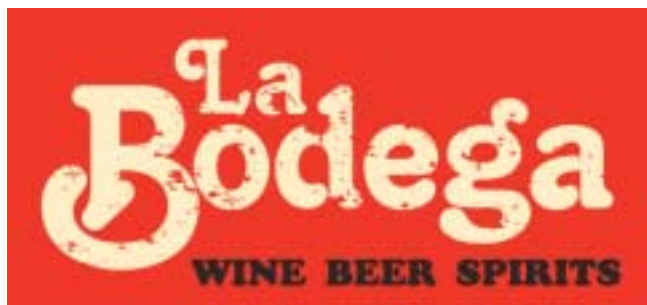
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Missing out on Equinox was a bit of a bummer, but do not fret. The option to have your meads and ciders evaluated and awarded is just ahead. On the horizon is the read-justed Anchor Town competition. Anchor Town will be collecting up entries of meads along with all the styles of beer. Big Fish, on December 5, will be taking over the ciders. Please check out the article below from Mike Fisher that covers Anchor Town in more detail. I don't have many details worked out for Big Fish yet, but I will keep you updated.

Hard to believe that December fits within my usual 3 month overview. Time keeps marching along and two big days in December are imminent. On Friday December 4th, we will be at the Alaska Zoo Gateway complex to party. Our last two years at the zoo for the Christmas party have been great, and the board moved to keep us there again for another year. Sadly, I contacted them (reportedly) one day late to pin down Saturday night. I think Friday from 7 to midnight will work out great though. To really make the weekend a challenge, Big Fish homebrew competition will be held the next day on December 5th. I'm really counting on a solid turnout for Big Fish. Plan to hear more from me on both of these events as they approach.

It is certainly not too early to send me your name for consideration for any of the available spots lined out above. I will be happy to include your name on the ballot up to the time that they are handed out for people to vote. Earlier is better though. Please contact me if you would like to help lead the GNBC, or if you have any questions/comments/concerns at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org.

Keep your brews hot and beers cold – Prez Peter



Secretary's Corner

by Jim O'Toole

I just got the Bodegafest volunteer schedule and see I am working the second shift on Saturday October 10. This is the second time I've volunteered at Bodegafest after attending a couple of them as a paying customer and it was good to see some familiar GNBC members on the list with me.

At the risk of looking like someone simply trying to save a buck I'll tell you that volunteering at beer events is certainly a way to get in free but it is much more than that.

At Great Alaska Beer and Barleywine Festival in January you not only get in free at the session you work but you also get a pass into the festival during a session when you are not working. I have volunteered several times now, the first time working security at one of the exit door where my job was not to keep people from sneaking in but to prevent people from leaving with beer in glasses. This and another time when I worked handing out the beer sample glasses were the best deal as I only had to work half the

session and then was given tickets to sample beers until the place closed. The people relieving me had been there since the place opened and had used up their sample tickets before they cut me loose.

But this past January I had obtained my TAP (Training for Alcohol Professionals) card allowing me to serve alcohol so I got to serve four beers provided by Specialty Imports. I had been at the festival the night before and sampled all four of them then but having the Specialty Imports guy there to explain to me what it was that I would be serving was part of the kind of beer education I've found myself enjoying since I got my beer palate working again 13 years ago.

My experience with Belgian beers wasn't a smooth road. I spent some time in Belgium 13 years ago and have to say that, as primarily a wine drinker at the time, it was a complete waste of time that I wish I could get back now that I know what I was close to. As it is, once I started drinking beer again I didn't see the attraction of the Belgians and I even used to tell people that I couldn't tell whether I was drinking a Belgian or another beer that had gone bad. I'm embarrassed about that now as I've found my palate developed to the point that I now enjoy a good Belgian almost as much as a good pilsner and, when I want to challenge myself, there are some mighty complex Belgian beers that take a little time analyzing. It's all part of beer education.

The beers I served at this past GABBF were some of the most famous and world renowned beers in the room and I was not familiar with any of them. Vander Ghinste Oud Bruin, a Belgian Flanders Brown is blended with lambic and oak aged for 18 months before it sees the limited light of day.

The Saison 1858 from Brasserie Du Bocg was an amazingly complex beer that I went out and bought on Sunday after the festival closed.

Brasserie de Rochefort's Rochefort 10 was an amazing beer that I learned is made by Trappist Monks in one of the few abbey's where the monks actually still make the beer and it is now on my list of favorite beers.

I also became familiar with Bosteel's Kwak and was amazed at the fruitiness that jumped out of it. The cool thing about this beer is something I learned from one of the customers that night. He stepped up and asked for a description of the beers and, when I mentioned the Kwak, he said that it was the beer that has a special glass and wooden holder for it and that it is served in Belgium with that glass and holder. He told me that this started when an innkeeper wanted to keep the coachmen who brought people to his establishment happy. These guys were forbidden from going inside with their passengers so the owner of the inn designed a glass that the coach guys could hang on the side of the wagon while they waited for the ride to continue on. More beer education and this time from a customer.



EVENTS

Every First Thursday
Moose's Tooth First Tap

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

20.....GNBC Monthly Meeting
7:00 pm at the Goose

23.....Entries Due for Anchor Town
Homebrew Competition at
Arctic Brewing Supply

25.....Anchor Town Homebrew
Competition Judging
10:00 am at King Street Brewery

17.....GNBC Monthly Meeting
7:00 pm at the Goose





By this time the Specialty Imports guy was gone and I was running those four taps on my own and having a great time doing it. One of my favorite times was when people would come up and ask what the beers were. Sometimes I'd ask what they like and the answer, as most of us would expect these days, was almost always, "IPA's." My response was that they should probably move on then as the beers I was serving were at the opposite end of the spectrum of beers. They would ask what I meant and I would then explain how malty the Belgians are and how the special yeasts used in fermentation gave them a unique, earthy flavor. I think I got through to some of them as some of them came back for more.

One guy though came through the line with some friends and he asked for the highest alcohol content beer I was serving. As I poured the 11.3% ABV Rochefort 10 I explained about it being brewed by monks and that it has been brewed in one form or another for centuries hoping to get him to appreciate what he had. He took the glass from me, looked at his friends, and downed it. I actually staggered backwards seeing that and realized, again, that there are people who go to beer festivals for reasons other than for what most of us do. The sad but true part of beer education.

Working as a server at Bodegafest last year was a great experience. I had never been in the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum at Lake Hood before so I got there early and had a chance to look around at this jewel of an attraction, even for someone who is not a huge aviation freak. The way the festival was laid out with serving stations spaced between exhibits spread things out and gave the place a sense of it not being as crowded as it was. Pamela told me I would be serving ciders on the first shift so I assumed I wouldn't be too busy but from the time the doors opened until a couple of hours later when my relief arrived there was not a ten second period when I was not pouring. I couldn't believe how many people were into ciders and how many of them were actually interested in the variances in the four I was serving. Pamela later told me that she knew I'd be busy because ciders are becoming more and more popular and seeing the varieties that are on the market now I see that she is right. More education.

The major difference between working the GABBF and working Bodegafest is that at Bodegafest, if you are a server, you only have to work half of the time and the rest of the time you are free to sample as many beers as you want. At the GABBF the sheer number of taps makes it difficult for the producers to find enough servers to provide relief for others so once you step behind the taps you are there until the place closes.

Which is one reason why I think more of us should get the TAP card. The more of us there are, the more good beer we all get to drink at GABBF. Another reason is that it really helps the Great Northern Brewers Club when we conduct the Beer Judge Certification Program classes and tests and when we hold and judge the beer competitions throughout the year. Whoever hands a beer to someone in a situation like these must be authorized by the State of Alaska to serve that beer and we could use some more people helping out with this.



The class required to obtain the TAP card is held at the CHARR offices at 1503 W. 31st, a block east of Minnesota Drive on various days and times of most weeks. You can check their schedule here <http://alaskacharr.com/calendar/>. The cost is \$45 but you'll get that back with just one Bodegafest and then, when you help out at the BABBF, you'll be money ahead.

Upcoming Events:

10/10

Bodegafest
 Anchorage Aviation Heritage Museum (Lake Hood)
 3:00-8:00 PM (note the difference from last year)
 Cost: \$35 in advance \$40 at the door
 Tickets are available now

Oct 17th

BJCP Written Proficiency Exam

Oct 23

Anchortown Homebrew Competition submission date
 Arctic Brewing Supply

Oct 25

Anchortown Home Brew Competition
 King Street Brewing
 Judges needed
 (You do not be a certified beer judge or have experience judging-You just need to dedicate an hour or two and like drinking beer.)

MEETING SETUP

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

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

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



Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew Competition This Month

by *Mike Fisher*

The 2015 Anchor Town competition takes place this month! If you plan to enter or judge in the competition, please review the information in this article carefully.

Entries will be accepted from 11am to 5pm on Friday, October 23 at Arctic Brewing Supply (8401 Sandlewood Place). If you need to ship your entry, contact me at (mikefisher.ak@gmail.com) in advance for an address. Send the tracking number so I can be around to accept the package. All shipped entries must be received by Wednesday, October 21.

For each entry, we will need a completed entry form and bottles. For beer, bring three 10-14 oz. bottles. For mead, bring two 10-14 oz. bottles or one 750ml bottle.

You may enter as many beers and/or meads as you want, but no more than one entry per subcategory. Please note that we will be using the 2008 BJCP style guidelines for this competition (beers under categories 1-23, meads 24-26). There is no charge for entries, but any spare 6-pack carriers or 12/24-pack boxes you can donate to the competition will be appreciated. Save your ciders for Big Fish.

Beer styles that count toward the 2015 GNBC Homebrewer of the Year award are 6 (Light Hybrid), 12 (Porter), 13 (Stout), 18 (Belgian Strong), and 22 (Smoke Flavored/Wood Aged).

The entry form is located online at http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf. Please have your form(s) filled out ahead of time.

Judging will start at 10:00am on Sunday, October 25 at King Street Brewing (7924 King Street). Light lunch foods and pretzels will be provided to fuel the judges and cleanse their palates.

We need judges! Anyone with an interest is welcome to attend. Please let me know by e-mail or at the October club meeting if you plan to be there.

After the competition, I plan to scan and e-mail judging forms to provide timely feedback. (Make sure your entry form is legible!) Leftover beers and meads will be brought to the November 17 club meeting to be claimed by the entrant (or by the lumbering masses at the end of the meeting, unless otherwise arranged).

We need entries! We need judges! Please plan to enter your best beers in the competition, and please stop by October 25 to participate as a judge. We'll see you in a few weeks!



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:

Great Northern Brewers Club
Attn: Treasurer
PMB 1204, 3705 Arctic Blvd
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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: October 20th 2015
7:00 pm at the Snow Goose**