



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

August 2026

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The Prez Sez

By Scott Clendaniel

It's the middle of summer, and the fireweed is starting to bloom up toward the top of the stalk. It's not quite there yet, but that means school will be starting soon, the days will be getting shorter, and it's almost time to start thinking about fall-themed beers.

I know I just wrote an article about drinking summer beers, but all this rain has me thinking about fall and winter already. Maybe it's time to start planning those darker ales, stouts, porters, and other cold-weather favorites.

A couple of reminders:

If you are interested in going to Kodiak with Liz Greer and friends, please reach out to Liz and see what the plans are.

Also, if you are entering the Alaska State Fair beer competition, make sure to get your entries submitted. I believe Liz said she would be able to collect them, but check with her for the details.

I will be out of town for much of August. I'll be heading to the cabin in McCarthy, then traveling to Germany and Ireland. Yes, I do plan on drinking beer while I'm there—research, of course!

I'm sure I've forgotten something, but our next meeting will be in September. I may still be at the cabin, so Liz or Nat will likely be leading the meeting.

I hope you've all been brewing away, and I look forward to seeing everyone when I'm back in Anchorage.

Cheers, GNBCers!

-Scott

In Memorial of GNBC President Cindy Pevear

By Pat Ryan

The first time I remember being aware of my dear friend, Cindy Pevear, at that time Cindy Harrington, was at a Christmas party held in our home around 1993. Mark and I had recently joined the homebrew club. We were at a meeting in October of that year, and a request was made for someone to host a party for the holidays. We discussed the matter and volunteered to host the next month.

This would be the first time we had invited the brew club members to our home and had no idea what to expect. Well, when the taxis started to arrive with about 60 participants, we were overwhelmed. And the party RAGED! At one point Mark played his bagpipe, and John Craig was doing headstands on the carpet.

Because of the number of guests, Mark had put "women only" on the upstairs bathroom door and "men only" on the downstairs bathroom. With peanuts flying and guests sitting on the floor with beer they had brought up from the kegs in the garage, participants did not seem to be very inclined to leave. Finally about 1:00 the crowd began to thin, and Mark took off the "women only" sign upstairs. I went down to bed, but I could still hear the laughter. Guess who? My friend Cindy was being the life of the party!

More time passed, and I continued to hear the laughter. Apparently Mark had gone into the bathroom, sat down on the toilet in his kilt, and gone to sleep. Unaware that he was in there, Cindy entered the bathroom, discovered Mark asleep, and borrowed cameras to take photos of him. Well, the following morning I received calls telling me about the photos and offering me money for the negatives. Yes! One of the cameras used was mine. I thought, "What kind of people take pictures of my husband on the toilet?" I quickly had them developed and learned they were quite innocent. At a subsequent party in our home, Bill Keas presented us with an 8"x10" framed photo with a bubble that said, "Now that was a great party!" The photo is still there after 30 years.

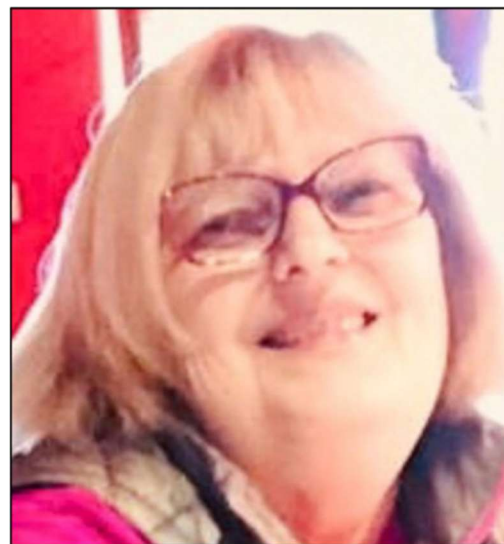
Cindy and I went on to become great friends. We took two cruises together. My husband and I visited Ed and her in subsequent years when he was stationed in Nome as head of that State Troopers post. The four of us had an absolute blast up there.

Back in Anchorage we went as each other's "date" for the Barley Wine Festival for many years, hiding when Mark would finish judging and come looking for us. We would see many mutual friends and drink lots of beer.

Then Cindy became ill and our antics took a downturn. Of course, there was the divorce that occurred between Cindy and Ed, too. We began to play cards with another friend every four or five weeks. We began talking on the phone frequently. Also, we enjoyed long lunches, especially at Pizza Plaza, where we made a pact to always be there for each other.

Cindy had so many fine qualities, which I admired. When her daughter Jennifer was pregnant with her first child, Sophie, I gave a Grandma Shower for Cindy at Cafe Amsterdam. About 25 people attended. Cindy was so excited because she was such a great family person. Her son Ross presented her with a second granddaughter, Gemma, and those two girls were the absolute "lights" of Cindy's life. She was loving, caring, and kind with both of them. I am certain both of them miss her terribly!

Of course, I miss her, too, but know I will carry her in my heart for the rest of my life. It helped me that Jennifer let me visit her in the hospital and hold her hand. That memory will always stay with me. Goodbye, my sweet, lovable, loyal friend! May the beer gods watch over you.





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Talkeetna July 4th Parade

By Elizabeth Greer

Thanks to all who support the GNBC Float in the Talkeetna July 4th parade! The float looked great and the crowds were 4 people deep despite the questionable weather.

Also thanks to the Lambs who hosted a July 4th potluck, and John Craig for camping space.



NOTE: The Denali Wort share was postponed so hold on to your creations! We will be sharing these soon!

Membership Update

By Steve Johnson

Every June or early July, our insurance broker requires the club to submit a list of members, the per capita basis of our liquor liability insurance bill. The annual insurance numbers are also a way to show trends in membership. One limitation of these numbers is that they do not include the few new or returning members who join after the membership list is submitted, but before the end of the membership year. The numbers also do not signify activity in the club, beyond paying dues.



The numbers below begin with the summer just after the pandemic shutdowns of March 2020. For the membership year that includes 2025 data, club dues increased for couples. Previously, there was no additional charge to add a spouse or partner in the same household.

Great Northern Brewers Club Membership Stats
Year / Annual / Lifetime / Total

--- Pandemic Shutdown, March 2020 ---

2020: 187 / 33 / 222

2021: 142 / 36 / 178

2022: 125 / 38 / 163

2023: 149 / 37 / 186

2024: 147 / 39 / 186

--- Couple Membership Rate Adjustment ---

2025: 113 / 39 / 152

2026: 96 / 40 / 136

In terms of member retention, in the current year ending in September 2026, 18 members in 9 couples and 16 single members—34 members in all-- from 2025 did not renew their membership. New and returning members meant that the net loss for the year was 16 members.

In the membership year ending in 2025, the year of the price increase for couples, 48 previous annual members did not renew –12 single members and 36 in 18 couple memberships, offset by new or returning members, a net loss of 14 members.

With the submission deadline looming, I ponder two trends: a welcome decline in the total number of non-renewals (from 48 to 34) and the troubling increase in net loss of members (from 14 to 16). Worth noting: a late July membership payment has reduced the actual net loss from 16 to 15. With two months left in the membership year, hope remains for additional new and returning members before the end of September.

Payments made now will cover membership until the end of September 2027.

Summer Session Beers

By Scott Clendaniel

Summer is here, and it is time for a thirst-quenching beer! I just drank the last of my Chores Pale Ale, and I need to brew more. Chores is a great summer beer. Carrying from 4.5-5.5% ABV, it is a lightly dry-hopped



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pale ale that quenches thirst like none other. That is why it is gone. Since I have a few weeks until the next batch is ready, let's talk about commercial offerings that will tide me over until my fermenters are empty and my kegs are filled.

Turnagain Brewing has a beer called Paddleboard Pilsner. It is a very good summer drinker. At 4.9% ABV, it is crisp, clean, and quaffable. I may have to fill a keg before Dr. Professor Ted sells it all by the glass at the brewery. His Winner Creek Lager is also a summer beer, but it has a decided American note to it: it is an adjunct rice beer.

Lager is king, and King Street has a Helles Lager that Pete and Lisa were enjoying the last time I went there. If P and L are drinking it, it is probably worth checking out.

Anchorage Brewing has its Time for a Change Pils, with the lowest ABV of the group at 3.5%. It reminds me of something Mark and Pat Ryan would have on draft in their garage. It is a good idea to enjoy these session beers when the days are long and the sleeps are short. If you decide to drink something like the imperial stouts or barleywines usually reserved for winter, you may find yourself missing the party because you need sleep well before the 11 o'clock hour.



If you happen to be in Talkeetna, grab a Bachelor Lager from Denali Brewing. It is tasty and refreshes like a lager should. I found it quite delicious.

Cynosure is under new ownership, and they are still making beer. Although they were temporarily closed at the time I write this article, the Leyland Lager is a perfect summer drinker. I wish it came in a six-pack of 12-ounce bottles, as a lager sometimes drinks better late around the campfire, straight from the bottle.

You can drink a Session Cream Ale from Broken Tooth, or you could order a Brewwerks Anchortown Cowboy Pilsner brewed with Citra and Nelson Sauvin hops. That is not traditional in any way, but at 4% ABV, it will keep you from getting the sleepies early in the evening.

If you find yourself drinking at 49th State, the 8 Star Lager is a go-to choice. But do not forget that they have a delicious beer called Blonde Eagle that carries some serious Alaska flavor with the addition of spruce tips.

I bet you are going to open an imperial stout anyway, since you are a member of the GNBC. That is fine with me, but do not complain when you hit the sleeping bag before the sun drops below the horizon. Of course, it will not get dark for another month, at least. Nobody will blame you if your camper is closed up tight while Eric and Liz are still running chainsaws to keep the campfire going, well past the imperial stout drinker's bedtime.

I jest. Drink what you want. This is just meant to inspire some summer fun!

Porters

By Steve Johnson

For the 2026 Big Brew in Anchorage at Arctic Brewing Supply on May 2nd, I brewed George and Aaron's pre-Prohibition Porter. That recipe was one of three suggestions for the Big Brew from the American Homebrewers Association. The other recipes were Dark Cellar Imperial Stout and Monk's Ration Trappist-Style Single. "Too much work" was my reaction to the 43 pound grain bill for five gallons of Imperial Stout to be brewed during a social brew day. The Trappist Style Single seemed of limited appeal compared to the Porter that won a Gold Medal at the National Homebrew Competition in 2018.

But what about the name of that beer, pre-Prohibition Porter? The name comes from BJCP guideline 27A

"Historical Beer: Pre-Prohibition Porter ... An American adaptation of English Porter using American ingredients, including adjuncts."

Consider the ingredients listed in the guideline:

Two and six row malt (or a combination of both) are used, along with low percentages of dark malts including black, chocolate, and brown malt (roasted barley is not typically used). Adjuncts are acceptable, including corn, brewers licorice, molasses, and porterine. More historical versions will have up to twenty percent adjuncts.

In the George and Aaron recipe, roasted barley makes up 6.6% of the mash and there are no

adjuncts I suppose that "roasted barley is not typically used" means that roasted barley is acceptable as an atypical ingredient—especially when the brew wins over 287 other entries in a category that included Porter and Stout as well as pre-Prohibition Porter.

And the absence of adjuncts? Perhaps that just means the recipe is less historical rather than "more historical."

At the Alaska State Fair, the category is Porter. On an entry form, I called the May 2nd brew Big Brew Porter.

Thanks to Lisa and Petr Dohm for hosting the Big Brew Day at Arctic Brewing Supply on May 2nd and providing ingredients and hospitality for all who attended. And thanks to Rick Levinson for saving my brew day.



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Meagan Wilson Blogs About Tumalo Cidery

By Steve Johnson

Every few months, former GNBC member Meagan Wilson, now in Oregon, posts on her blog, happyhalfpint.com. Her latest article is based on visits and interviews at Tumalo Cidery, located in Tumalo, Oregon, a few miles from Bend. Tumalo produces only dry or semi-dry ciders and had 16 varieties on tap when she visited. She describes Tumalo Cidery as the best maker of semi-dry ciders in the United States. Her account also includes details on Tumalo's participation in the Oregon Beverage Collective. I recommend following this well written blog. Updates will not overwhelm your inbox or attention span.



Alaska State Fair 2026 Craft Beverages Competition

Get ready for the 2026 State Fair Craft Beverage Competition!

This year's event will include many Divisions and Classes to enter. There are also Divisions for Non-Alcoholic Beverages and Label Competition. Professionals are also encouraged to enter in a designated Sub-Category.

Entries can be:

- Dropped off at the Fairgrounds – Hoskins Building on **Friday, August 7, or Saturday, August 8**, from 11 am – 7 pm.
- Dropped off with the Superintendent (contact her)
- Mailed in. Mailing entries is highly encouraged.

*The Beer Competition Judging Sessions will be held on **Friday/Saturday August 14 & 15 pm at the Fairgrounds**. Judges and "TAPS Certified" Stewards, especially those with experience, are needed. Please consider supporting this event and helping out; contact the Competition Superintendent Vanessa Willis at akfaircraftbeverages@gmail.com*

Additional Information: <https://www.alaskastatefair.org/site/exhibit/craft-beverages-2025/>

Club Clothes!

You can now order GNBC Hoodies and Tee Shirts online! The Teespring link has been updated and is ready to roll. Nice Looking Blue Recommended, link to use:

<https://my-store-59c1d0.creator-spring.com/listing/greatnorthernbrewersclubshirt>



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