



# THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB  
OCTOBER 2016

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## The Prez Sez

by *Kevin Sobolesky*

I got a good taste of the fall recently. I wish it was a refreshing glass of Oktoberfest from a local brewery, but, it meant being rained and hailed upon while moving a fiberboard desk.

It's definitely that time of year when I am getting anxious for snow. The garage gets cool enough for lagering. Luckily, plenty of Oktoberfestivities will cheer us up before we realize the sun is gone until April. Get your Lederhosen and/or Dirndls ready!

The BNBC September meeting was a fine time, indeed, and thanks again to Brian Hall for bringing his Vienna Lager to share and for elucidating us on some interesting history of the style. The next meeting theme will be Porters, so bring those dark, malty fellows along whether they be Brown, Robust, Baltic, smoked, or any variation you have!

We are in the midst of our membership drive, as we are now in the 2016-2017 membership year. If you haven't renewed, please do so at: <http://greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html>

Elections are coming up in November, so we need to have our ballot finalized at the next meeting. If you are interested in an officer or board position, please let me know at [president@greatnorthernbrewers.org](mailto:president@greatnorthernbrewers.org)

Anchortown is coming up. I hope you have your beers ready to enter. If you, drop them off at Arctic Brewing Supply on October 22nd. Be sure to join us for judging on the 23rd, starting at 10AM at King Street Brewing Company.

Our Xmas party is set for the 10th of December at the Zoo. The theme this year is a Night at the Movies, so dress up as your favorite actor, character, director, or a tub of popcorn if you so choose. It's always been quite the shindig, and the Zoo has been an excellent venue for us, so mark you calendars.

Keep on Brewin'  
-Kevin "Brewineer" Sobolesky

The Prez Sez

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## Secretary's Corner

by Jim O'Toole

I'm writing this in Lisbon, Portugal as I start my second of five weeks in Europe. I won't go into the details about how I can pull this off financially, so ask me about it the next time you see me if you care. I'll be writing this in stages on my buddy's laptop. The only electronics I have with me is my smartphone, and my fingers are just too bulky for comfortable typing on that miniscule keyboard.

We spent the first few days of the trip in Ciudad Real, south of Madrid, and have been in Portugal for about five days. We leave in the morning to go back to Spain and will be there for 12 days, driving from here, near the Atlantic Ocean, and ending up in Barcelona, on the east side of Spain. After that it is Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and then home on October 12, flying out of Berlin.

I've been in Spain and Italy before. Despite my complete devotion to beer, if I lived in either of these places, I would be a wine drinker. The amazing quality of the produced here, at prices that are astoundingly cheap, I'd go for wine. I'm discovering that there is some pretty good beer here too.

My buddy met me in Madrid where we grabbed a rental car for a drive to a town called Ciudad Real. Nothing much happens there, but it is a nice town that's somehow, intimately connected to Don Quixote and his creator, Miguel de Cervantes. I can tell this by the number of statues that are named for him all over town.

My intent to drink wine was amended simply because it was so damn hot when I got here. I felt I had to drink cold beer or die so I started looking for beers as soon as I arrived. I found a number of nice lagers. One of them is a local favorite made by Sagres.

If there is anything you need to know about Spain, I can sum it up with this, "If you like to drink beer or wine, you will never have to buy food." I'm not kidding. You could live forever in this area of Spain if you got up every morning, went to a bar and ordered a drink and then continued to drink all day as you get a tapa with every drink you order. The tapas can range from a small burrito with guacamole to a full sized hamburger. I've done this at every place I'

On a day I had to myself, I stopped every few blocks to sample a small (usually 30ml) glass of beer to keep me going. I found myself talking to two guys who asked where I was from. One of these guys spoke no English and the other spoke English as well as I speak Spanish. When I said "The I was from the United States and specifically Alaska, I got the normal response from people over here: "Muy frio."



I told him that I had talked to my girlfriend the day before and it was around 25 degrees Celsius (about 60F) and he was surprised.

We talked about a number of things over more than one beer. I got around to asking him about homebrewing. He had no idea what I was talking about. This could have been due to the language barrier, but he understood what I was talking about and still had no idea what I was talking out.

There's a difference between people in Europe and the US. We know very little about them and they know a lot about us. If someone asked 100 US citizens to describe the summer weather conditions in southern Spain and Portugal I doubt you would find 10 who would say that it is unbearably hot. Mention Alaska to anyone in Europe, and that person will understand that it just gets cold here. Ignore the fact that some Europeans think Alaska is part of Canada; that's understandable when you think that all they are thinking of is where Alaska is on a world map. They know the world map.

On our first night in Ciudad Real, my buddy checked Yelp and found a place called Restaurant Lager so. I'm a lager fan, so we headed there and found a virtual beer museum. Forget the great tapas we ordered off of a menu with each beer ordered. Ciudad Real is place with walls filled with old beer posters, photographs, and other memorabilia including a framed letter written by the president of Pabst Brewing Company in 1899.

The letter is just an apology for the Pabst not being able to fulfill an order. The fact that a bar in a town in Spain that anyone not totally devoted to "The Man Of La Mancha" would post such a sign tells me they feel about beer.

The bartender spoke zero English but I had no problem deciding which of the eight or so German beers they had on tap I wanted. I visited this place three times while there and I would highly recommend it as a place to stop if you ever find yourselves sweltering south of Madrid.

I left Ciudad Real and drove to the fantastic resort area in southern Portugal near the town of Faro. My friend and I have friends who recently bought a spectacular home near there. I met these people about seven years ago when they were living in France and their kids were 10 and seven years old. The oldest, Sophie, had left for boarding school in England (yes...these people are fairly wealthy) the day before we arrived but the son, Christopher is now 14 and he was there. We were in the house less than five minutes when Christopher opened the refrigerator, popped the tops off of two Sagre's, and set them down in front of us without a word. He did this two more times before I told him to stop as it was still early in the day. I can only describe him as his father's son as I've only met his dad twice and there was a lot of beer involved both times.

After two days in 90 degree heat I was off with my friend on a two hour drive to Lisbon, a city with as much history as any in Europe.

I discovered years ago that the best introduction to a new city over here is on the "Hop on-Hop Off" tour busses. We took rides around town on two of them, stopping just twice to get out of the heat. We could have gotten off a dozen or more times if we were interested in seeing any of the seven gazillion museums or but we were chasing beer.

The next day I was on my own, so jumped back on the tour bus and went to the busiest section of town in the main square on the River Tejo.

# EVENTS

*Every First Thursday*

*Moose's Tooth First Tap*

*Every Friday*

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

18..... *GNBC Meeting at 49th State  
Brewing - Anchorage  
7-9 pm Downstasirs*

22.....*Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew  
Competition Entires Due at Arctic  
Brewing Supp;y*

23.....*Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew  
Competition at King Street Brewery*

29.....*Mighty Matanuska Brewfest  
Raven Hall-Alaska State Fair  
grounds-Palmer 6-10 pm \$30 pp*

15..... *GNBC Meeting at 49th State  
Brewing - Anchorage  
7-9 pm Downstasirs*

10.....*GNBC Christmas Party at the  
Anchorage Zoo*



There were a number of reasons for going there, but the primary one was to check out something I spotted the day before, the Museu da Cerveja. For 3.5 euros I was handed a seven ounce beer in an old fashioned ceramic glass. I was aimed upstairs to an exhibit on the beer of Portugal. The tour was sort of about the beer of Portugal. The Portuguese were at the forefront of exploration in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and they settled in many places like Mozambique, the Azores, Angola, and Brazil.

Through a door at the back of the exhibit of old brewing equipment and bottles, there is a dark space designed like a brewery in an ancient monastery. It's complete with a manikin in a monk's robes sitting at a desk like he was keeping track of the brewing. I enjoyed the old brewing equipment was on display.

The place had a bar on the ground floor. I didn't want to be rude and simply walk out after viewing the museum, so I visited and got a short lesson in Portugese from one bartender and another who had a friend who brews beer at home. This bartender said he was interested in trying it himself, but he didn't know where to buy supplies. I told him that homebrewing is very popular in the US. He said it is growing fast in Portugal.

The place was too busy for an extended conversation but I feel I've accomplished part of the reason I came there. As I sat in the hotel finishing a really nice bottle of red wine, I asked more and more people about the homebrew culture there. I know it sounds like a tough job but someone has to do it.

Help out the GNBC and step into a more formal role!

Humpy's Big Fish Competition

At one of Humpy's properties on 12/3

8 Dark European Lager

18 Pale American Ale

22 Strong American Ale

24 Belgian Ale

25 Strong Belgian Ale

29 Fruit Beer

Side Challenge - Chocolate

Time to brew!

GNBC Christmas Party

Alaska Zoo Gateway Complex 12/10 at 7:30

Movie Night!



## Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew Competition

by *Mike Fisher*

Last call for Anchor Town! The 2016 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 11:00am to 4:00pm on Saturday, October 22 at Arctic Brewing Supply (8401 Sandlewood Place). Please note the ending time; due to the need to record entries, arrange flights, get everything out of the brew shop so they can close on time, and drop off beers at King Street that night, I need to wrap up the entry process early. If you are not able to drop off beers during this window, please contact me at [vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org](mailto:vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org) to make other arrangements.

If you need to ship your entry, contact me at [vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org](mailto:vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org) for a shipping address. Please send the tracking number(s) so I know when they are coming. All shipped entries must be received by Wednesday, October 19.

For each entry, we will need a completed entry form and three (3) 10-14 oz. bottles. Please save time and hassle by preparing the entry form ahead of time, and pay close attention to caveats in the BJCP style guide (e.g., XXX should be entered in the YYY category). You can access the entry form online at [http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP\\_EntryRecipe.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf).

You may enter as many beers as you want, but no more than one entry per subcategory (letter and number). Please note that we are using the 2015 BJCP style guidelines for this competition. There is no charge for entries, but any spare heavy duty boxes (especially 24-pack beer boxes) you can donate to the competition will be appreciated for transportation.

All beer categories in the 2015 BJCP Style Guidelines will be judged but the ones that will score you points toward GNBC's Homebrewer of the Year award are Standard American Beer (1), International Lager (2), Brown British Beer (13), Irish Beer (15), Dark British Beer (16), and American Wild Ale (28). The side challenge for this year's competition is called "Funky Fermentables" and is intended to highlight non-traditional beer ingredients. You are left to your imagination and judges will evaluate just how funky the ingredient(s) is/are (as in "different but good" or an homage to blues, not "I fermented this in my laundry hamper") and how well they fit into the beer.

Judging will start at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 23 at King Street Brewing (7924 King Street). Light foods and pretzels will be provided to cleanse palates and fuel judging.

**WE NEED JUDGES!** A lack of judges is the number one challenge we face in our competitions. In recent years, we have had approximately 60 entries. More judges means (a) a faster judging day and finishing time, (b) fewer conflicts (you can't judge a flight that includes your entry), (c) less palate fatigue, and (d) less risk of running out of time to judge entries. **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE come to help out with judging.** Anyone with an interest is welcome to attend, and inexperienced judges will be paired with experienced judges. Please let me know by e-mail or at the October 18 club meeting if you plan to be there.

After the competition, I will scan and e-mail score sheets. (Make sure your entry form and e-mail address are legible!) I will bring leftover beers to the November 15 club meeting to be claimed by the entrant, unless otherwise arranged.

We need entries! **We REALLY NEED judges!** Please plan to enter your best beers in the competition, and then stop by October 23 to participate as a judge. We'll see you in a few weeks!

## MEETING SETUP

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

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

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



## Easy Drinking IPAs

*by Brian Hall*

In the last year or so I've been brewing a whole lot of beer, but one keeps coming back and getting brewed consistently: an IPA with a softer bitterness and a smooth finish. To some, it's called the New England IPA, or NEIPA. Sometimes they're referred to as New England Pale Ales, depending on the hopping rate. What I love about these beers is their extreme drinkability and super-fresh hop flavors.

Not everyone loves them. There are many who think the haziness of the beer is off-putting and don't enjoy a cloudy beer, purely from an aesthetic standpoint. Others chase it down like a bear going after spawning salmon. As I mentioned earlier, when I can get a clear beer, it's great, but if I'm unable to do so easily, I'm able to live with it. To each their own.

I brewed this beer very similar to the way I brewed an all Citra version a few months ago. Differences this time were a change in the amount of oats, using London III, and playing with some of the “less juicy” hops to impart a deeper and more complex flavor. While I’ve really enjoyed all the Citra, Mosaic, Galaxy, etc., I wanted a little more flavor and a tad more bitterness. I left my charge of magnum alone, and decided to use some Falconer’s 7Cs and Simcoe in my knockout and dry hopping. What I got was a delightfully hoppy beer with a little more bite, yet still great smooth hop flavors.



Brewdays have gotten really simple for me when brewing this style: I’ve got all my additions memorized and bought a few trinkets to help transitions go smoother throughout the day. I’m able to brew this beer in under four hours while watching my son (part of which conveniently overlaps with his nap time). Not too bad.

During our lunch, I brought all the equipment I’d need into the kitchen. After lunch, my son hit the hay. Once he passed out, I started to heat my strike water and crushed grain. Once warm and crushed, my brew bag was added to the pot, as were the water adjustments and my grain. I mixed and let it sit while I got my makeshift fume hood out and cleaned up a few things on our porch. I hoisted the bag up, let it drain, rinsed the grain, squeezed out the rest, and started to heat. With a heat stick I’m able to be at a boil in under 20 minutes. I weighed out hops and added my first charge when I started the timer.

I didn’t add any other hops until whirlpool. I cooled to 190F, and let 4 oz of hops steep for 25 minutes. I put my brew bag back in to help with hop removal. I don’t mind a little trub, but this does get nuts after dry hopping.





I hit this with a 1L slurry of London III, and it fermented at 68F for 4 days. It was then raised to 71F and 5oz of dry hops were added. Four days later, it was crashed and kegged. I started drinking it later that day, thanks to my carbonation stone. The first day it was somewhat harsh and I was afraid I'd over-bittered. However, with a couple more days in the kegerator, it's pouring well and drinking exceptionally smooth. Not quite as easy as my all Citra version, but I personally enjoy a little more of the bite. I also liked using all Crisp MO as the base with a splash of vienna. Really tasty.

Next iteration? I'll probably do something similar, but I'd like to try playing around with oat and wheat levels. I'm also toying with a similar brew without using oats – a friend of mine is getting married so I've got a couple brews I'm going to do in a similar fashion for the occasion.

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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: October 18th 2016  
7:00 PM at 49th State Brewing Anchorage**