



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

JUNE 2018

State of the Brewnion

by Mike Cragen

Summer is here! And with it comes the sun, green grass and some easy drinking. Which, if your past 2 months were anything like mine, is a sweet respite from a frantic and over-cast Spring.



May started off strongly with the Brew-a-thon hosted by Kevin Sobolesky and his parents. With the weather's cooperation the event was a rousing success. We owe Kevin big time, not only for Brew-a-thon, but also for running and organizing the beer tasting class once again. Thanks Kevin, for being such an instrumental part of GNBC!

May's other highlight was our monthly meeting, hosted at South Coffee-house. Denali Brewing's Greg Spore and Matt Hiller were featured guests, attending to taste the different brews made from DBC's Grove IPA wort. For starting with the same wort, there was a refreshing amount of variety. Spruce Tip IPA, Juniper IPA, Cascadian Dark Ale and Black IPA are just a few of the creations brought in. Of the 20 Grove IPA batches made by club members, 18 attended. Many thanks to DBC for providing this fun and educational experiment.

In the next 3 months, we have a great lineup of GNBC and community brewing/craft events. The highlights include:

June 9th – AK Run for women, GNBC Team Brewbies (contact Liz at: ea-greer2001@yahoo.com)

June 15-17th – Camping at Trail River (Moose Pass)

July 10th – Summer BBQ at Jeff Loughrey & Cathie Straub's house - 6:00pm

July 11th – ET Barnett entries due (in Fairbanks). No entry collection in Anchorage

State of the Brewnion

Secretary's Corner

ET Barnette Homebrew Competition Announced!

Anchortown Invitational

2018 Alaska Run for Women Brewbabies, Baby!

Brewathon This Weekend

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July 12th – Beer in the Garden at Botanical Gardens

July 14th – ET Barnett Homebrew Comp in Fairbanks (see article below for more details)

July 28th – The Culmination Festival

July 28th – Beer and Bacon Festival – Lakefront Hotel

No events scheduled in August thus far.

Mark your calendars, June's big highlight is a campout! We'll be at the Trail River campground in Moose Pass June 15th-17th. The group site is rented so there's plenty of room, and don't forget to bring something to share for the potluck that Saturday.

The E.T. Barnett homebrew competition in Fairbanks is coming soon as well (July 14th.) For over 20 years Scott and Chèrie Stihler have hosted this exceptional competition. Unfortunately if they don't get some help from qualified judges, the competition might not be around much longer. If there is any way you can make your way to Fairbanks that weekend, it would be a tremendous step toward saving a local homebrewing tradition. I've personally had a blast judging the past few years. There's been mention of some members carpooling. Contact me for more information on that. For info on submitting your brews visit: <http://www.mosquitobytes.com/Den/Beer/Events/Events.html>

The Final Wort (the last batch I brewed) is a California Common (19B). The most recognizable commercial example of this style is Anchor Steam. Typically, this style utilizes Northern Brewer hops supported by a caramel/toasty malt backbone. Mine rang in at 1.054 and has already dropped to 1.010. As always, I'll have The Final Wort at a future meeting/gathering for you to sample and critique.

Remember, beer is about 93% water . . . stay hydrated,

Mike "Keggin" Cragen



Secretary's Corner May 2018

by: *Jim O'Toole*

I look around at the membership of the GNBC and realize that I'm one of the oldest people there. John Craig, when he's not busy perfecting his place in Talkeetna, could probably give my birth certificate a run for its money but it doesn't really matter in the long run. And a long run is what I'm hoping is ahead of me.

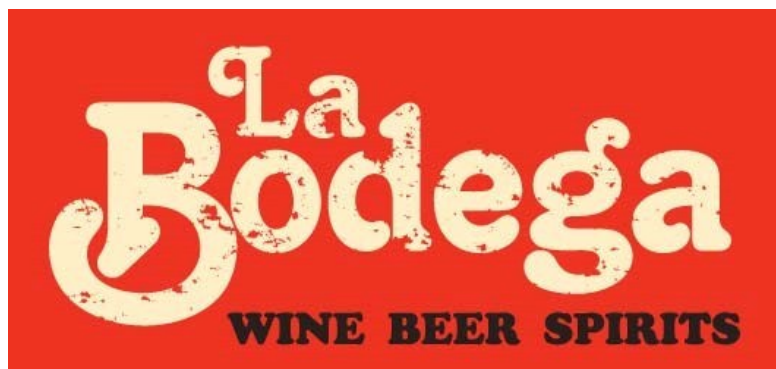
But getting old kind of sucks. Bodily functions that worked for years break down. You can't sit in one place for as long as you sometimes need to. You can't stand in one place for as long as you used to. And things that never used to bother you can make you a quivering mass of nerves.

Other than that, I'm doing great and a recent road trip (not to mention a couple of visits to physical therapists at the Alaska Spine Center who are magicians so far) has a lot to do with it. And those "quivering" nerves.

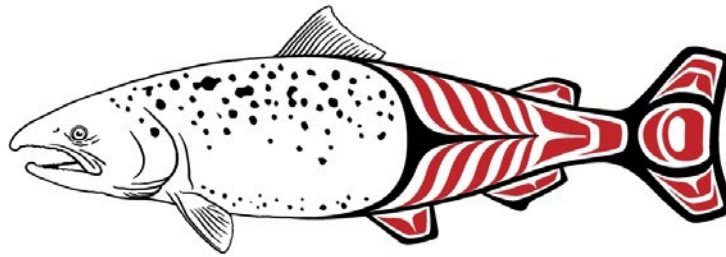
The original plan was to attend my navy reunion in Little Rock and not make a big deal out of it. But then I realized that Little Rock is not too far from some places I've wanted to see so we flew to Dallas, rented a car, got out of town from that insane airport at 6AM and reached Lafayette, Louisiana by late afternoon. The rental car had me listed as the only driver so I had to be sensible about chasing beers but we managed to find a nice, neighborhood brewery, Parish Brewing Company after driving around looking for another one that ended up being closed that day. I won't give you the name of it but it would have been a great tee shirt and Parish Brewing was a gem anyway. Parish Brewing's most popular beer is Canebrake, a "Louisiana Wheat Ale" made with good ol' Louisiana cane sugar. They seasonally load it up with strawberries and sell a lot of that too. This is the second location for the brewery if you don't count the owner's homebrewing spot before he decided he had some good stuff to sell and started a small commercial brewery that he outgrew in a couple of years.

Our eventual initial destination on this trip was New Orleans and using Google Maps we navigated to the front door of the hotel we had booked without much trouble at all. After checking into the room we decided to go to the lobby and pick up the free draft beer and/or frozen daiquiri that came with the room. There were two beers on tap, a Swill Lite and a local product but only the Swill was part of the deal. I told the desk clerk to simply forget it as I planned on being in the city for three days and didn't want to be sick and walked away. Kathy stayed for her frozen daiquiri and offered to pay \$7 for the local beer for me and the woman decided that I must have really been offended by her offer of swill and poured me the local beer. I can't remember what it was but, at least, it was more drinkable than the daiquiri that came out of a slushy machine and which Kathy tossed before I could finish my beer.

So, hotel stuff taken care of, it was off to Bourbon Street, two blocks away. 50 feet from the hotel door, at a corner, a guy was dragging an unconscious woman out of the street onto a crowded sidewalk. Everyone was attempting to get out of the way so someone bumped into a junkie looking guy who turned, saw me, and luckily was too dry mouthed to gather up much spit because he thought I was the one who bumped into him. I told Kathy later that it was as close as I've come to punching anyone in a long time and that our welcome to New Orleans was not what I had hoped for.



But it got better. Bour- and crowded but even- saw no hassles at all. I beers I drank but there have moved beyond offer some good craft sive though.....like \$9 a screen tv's are showing games and one of the people traveling with me really likes her hockey. Hey, she could be into knitting.



TURNAGAIN BREWING

OLD WORLD TRADITION... THE ALASKAN WAY

bon Street is crazy loud ryone is having fun so I didn't take notes on the are some places that the standard beers and beers. They are expen- pint in places where big Stanley Cup hockey

So we spent three days in New Orleans, eating a lot of great food and spending almost a full day at the amazing World War II Museum which is made up of three large buildings and which would take more than a full day to see it all. We were there four hours and I mentioned to Kathy that we were still in Europe and still had the Pacific War stuff to see. It is one of the best museums devoted to one topic anywhere. It's a must see when in New Orleans.

Back in 2002 I had the opportunity to drive a road which is a National Park Service road called "The Natchez Trace Parkway." It is a 50 MPH road that parallels the trail that Indians used for centuries and which boatmen in the 1700-1880's would use to get back home after floating barges down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans. If you are into US history this is a road for you. There were small inns along the trace in the old days and one of them is still standing complete with a slave graveyard behind it. The slaves, apparently, were the ones who served the beer to weary travelers and it must have been exhausting work with all the other stuff they had to do.

There are ancient Indian mounds along the way as well as Confederate graves, swamps with alligators, places where travelers wore the trail down ten feet or so below ground level, and some incredibly beautiful scenery. Oprah Winfrey's home town is on the Trace but the display they had to honor her that I saw back in 2002 is no longer there at her request. Apparently she doesn't have too many good memories of the place.

We veered off the parkway at Tupelo and headed for Memphis for a night and a day. The night turned out to be more expensive than I expected as there was a big music festival going on and it was the last night so rooms were going at a premium. I sniveled enough to a desk clerk at the third place we stopped that I got him to give me a more reasonable rate, especially after Kathy told him about me being a veteran on the way to a reunion. Either he was a patriot or he thought he might not want to deal with a PTSD nut who was looking a little tense that evening and we worked everything out.

There are three things we did in Memphis and I'd highly recommend them all. Sun Records, the birthplace of rock and roll does a great tour and still runs it as a studio with some of the same instruments used by some of the greats. Jerry Lee Lewis got his first recording contract by pounding on the piano in there. Elvis Presley took a year to gather up enough money to record one song and, when he got to the studio, Sam Phillips, the owner, was not there so Elvis was out of luck but the secretary thought he was cute so cut the first Elvis recording herself. Try to keep from getting too emotional when they play THAT tune for you.

Memphis is known for bar-b-que and Central Bar-B-Q is the place. Or places. They have two locations but the line to get into the one in the suburbs was too long for us so we found another place with a bunch of beers on tap and good burgers and waited until the next day to hit the Central Bar B Q place near downtown. There was a line there too but it went fast and it was definitely worth the wait. You read a giant menu inside the door, reach a cashier, order and pay, pick up your decent beer, and go to a table to wait for you order which comes amazingly fast considering how busy the place is. After pigging out we walked a block up the street to the Lorraine Motel where Martin Luther King was killed on April 4, 1968. The hotel is adjacent to a Civil Rights Museum and still stands as does the boarding house across the street where the shot was fired from. Memphis has its ups and downs.

After that it was Little Rock and a reunion of the crew of the USS Caiman SS323. We had about 60 crew and 120 or so guests attend and there would have been more crew there but seven of them had to cancel for things like a death in the family, cancer diagnosis, and other things that made us all realize that our numbers are dwindling and we may be seeing old friends for the last time.

Gee, isn't this an uplifting essay?

One good thing about these reunions is that one of the guys on the boat when I was on it ended up being the Chief Financial Officer for Sierra Nevada Brewing in Chico. Not only did that get me a great tour of the brewery there after a reunion in Reno but it also means our Caiman reunions receive about ten cases of a variety of Sierra Nevada beers no matter where we meet. I DID have to deal with ex-shipmates who don't understand that beer is supposed to have a variety of tastes and aroma but these are old guys and no one can tell them anything.

During these reunions we always have some special trip planned; at Flagstaff it was the Grand Canyon, in San Antonio it was a bus ride to Fredericksburg and the "War Of The Pacific Museum," and this time in Little Rock it was a short bus ride over the river to the USS Razorback SS396, a submarine similar to the Caiman that is on permanent display there. They had a nice bar b q buffet lunch for us and gave us the run of the boat for as long as we wanted to stay. The highlight was when they fired up one of the diesel engines and that familiar sound, which most of us hadn't heard for almost 50 years, had everyone grinning like a bunch of kids. And then the exhaust reached us and we remembered how we used to smell.

After the reunion I took advantage of being in Arkansas, the last of the 50 states that I've visited, and drove to see the Ozark Mountains. It was a long day driving to the northwest corner of the state but when we got there I realized that "mountains," when describing the Ozarks, means about the same thing as it does in southwest Pennsylvania where the Alleghenies are more like rolling hills. It is beautiful country as we drove along two "scenic highways" heading back towards Little Rock but we were reaching two thousand miles on the rental car and my butt was starting to hurt so we grabbed a room, hit a Mexican restaurant for a couple of Negro Modelos and, what Kathy said, were a couple of great margaritas and got off toward Dallas early the next day.

If I ever tell you that I am planning to drive in Dallas, Texas again.....shoot me.

I grew up and learned how to drive in a city where the roads make no sense until you realize that the place has had white people living there for over 350 years and the roads they built and still use followed old Indian trails. I've driven in places like Boston where people have been found to have been spinning around in round-a-bouts for several years. I've driven in Florida where people older than me have forgotten everything they ever learned about safe driving because they really need to get somewhere before anyone else does. But Dallas was the one place where I almost lost it. I mentioned this to someone the other day and they said "There are a lot of cars in Dallas now." I said, the number of them is not the problem; it's how fast they are all going and how turn signals are not necessary because everyone knows where everyone else is going and seeing someone in front of you with a turn signal on means you better hurry up and pass them on that side before they make the lane change even if it is obvious that they are trying to make it to an off ramp.

We got a room near the airport for a quick getaway the next day and, despite my shattered nerves, ventured out for food and beer. With Kathy navigating we drove around for over a half hour in an area where there were supposed to be a lot of restaurants but most of them were closed. Dallas was getting another entry on the reasons why I hate the town when we weaved our way through a strange mall parking lot and found a place with about 40 beers on tap and an extensive menu. We sat at the bar and the barmaid kept saying things like "honey," and "baby" and "sweetheart" to us and it wasn't until we were almost done with our meal that I realized she was talking to Kathy. I told Kathy that, "If she calls you 'baby' one more time I think, by Texas law, you are legally married." Kathy told me I had enough to drink and called for the check.

So the trip was not really much about beer. Thus this Secretary's Corner is not much about beer. Other than the time in New Orleans and Little Rock where the car was parked for a few days, I really didn't have much opportunity to sample as many beers as I would have liked. I can say though that there are a lot of great beers being made in the deep south and that should make us all want to go try them. When someone else is driving.

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

Summer Camp-Out

June 15th Trail River Campground, Moose Pass/Seward –

Frankenstein article - Kat Karabelnikoff, Julie McDonald, Peter Hall

Hooray, the summer campout is just over a week away! You can arrive early in the afternoon on Friday June 15th and the good times continue thru the 17th. Most people are packed up by 2pm on Sunday.

To find the campground, head south from Anchorage towards Seward on the Seward Highway. Watch for the brown and cream colored sign just before the Crown Point Bed and Breakfast between mileposts 25 and 24 on the right side of the road. Turn at Milepost 24.2 on Trail River Road for 2 miles. We will have the group area with the pavilion reserved. The group campsite is on the left once you are in the campground but there will be signs directing you to the group camping area.

The highlight of the campout is the group potluck Saturday night and the theme is B. Fantastic B, first letter of our favorite beverage BEER! Brownies, Burgers, HaliBut (little stretch, but I say ok!)...you get the idea.

Even if you can't come for the entire weekend, we'd love to see you out on Saturday night for the food and "club business" (aka socializing). We'll plan to kick off the potluck between 5:00pm and 6:00pm. A bonfire is usually constructed at some point as well, taking the fun late into the sunny (we hope) Alaskan summer night.

Bring your favorite foods and your homebrews, ciders, and meads. This is a family friendly event so bring the family, the kids, the dog, and guests if you like. If you bring your dogs, please plan to have them under control at all times. In previous years, we have had our canine friends help themselves to food at the potluck tables, and even run off and go missing.

For current updates check out the FB event page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/165124017490963/> or contact Peter Hall at alaskabrewer@gmail.com Hope to see you all at the campout this year!

***Please note that this is the same weekend as the Moose Pass Summer Solstice Festival at the Moose Pass Fairgrounds. So the campground will fill up quickly. If you plan to rent a campsite outside of the group site it's looking like they are already booked up for that weekend. The group site has a handful (maybe 6) private campsites with some parking available at the group shelter area. Some of these group campsites are big enough to put two RVs or tent families into.

Last friendly reminder. We will be in bear country, so be mindful of your food and other items that might attract bears to the site.



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The *Northern Brewer* welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. You can contact the editor, Debbie Grecco at:

The Great Northern Brewers Club and the American Homebrewers Association remind you to....Savor the Flavor Responsibly

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NEXT MEETING: May 15th 2018

7 pm at SOUTH COFFEE HOUSE: 11124 Old Seward Highway, Anchorage