



THE Northern Brewer

November 2023

Contents of This Issue

The Prez SezN
Secretary's Corner
Membership News
Beer Research
Reading About Beer
Big Fish Competition

Next Meeting

November 21 @ 49th State

The Prez Sez

By John Trapp & Liz Greer

All right, October is behind us and we've entered November. Things are looking up. They were already looking up, so I guess they're "extra" up now. We had another amazing meeting in October and we need to give a big thank you to John Burket for coming in and talking to the club about yeast, more specifically dry yeast. I definitely foresee a GNBC experiment with different yeast strains on the same wort in the next few months. It should be a Lager and maybe we'll do an O-fest beer for next year, just saying. Also, elections are this month and we had quite a few members volunteer for officer and board positions. Nominations are still open, so if you want to run for a position let us know before the meeting on the 21st and we'll get you signed up.

Here's the 3 month calendar:

November 21st – Monthly meeting at 49th State Brewing Company
7:00 p.m. Elections

December 2nd – Humpy's Big Fish Home Brew Competition, see article below for details.

December 9th – GNBC Christmas Party! Anchorage Brewing Company
6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

January – (February 1st) Industry Meeting for Barley Wine Festival.
49th State 6:00 p.m.

Our November meeting is election night, and after the ballots are counted, we will dive into an educational talk about ciders. Ira Edwards will be leading the talk and we should have some tasty samples to go with it. If you have a cider in the cellar, dig it out and bring it with you.

On December 2nd the Humpy's Big Fish Homebrew competition will be resurrected after a 4 year rest. Billy is looking forward to hosting this again, so root around in the crawl space or closet and find some entries. See the flyer below for information on drop off and judging. This is a BJCP certified event.

GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB GNBC WEBSITE

www.GreatNorthernBrewers.org

CO-PRESIDENTS

Elizabeth Greer and John Trapp
president@greatnorthernbrewers.org

VICE PRESIDENT

Christophe Venot
vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org

TREASURER

Lindsay Foltz
treasurer@greatnorthernbrewers.org

SECRETARY

Gwen Higgins
secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Steve Johnson
membership@greatnorthernbrewers.org

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Jordan Couture, 2022-2023
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Jerry Siok 2023-2024

Contact information via our website

Also in December, our Christmas party will once again be at Anchorage Brewing Company. Gabe has been kind enough to host us another year so be sure to drink plenty of his beer (not hard to do).

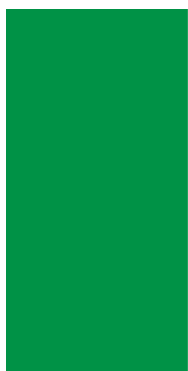
Once January rolls around we typically have our largest meeting of the year, the industry meeting. This coincides with the barley wine festival and it's held on the Thursday of beer week. Well, the fest is pushed back to February, so our industry meeting is on February 1st. We'll talk more about this a little later, just want everyone to get this on their calendar.

Until next time, keep brewing because life is good.

Cheers

Secretary's Corner: Beer in Italy

By Gwen Higgins



As the club's secretary, I usually use this column to recap the previous month's activities. During Fall, that typically means including a few things I learned from the educational talk at the meeting for members who were unable to attend. However, last month, I was the one who couldn't come to the meeting, because I was on vacation in Italy. So instead, I will share some of my observations about Italian beer.

In general, Italy is more associated with wine than beer, and from what I gathered Italian beer is somewhat looked down upon. On a hike through the Tuscan countryside that ended in a tasting at a winery, someone asked our guide what kind of wine he liked. He replied that he preferred beer, having drunk too much wine when he was younger. When asked what his favorite Italian beer was, he laughed and said he didn't drink Italian beer, only German.

While I was there, it was unseasonably warm for October, with temperatures in the 80s. When it is that hot, only a nice cold beer will do, so on a couple occasions I did pick up a beer at the store to enjoy back at the hotel.

Knowing nothing about Italian beer I picked a couple at random from the refrigerated case and ended up with a Peroni Nastro Azzurro Stile Capri, which was a light lager with a hint of lemon, and a Birra Messina, which was more of a traditional lager without any extra flavors. Despite the less than ringing endorsement from our Italian guide, both were crisp and refreshing after a long day of sightseeing.

Membership News

By Steve Johnson

At the end of the club's membership year in September, Great Northern Brewers Club had 90 annual members. In September 2022, the club had 76 annual memberships.

As of October 29th of this year, the club has received 37 annual dues payments for the membership year that began on October first: 35 from renewing members and two from new members. Also, one of last year's annual members began a Life Membership. Last year on this date, 45 members had paid dues for the year just ended.

Most often mentioned among the benefits of club membership are the discounts at Arctic Brewing Supply and other local vendors. Another purpose of membership, however, is to provide an opportunity for social and educational interaction among folks with an interest in brewing and learning about alcoholic beverages.

These opportunities occur most often at our meeting, held eight times a year in the Barrel Room (or another location) at 49th State Brewery in Anchorage. In recent months, twenty to thirty folks participated in the meeting, sharing homebrew and commercial beer (and mead and cider) and meeting people with shared interests. Members also provide food, set up chairs and tables for the meeting, and clean up afterwards. A paragraph from the club website describes the details of this voluntary system.

Food / Setup / Cleanup

Each month we cycle responsibilities for the meeting, based on members' last names, for providing food at the meeting, arriving early to help set up ahead of time, and staying a little later to help clean up after the meeting. The cycle for the current year is below. Find the month of the meeting and the group in which your last name lies, and you'll find your member duty.

Month	Last Name A-J	Last Name K-P	Last Name Q-Z
February	Setup	Cleanup	Food
March	Cleanup	Food	Setup
April	Food	Setup	Cleanup
May	Setup	Cleanup	Food
September	Cleanup	Food	Setup
October	Food	Setup	Cleanup
November	Setup	Cleanup	Food

Of course, at any regular meeting anyone is welcome to bring food, help setup or help cleanup, regardless of your place in the schedule.

To report an undelivered or lost membership card, send a message to membership@greatnorthernbrewers.org. I can usually provide replacements on short notice.

Steve Johnson
Membership Coordinator

Beer Research...

A Dark Idea that Never Saw the Light of Day

By Rick Levinson



Think back to what it must have been like to be a lover and drinker of fine beers 100 years ago. Come with me in my time machine back to the days of Prohibition and to the Roaring 20's. You might be thinking it wasn't so bad. Those were glory days for homebrewers who were much in demand. Times were prosperous and progressive. There were speakeasies, art deco, spectacular fashion, and great jazz. There were also those that took Prohibition and its enforcement very seriously. And there were those who tried to do much worse.

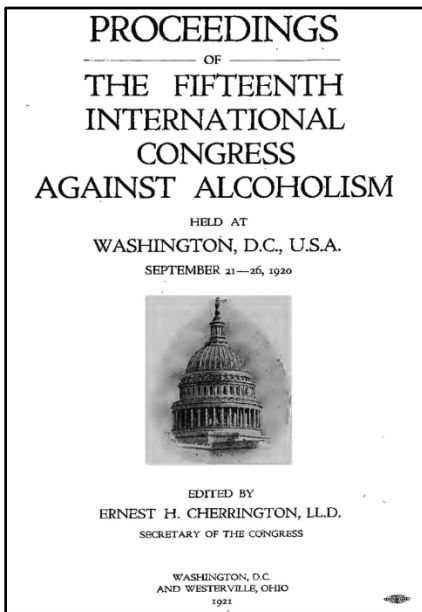
The 18th Amendment was a result of chronic out-of-control alcohol-related misbehavior and all the societal ills related to alcoholism. The temperance movement had been active for decades, but had gained sufficient momentum to constitutionally ban the manufacture, transport, and sale of alcohol beverages. The aim was

to reduce or prevent alcohol consumption, prevent drunkenness and disorder, and prevent prostitution, sexually transmitted diseases, crime, violence, poverty, and other social ills associated with drinking alcoholic beverages.

Part of the temperance movement included a series of international conferences dedicated to exposing issues and solutions related to alcoholism. The most notorious of these was the Fifteenth International Congress Against Alcoholism which was held in Washington DC on September 21-26, 1920, just 21 months after Prohibition took effect in the United States. It was there that radical temperance "experts" took control of the conference and related alcohol Prohibition to the concept of Eugenics.



The Eugenics movement coincided with the temperance movement. In the early 1900s, eugenicists believed that there was a distinct rise in the number of degenerates and feeble-minded individuals throughout society, and this led to the belief that positive selective breeding needed to occur to prevent the hereditary inheritance of certain negative traits. Alcoholism and drug use were hot topics in the Eugenics movement. Many eugenicists believed that the 'epidemic' of degeneracy was caused in part by the consumption of alcohol, and that people who consumed alcohol were basically "defective people". Alcohol consumption was leading to the disintegration of the Anglo-Saxon race and to the decline of civilization. These eugenicists joined the fight for alcohol Prohibition, solicited scientific experts to promote their cause, and tried to spread Prohibition and Eugenics around the globe.



One of the scientific experts was Dr. Charles R. Stockard, of the Cornell University Medical School. At the Fifteenth International Congress Against Alcoholism conference, Dr. Stockard presented a paper describing the effects on developing embryos and progeny of animals that were treated with alcohol. He experimented on fish and on guinea-pigs. He did not experiment on humans, but he did speculate on alcohol's impact on humans based on his research. He noted that, after alcohol intoxication, guinea-pigs lost muscle coordination and stumbled over drunk, just like many men that were seen on the streets before Prohibition. The alcohol poisoning caused serious defects in the eyes and other deformities. It also slowed down metabolism and caused defects in the eggs, which when fertilized, often produced what he called "monsters". He recorded the number of "monsters" versus the number of successful offspring through successive generations. He noted that when a healthy female is fertilized by an alcohol-intoxicated male (as is often the case with humans), she either aborts her offspring, or the offspring are "born dead", or they are afflicted with some awful disorder, often a nervous disorder. While a few normal offspring were born, the mortality rate was very high, but mortality decreased with each succeeding generation.

In applying his results to humans, Dr. Stockard noted that many inebriates are either weak or mediocre people, are criminals, or are individuals who don't seem to amount to anything. Being a eugenicist, he suggested that alcohol should be encouraged for these people in order to prevent more of such people from being born. "Defective human stock can only produce more defective human stock, so therefore it is better to reduce and destroy the defective stock". With inebriation over time, more bad people will be eliminated, thereby improving humanity and saving society an enormous cost. He called this a "cold proven scientific fact" even though it is not appealing or humane or even a scientific fact.

Dr. Caleb W. Saleeby, an English physician and writer who was an advisor to the British Minister of Food during World War I, presented his research on the mistaken use of alcohol to treat pneumonia, and how the manufacture of alcohol is the destruction of the food supply. He called yeast a parasite, and fermentation "rotteness" that consumes vitamins, destroys food value, and leaves only a poison. He also added to Dr. Stockard's fusion of alcoholism and Eugenics.

Dr. Saleeby agreed that "we must cut off the propagation of defective people before they overpower us." However, he was steadfastly opposed to the use of alcohol to achieve that goal. He suggested a more humane and "moral" method that preserved the defective individual without alcohol poisoning. He said that the real solution would be to concentrate and confine alcoholics and other defective people to farms where they could work and live, and where they would be treated kindly and mercifully in a sort of colony. It would be imperative that they be prevented from reproducing, even by sterilization if necessary. He said that they would work to maintain the farms and produce their own food, and that there would be far less public expense than with any other solution.



Soon, other delegates to the Congress joined Dr. Stockard and Dr. Saleeby, promoting or prohibiting alcohol as a means to cull undesirables from society, and coming up with more and more radical ideas. The delegates

were whipped into a frenzy, and the conference had turned ugly. At one point, they called for the establishment of concentration camps for chronic beer drinkers. Things were definitely getting out of hand.

We'd best take our time machine back to the present day, in a hurry. Whew!

With hindsight and history, we can see how things turned out. We all know and appreciate that Prohibition was repealed by the 21st Amendment which was ratified in December 1933. The Eugenics movement did continue to grow, culminating in African colonial subjugation and in Nazi Germany. After defeat of the Nazis near the end of World War II and with independence for many of the African colonies, the Eugenics movement finally dissipated. And fortunately, the marriage of Prohibition and Eugenics began to diminish after Prohibition was repealed. While alcoholism is still a problem, we've learned much more about how to deal with it and how alcohol actually affects humans. Fortunately, the idea of being sent to a concentration camp for imbibing a beer never saw the light of day. Though neo-Prohibitionists still pose a threat, we are free to enjoy our favorite beverage without risk of being carted off to the farm.

Reading About Beer and Brewing

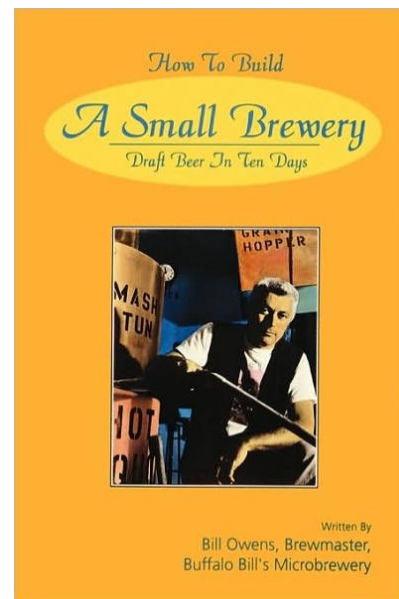
By Steve Johnson

Among Charles Bamforth's numerous articles and books, most focused on the science and technology of brewing beer, are several titles aimed at non-technical readers. *Beer Is Proof God Loves Us* (FT Press, 2011) belongs to that non-technical category. This book came to my attention recently when I was checking the Anchorage Public Library catalog for books on beer and brewing. Deciding to borrow the book was an easy decision, given that I've enjoyed Bamforth's appearances on podcasts from Beersmith and other venues (search Bamforth on Youtube).

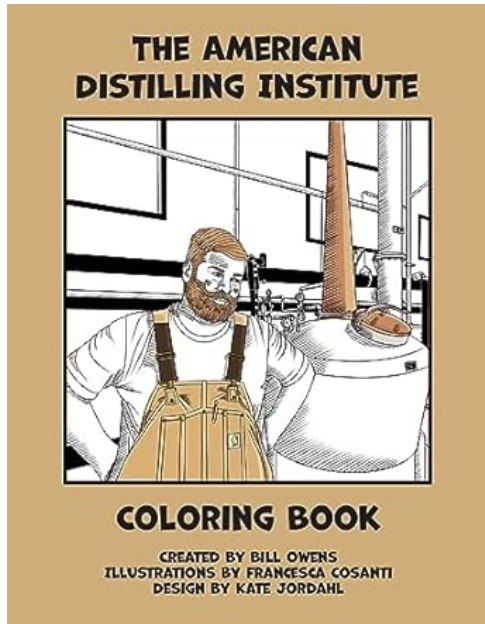
In any case, this 237 page book is loaded with anecdotes from Bamforth's career and personal life. Most of the anecdotes are exiled to 90 pages of endnotes. As Bamforth suggested, I read the book by starting with the end notes and periodically referring back to the main text. For many readers, that comment would probably be a poor basis for a book recommendation. If, however, you enjoy listening to Bamforth on podcasts, and will read someone who defends mass market light lagers as other than fizzy water (when done correctly, that is, with excruciating attention to quality control and consistency), you may enjoy *Beer Is Proof God Loves Us*. Publication of the book may be proof that God loves Charles Bamforth. Nonetheless, I will be looking for some of his other non-technical books.

Books were not on my mind when I took the Alaska Railroad to the 2023 Talkeetna Beer Fest. After my first hour of tasting beers in the outdoor festival grounds, I walked into Susitna Hall in search of the rest rooms. Before I found the gents, I encountered a table covered with books and the fellow who was selling the books, Bill Owens. Some may recall Owens for Buffalo Bill's Brewpub, which he opened in Hayward, California in 1983 and sold in 1994. No doubt because I was in a really good mood, and remembered visiting his brewpub, I wound up buying a stack of books from Bill Owens.

How to Build a Small Brewery: Draft Beer in Ten Days by Bill Owens. WhiteMule Press, 3rd edition, 2009 (first edition 1992). 47 pages. Step by step illustrated directions for a gravity fed brewery. In our age of Brew in A Bag and electric fermentors, gravity fed tower systems fall in the category of obsolete technology. Nonetheless, the booklet is a useful historical document. There are probably plenty of gravity fed tower brewing systems



in sheds around Anchorage and the valley, in addition to those still in production. Even though I will never build such a system, I was happy to add *How to Build A Small Brewery* to my book collection.

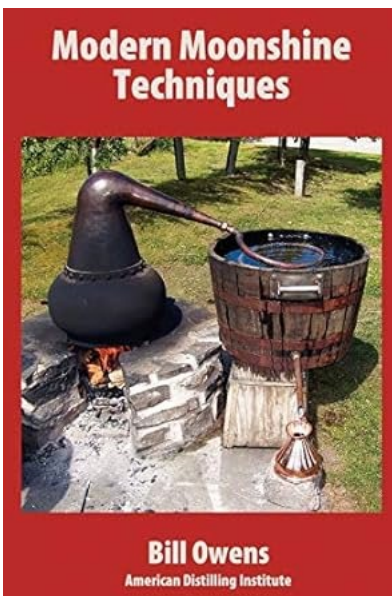


The American Distilling Institute Coloring Book created by Bill Owens. Illustrated by Francesca Cosanta. Design by Kate Jordahl. Photographs of small distillery operations worldwide, reduced to line drawings suitable for use in a coloring book. American Distilling Institute, 2023. Photography is Bill Owens main, lifelong profession. I am guessing that the coloring book format was feasible to publish, though publishing a book of photographs was not.

Along with these books, Bill Owens provided a printed map of The Most Difficult Whiskey Trail in the World, copyright 2022 by the American Distilling Institute. The trail connects thirteen distilleries in Alaska and one across the Canadian border in Whitehorse. Thirty eight breweries in Alaska are also listed, though not mapped. (Alaskan seems out of place in a list of microbreweries.) Owens said that he was going to try to organize a whiskey trail tour in 2024.

These books were not my typical take home from a beer festival. I do, however, plan on returning to Talkneetna for the Beer Fest in 2024.

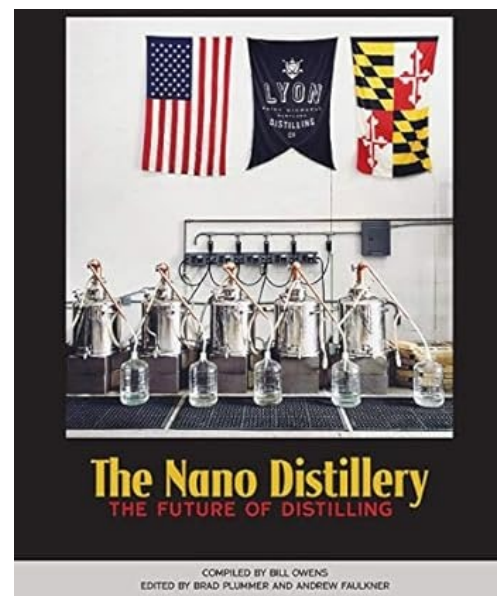
Given that I have no interest in setting up a still and producing spirits, I clearly did not need to buy the next three books listed. I can plausibly ascribe the purchases to the brews I had in the previous hour. I have, however, noticed the growing number of small distilleries in Alaska producing vodka, gin, and a variety of other liquors. I have also noticed the presence of distillers yeast at the local brewing supply store. And I occasionally drink London dry gin, usually on the rocks or in martinis. Perhaps the reason I purchased these books is : All of the above.



Modern Moonshine Techniques by Bill Owens. White Mule Press, 2009. 93 pages. A logical counterpart to *How to Build A Small Brewery*, this more recent volume is an introduction to distilling, including legal aspects and the how-tos of sugar wash, pot stills, column stills, and license applications. The book describes how to distill whiskey from the 9%ABV beer. A closing section, apparently listed from the internet, describes distillation of cracked corn using no added yeast.

The Nano Distillery: The Future of Distilling compiled by Bill Owens. Edited by Brad Plummer and Andrew

Faulkner. White Mule Press, 2018. *The Nano Distillery* is aimed at amateur distillers interested in going pro as part of the craft distillery movement. The main sections of the book are: (1) Getting Started; (2) Regulation, Operation, and Construction; and (3) Production Techniques. A fourth section provides profiles of thirty-three distilleries worldwide, most in the U.S., none in Alaska. A final profile describes a closed craft distillery. Those interested in gin may find interest in a chapter on gin styles and techniques.





Humpy's / GNBC BIG FISH

WHAT TO ENTER

All styles of beer, mead, and cider.

Styles will be judged using the 2021 BJCP style guidelines

Some categories will be combined

Guidelines: <https://www.bjcp.org/bjcp-style-guidelines/>

HOMEBREW COMPETITION

AHA/BJCP Sanctioned Competition Program

HOW TO ENTER

Drop off at Arctic Brewing Supply, 8401 Sandlewood Place, on **Saturday November 25, 2023** between 11:00am-5:00pm; or contact GNBC for alternative drop off locations

For each BEER entry: three 10-16 oz. bottles (two 22 oz. acceptable but not preferred)

For each MEAD or CIDER entry: two bottles

For ALL entries: completed BJCP entry form

Entry form: https://legacy.bjcp.org/docs/BJCP_EntryRecipe.pdf



Bottles may not have any writing or labels on the glass

Multiple entries: label each set on bottle cap or with sticky note

JUDGING — DECEMBER 2, 2023

Judging starts at 10:00am at Flat Top Pizza at 610 F Street (tentative)

Old and New judges all NEEDED! If this is your first time, I want you there!

RESULTS / LEFTOVER BOTTLES

Contact organizer for return of leftovers or pick them up at GNBC February 2024 meeting at 49th State Brewing



CONTACT / QUESTIONS

President@greatnorthernbrewers.org

Great Northern Brewers Club

Holiday Party!

Saturday December 9, 2023
7pm - 9:00pm

Anchorage Brewing Company
148 W 91st Ave. Anchorage



Anchorage Brewing Company will again be hosting the GNBC Holiday party this year. Many Thanks to them! We will be in a private area, but the public area and outside fire pits will also be open for our use.

Please do not bring your alcohol into the public area.

Attire Theme: Brew Logo Wear/Gear! Prizes for various logos!

Food Theme: Things on a stick!



What to Bring:



- a potluck dish on a stick preferably
- homebrew or specialty share beer
- If you want to play - a gift for the Exchange/Stealing Game - a nice beer or brew related item. Wrap it up!
- There will be few other fun activities too.

ABC will have beer for sale at the public tasting counter.

Note: they are providing the venue free of charge so Tip the Servers well!

Membership is required to attend. You may bring one guest. You may join or renew Online at

<https://greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership/>

RSVP on Facebook Event is not required but appreciated for head count.



Great Northern Brewers Club would like to thank our supporters:

Present your GNBC card at these suppliers for a members-only discount. See each store for details.



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