



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB
SEPTEMBER, 2017

The Prez Sez

by John Trapp

August started out fairly hot and sunny, but by mid-month the rains took over. I mean - holy cow - it has poured buckets of rain down the last two weeks!

I hope everyone took advantage of the wet weather to brew some beer. There's still time because I promise, there's more rain coming. At least my garden is benefiting from this.



The Prez Sez

Secretary's Corner

Anchortown Invitational
Homebrew Competition
Announced

Meet Your Local
Anchorage Brewing Company's
Gabe Fletcher

Dues are Due in September
Pay Up to Renew!

Celebrate the fact that craft and home brewing are robust in our state. The upcoming Anchortown Homebrew Competition is ample testimony to homebrewing's prowess in our community. QUAKE Brewing Company opened in Wasilla last week. Cooper Landing Brewing Company now has a license to brew on the Peninsula. Kevin Burton of Glacier Brewhouse is expanding the empire's reach by working to create Matanuska Brewing Company in Palmer. Home brewed and craft beer is on the move in our state.

The rains did let up just enough to enjoy our August BBQ at Peter and Shannon Hall's home. We had a nice turn out and some good food and beer, a big thanks to the Hall family. Here's the three month calendar of events.

September 16th – Talkeetna Beer Festival! Tickets are \$55 and worth every penny.

September 19th – **Monthly meeting at 49th State Brewing Company, 7:00p.m.**

September 23rd – Bodega Fest.

End of September through mid October – Oktoberfest season starts!

October 8th – Anchor Town invitational Home Brew Competition

October 8th – Valdez Oktoberfest Homebrew Competition

October 14th - Autumn Pour HBC in Juneau

October 17th – Monthly meeting at 49th State Brewing Company, 7:00p.m.

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

I'm keeping my fingers crossed that the weather is nice for the Labor Day weekend. I sent out a club e-mail earlier letting everyone know that John and Rose Craig have once again opened the homestead off of Yoder Road in Talkeetna to club members to camp for the weekend. There's a chance you're not going to read this before the vacation starts, so let me know how it goes.

GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB
PMB 1204
3705 ARCTIC BOULEVARD
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99503

GNBC WEB SITE:

WWW.GREATNORTHERNBREWERS.ORG

NEWSLETTER EMAIL

bushy@alaskan.com

PRESIDENT: JOHN TRAPP

johnctrapp@hotmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT: KEVIN SOBOLESKY

vp@greatnorthernbrewers.org

TREASURER: SAM MOORE

treasurer@greatnorthernbrewers.org

SECRETARY: JIM O'TOOLE

secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MIKE FISHER

mikefisher.ak@gmail.com

BRIAN SMITH

brian.smith@ymail.com

KAT KARABELNIKOFF

kkarabelnikoff@gmail.com

BRIAN HALL

iheart314@gmail.com

PETER HALL

alaskabrewer@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Debbie Grecco

bushy@alaskan.com

Speaking of Talkeetna, if you couldn't make it up there over Labor Day, think about heading up for the Talkeetna Beer Festival on September 16th. This is a fantastic easy-going, laid back beer festival that's a real pleasure to attend. Not that I don't enjoy attending other festivals, because I do. But there's a nice small town feel to it and everyone has a great time. Well worth the \$55 ticket price.

We will be resuming our monthly meetings in September in the basement of 49th State Brewing Company. A couple of reminders for the meeting; please pay your membership dues. Also, bring a commercial beer for the raffle. Our raffle is the biggest revenue maker for the club. Nominations for all officer positions and three board positions will be opened.

Please consider running for a position. I'll address what the positions do before nominations are opened. It's a very rewarding way to give back to the club. Think about it.

We also haven't forgotten that education is a big part of our club and the meetings. In September Mike Fisher will be talking about Saison beers (one of my favorites). In October we will be talking about sanitation, or how to achieve good sanitation. And in November we will have a tasting of off flavors (probably from bad sanitation). Also, don't forget to enter the competitions coming up in October. The Anchor Town Invitational on Oct. 8th, see Mikes article on this, and then the Autumn Pour in Juneau on Oct. 14th. So plan on entering, AND plan on judging them too. This months "Meet Your Local" article features Anchorage Brewing Company's owner – Gabe Fletcher.

Remember, be safe and drink responsibly when out and about and keep those carboys filled. Until next month, Cheers.



Secretary's Corner

by Jim O'Toole

My beer locker is a little less full these days.

Two old buddies came up for eleven days and we did our best to drink through some beer I've had hanging around for a while.

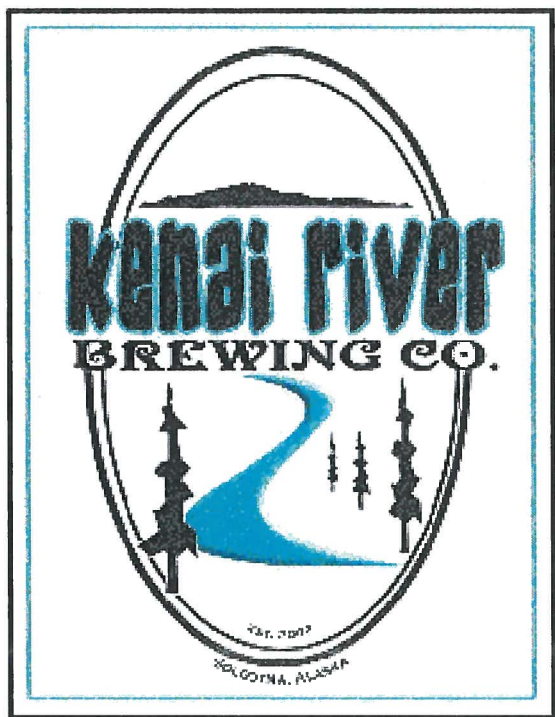
One of these buddies, Sandy, is a guy I met in the US Navy and the other is Gary, who I met when Sandy, Gary, a guy named Bob, and I took a ride in Bob's car across the country in 1966 when we had orders to board the USS Caiman SS323 in San Diego. We had finished a school in New York and the cross country trip would have been simple if there hadn't been a nationwide strike of airline mechanics that grounded all commercial flights. So, when Bob said he would be driving from his Boston home to San Diego and suggested we share expenses we figured it might be better than a bus.

Bob picked me up in Pittsburgh and, on the way to Sandy's place, about 90 miles west in Minerva, Ohio, Bob told me how he had tuned up his Chevy Belair for the trip. He said he spotted a crack in an engine fan blade so went to a junkyard for a replacement, bought new tires, and steam cleaned the engine. We were trained nuclear power plant operators so had some mechanical skills and I didn't think much of what Bob had done until we were about ten miles from Sandy's place and there was a loud bang from under the hood. Bob got out, opened the hood, and started screaming. That new/used fan had shorn a blade and put it through the radiator. By the time I got to the front of the car most of the anti-freeze was on the ground and Bob was still stomping around yelling at the top of his lungs.



We managed to find a phone, called Sandy to tell him what happened, and a short while later he showed up with his dad who got his first and last lesson in dealing with Bob. Unfortunately, Sandy and I had a few more lessons to get but this first one was when Bob told us that the guy at the junkyard where he bought the used fan told him that a cracked fan is usually a sign that the water pump is going bad but Bob looked at the water pump and decided it was fine. Keep in mind, folks, that this guy was about to be entrusted with the operation of a US Navy submarine.

Sandy's dad took off and came back with a new fan and water pump, a used radiator, and anti-freeze. We changed the water pump and fan and were putting the radiator in when Sandy's dad pointed out that there was some wiring in the way but Bob ignored him and jammed the radiator down and into place. Everything got buttoned up and we headed to Sandy's place but noticed that the "generator light" on the dashboard was on. Sandy's uncle was a pretty good mechanic and he found that there was an electrical switch on the voltage regulator that kept opening which prevented the battery from being charged so he suggested we just leave the cover off of the regulator and jam something in the switch to keep it closed for a few hours every day so the battery would charge. He said the car could run forever that way so we decided to get on the road.

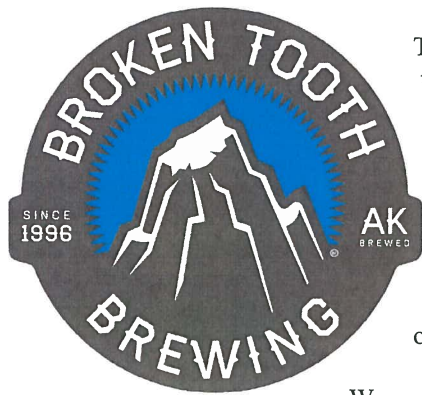


Before we left Minerva, Sandy's old buddy, Gary - who was on leave from the Air Force and waiting to transfer to a base in California - decided to go with us. Sandy's last joking words to his family as we pulled out of the driveway were, "We'll probably make it to Canton" and we all laughed.

Until we got to Canton...about 40 miles away. Bob spotted a Chevy dealership and suggested we have the generator light checked out. A service manager had us pull the car into the shop and a mechanic opened the hood and stared. "What the hell is this?" he asked and said he had never seen anything like the electrical system he faced. Bob told him that he bought the car at a police auction and that the car had been wired for all the additional stuff cop cars have. The mechanic said he would have to find a manual and went to the office. I stepped outside to smoke a cigarette and a few seconds after lighting up I saw a blinding flash from inside the shop. Going around the corner I saw Bob

standing in a cloud of smoke in front of the car. He had decided to wiggle some wires for some reason and the entire charging system was nothing but fried wiring.

I don't remember how much it cost us to fix that but we left Canton, made it to St. Joseph, Missouri and Bob decided we needed a new alternator so we holed up in a motel for the day. While Bob was gone the rest of us determined that we might have made a bad decision by not taking a bus and wondered how much more of our money Bob was going to need to get his car across the country. It turned out that it was a considerable amount.



The alternator was fixed, the light was off but, as we left St Joseph, Bob missed a turn and turned around in a junk yard but rather than turn in the driveway he drove through a bunch of junk metal lying on the ground. One of us mentioned that he was in danger of damaging a tire but Bob told us he bought four good retread tires before he left Boston and we would be okay. RETREADS?? A night at a motel, a new generator, and many miles and two tire replacements later we stopped for gas before crossing a dessert and the guy pumping gas noticed a bubble on the sidewall of one of the tires so Bob told him to replace it. While he was paying, Sandy, Gary, and I decided we were not giving Bob another nickel for anything other than gas which really pissed Bob off but the fact is, we were running out of money after practically buying Bob a new car.

We made it to California and dropped Gary off in Barstow where, I just learned a couple of weeks ago, he had had to borrow money from Sandy for bus fare to get to his duty

station.

Unfortunately, Sandy and I had to continue on to San Diego and spend four years cooped up on a 307-foot tube with Bob who proved he was as incompetent a sailor as he was a car owner.

Of course some good came of this and the main thing is that Sandy and I became great friends and, through him, Gary and I have also. On one of Sandy's first trip's here he talked me into brewing a batch of beer so you are reading this because of him. He just headed home after his tenth trip to Alaska and Gary is telling people back home in Minerva about his third trip here. I assume he will do some of this talking at the first brew pub to open anywhere near Minerva, owned by friends of his.



As Sandy was the one who turned me on to home brewing on his second trip here, there was a lot of conversation about this and Gary got very interested. I had an IPA finishing fermenting when they got here so we bottled it while they were here and then brewed up a simple Sierra Nevada Pale Ale clone so he could see the process.

I had hoped to have that IPA ready when they got here but it was really slow finishing feeding so I had to dig deep in the beer locker, buy a case or two and, of course, try at least one beer at as many beer joints around Anchorage as we could in the time they were here. We saw most of them but I regret not getting them down to Girdwood to see what those guys are doing with Girdwood Brewing these days. One place that was a nice surprise was Knik River Lodge where the view is fantastic and they had three or four decent beers on tap. One of them was a German lager that Gary loved and said that he wanted to go home and brew. Sandy and I loved his enthusiasm but had to suggest that he might want to try a couple of simple ales before he tackled something like that.

So, the "Society Of Bob" survived again. On that road trip in 1966 there was no alcohol involved all the way but when I'm with Sandy, whether here or at his place in Virginia, at one of our Navy reunions, or traveling together in Europe, we drink. We don't intend for it to happen.....it just does. Maybe it's the sailor in us. And for all you Air Force fans out there, Gary joined us this time and would have made you proud.

A good time was had by all.

Bob was nowhere to be seen.

Calendar:

Alaska Crafted Beer Festival
 Sept 9-Saturday
 5:00PM
 Williwaw
 7th and F St
 Anchorage



Talkeetna Brewfest
Sept 16-Saturday
2-6PM
Sheldon Community Arts Hangar
<http://northernsusitnainstitute.org/nsi-gatherings-events/talkeetna-brewfest/>

GNBC Monthly Meeting
Sept 19-Tuesday
7PM
49th State Brewing's basement

Capital Brewfest (if you happen to be in Juneau)
Sept 23-Saturday 1-5PM
Juneau Arts and Cultural Center
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/capital-brewfest-2017-juneau-alaska-tickets-35742481725>



For more...see The Prez Says above.

Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew Competition

by *Mike Fisher*

With fall showers and yellowing leaves upon us, it must be time to submit entries to this Fall's Anchor Town Invitational Homebrew Competition.

Entries will be accepted on September 30 at Arctic Brewing Supply (8401 Sandlewood Place, Anchorage, AK) from noon to 5pm. A couple of requests/requirements:



1. 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 get the entry form at http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf.
2. If you are entering a beer that goes into the imperial style group, please be sure to include the original and final gravities and, if you want to show how wonderful of a person you know are, the calculated ABV using either brewing software or the simple method ($1.31 * (OG - FG)$). Some of the imperial styles will require verification of the ABV.
3. When we ask for a completed entry form, we mean a completed form. Please extend us the same courtesy that our judges and competition volunteers show you. (See below about the fantastic results reporting!) Include the recipe. Include the stats. The organizer reserves the right to refuse any entry for which information is incomplete or suspect.
4. You can enter as many beers as you like, but only one per subcategory. Again, please note that we are using the 2015 BJCP style guidelines for this competition.
5. There is no charge for entries, but any spare heavy duty boxes (especially 24-pack beer boxes, with the dividers) you can donate to the competition will be appreciated for transportation.
6. We need judges! In addition to entering a beer, please try to swing by to help judge. You can judge any category in which you didn't have an entry.
7. If you are around at the end of the judging session, you are encouraged to grab any empty bottles you want to reuse. Anything I take with me is going straight to recycling.

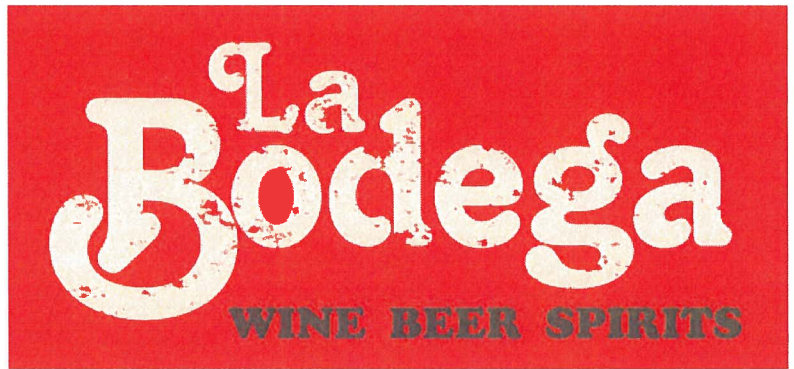
Now for the nitty gritty, "I told you so" stuff that our attorneys (if we had any) would want us to include. To help things go smoothly and keep everyone happy:

8. PLEASE complete your entry form ahead of time with legible writing. I can usually figure out most handwriting, but if I can't and it affects you in some way (such as eligibility for Best of Show) that's on you, not me. This is especially the case with the 2015

style category and subcategory, original/final gravities for imperial styles (see below), and your e-mail address for score sheets.

9. If you are submitting multiple entries, PLEASE label each one to match the entry form. If your IPA gets judged as an wee heavy, and vice versa, that's on you, not me. We're not going to rely on the judges to figure it out.

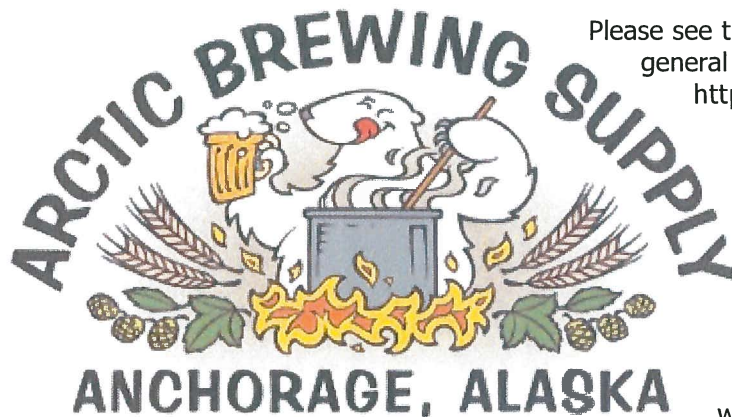
10. Entries are accepted from noon to 5pm on September 30. PLEASE do not show up at 10am unless you have other brewing-related shopping to do (which is highly encouraged) and don't show up at 5:15pm after I've sorted everything and started loading my car. If you can't make that day and time, I will try to be accommodating with an earlier meetup. (Note: I will NOT be able to accept any entries October 1-7.)



We will judge according to the 2015 BJCP Style Guidelines. This year, the GNBC leadership has changed the GNBC Homebrewer of the Year (HBOTY) award program and Best of Show (BOS) judging. All beer styles will be accepted, but BOS/HBOTY style groups are:

Styles eligible for HBOTY and BOS: Wild/Sour/Brett, IPA/Pale, Lager, Stout/Porter

Styles eligible for BOS: Belgian/French, Imperial (8% and up)



Please see the following guide for details on BOS/HBOTY eligibility (and general scoring):

<http://www.fisherak.com/AnchorTown2017ScoringAndBOS-HBOTYGuide.pdf>

The competition theme is "Harvest Beers." If you are entering one, please put a note on your entry form (in addition to the base style!) and if we have enough interest I will announce the top scoring theme beer.

Judging will start at 10:00am on Sunday, October 8 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. More judges means (a) a faster judging day and earlier 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 September club meeting if you plan to be there. I could also use help fetching beers and arranging flights during the judging. (You'll even get to try some of the great beers but skip the bad ones that I've entered.)

If you have any questions, including getting a shipping address if you want to send beers to me from outside the Anchorage area, please send me an e-mail at AnchorTown@fisherak.com.

After the competition, I will scan and e-mail score sheets. I will bring leftover beers to the October 17 club meeting to be claimed by the entrant, unless otherwise arranged. (After the meeting, it's a free for all unless I hear otherwise.)

We need entries! We REALLY NEED judges! Please plan to enter your best beers in the competition, and then stop by October 8 to participate as a judge. We'll see you in a few weeks!!



Meet Your Local - Anchorage Brewing Company Owner – Gabe Fletcher

By John Trapp

I had the pleasure of sitting down with Gabe Fletcher a few weeks ago to talk about beer and Anchorage Brewing Company.

I've known Gabe a long time. In 1998, we took the BJCP class together. He was just starting to brew professionally at Midnight Sun Brewing Company and remained rather quiet for the three months while we honed our tasting and judging skills. Anyone that knows Gabe would agree, he's a walk softly but carry a big stick kind of guy. He's not outspoken, and often you don't even know he's entered the room. But don't let that fool you, this guy knows his beer.

While Gabe worked his way up to Brew Master at Midnight Sun Brewing Company, most of the local beer drinkers watched as his artistic and creative side starting to show. Think of his new brew releases like the Seven Deadly Sins series of beers, as an example.

His experiment with adding Brett (Brettanomyces) to beer had begun, and the beer world was about to be turned upside down. He released more beers with Brett and that were aged on oak. It's easy to identify them as Gabe's creations.

I asked Gabe when he got turned onto the sour ales. He told me that three things happened. First he tried Orval Trappist Ale. Orval is a phenomenal beer that shows you how beers can be a "bunch" of different flavors while still offering a slight dryness and sourness from the Brett." If you've had Orvale, there's nothing over the top, but all the character is there. If you haven't tried one, you're missing out. More about Orval later. Next, he tried beers from Jolly Pumpkin Brewing Company in Michigan. Again, these were sour ales that allowed beer lovers to enjoy the entire flavor spectrum without the beers being over the top with Brett.

Finally, he credited Billy Opinski with turning him onto sour ales. I laughed out loud when he said that because I credit Billy with turning me onto sour ales too. Both Gabe and I admitted that we weren't huge fans of the sour stuff at first, but hanging around Billy in the late 90's and early 2000's changed that.

At most of the GNBC events like our annual Christmas party, potlucks and monthly meetings, Billy would show up with is own hand truck wheeling in three cases or so of Oude Gueuze and Duchesse. If you were anywhere near Billy, or even walking by, you ended up with a glass of Gueuze. Eventually , like me, you learned to appreciate it, and looked forward to seeing Billy walk through the door.



Gabe left MSBC to start Anchorage Brewing Company in August of 2010. Not having a place to set up shop yet, he worked out a deal with the late Sleeping Lady Brewing Company where he could brew and age his beer while his new brewery was being built. He moved in and set up the basement of the Goose to accommodate his barrel aging process. Gabe brewed his first batch in December of 2010.



Since Gabe's new beers needed to age in oak, the first drinkable release was in May of 2011. I asked Gabe what his standard aging time was. "It all depends on the beer," he says. "Some get aged as low as four months, while others get aged up to two years."

I started to think about that and asked Gabe if he had a flagship beer that he kept going, as most breweries do. He was very quick to point out that "no, there are no flagship beers," and he can't see himself brewing the same thing over and over again. His words were "I'd get too bored if I did that". That statement alone should tell you that you'll always find something new and exciting brewing at ABC.

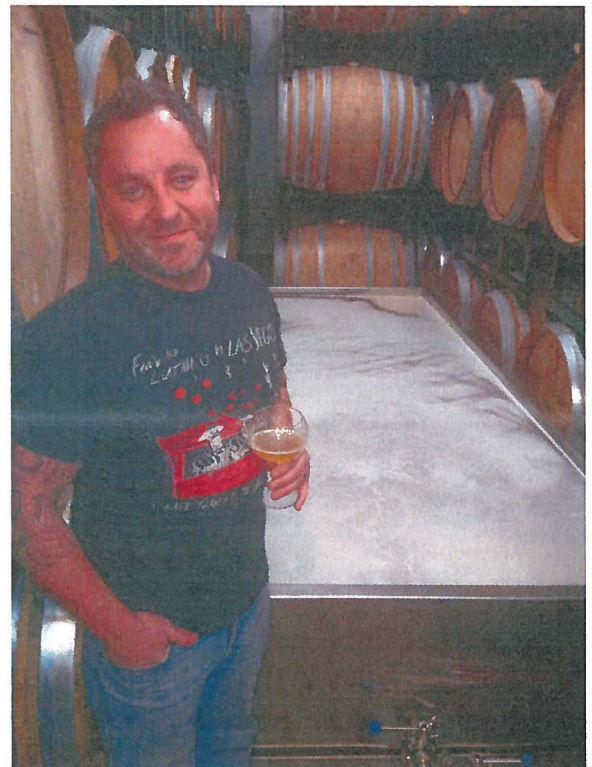
While ABC was surviving in the basement of the Snow Goose, the new brewery was being constructed across town off of King Street on the end of 91st Avenue.

Gabe settled into his new brewery in March of 2015. If you haven't been there yet you owe to yourself to go check it out. Anchorage Brewing Company is definitely a world class brewery, turning out cutting edge world class beers. The Belgians make the best beers in the world, especially when it comes to sour ales. And very few breweries are producing high quality

sour ales. So when you can make something as good as Gabe can, the beer world takes notice. Anchorage Brewing Company's beers are shipped all over the world. Anchorage Brewing Company beers are highly sought-after by beer enthusiast young and old.

Back in late 2014- perhaps as early as 2015 - Gabe and his wife spent some time in Belgium. They arranged to stay at the Orval Trappist Monastery (in silence) for a few days.

I asked Gabe if Orval knew about Anchorage Brewing Company and he said, "they knew about me." Just think about that. Gabe was at the sacred Trappist Monastery that produces the beer that helped inspire my Brett/oak journey, and they knew about Gabe's beers. That's pretty damn cool. One more thing that's extremely cool - and I raise a pint to Gabe for this - He says that "you know, it was my dream to go to Belgium, sit in a bar there and order my beer, and I did it". You most certainly did Gabe; congratulations on all your success.



Membership Renewals

By: Kat Karabelnikoff

I almost can't believe that September is knocking on the door already and that means we have one month left in the current membership year.

Yes that is right your membership card will expire at the end of September, so please RENEW your memberships now to continue to enjoy all the fun and perks of being a GNBC member. If you renew by **September 17th** you will be able to pick up your new membership card at the meeting on Tuesday, September 19th. If you can't make it to the September meeting don't worry, any cards not picked up at the meeting will be mailed out that week.

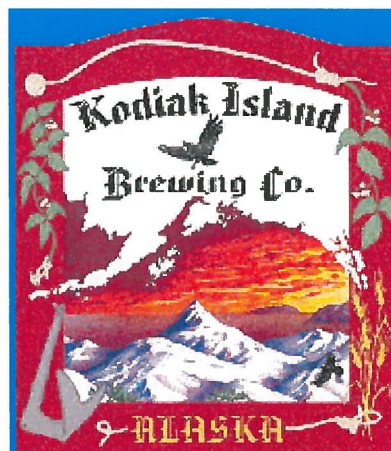
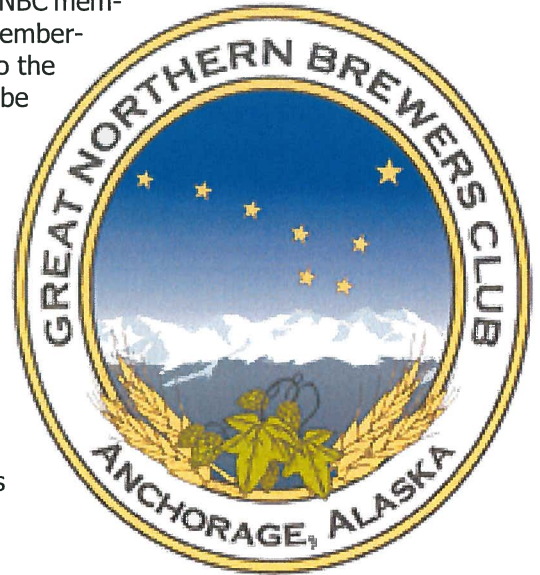
The cost for membership is \$30.00 annually per household (don't forget to include your spouse's name so they can have their own membership card and get the benefits too.) or \$350 for a lifetime membership. If you know you will be attending the September meeting and want to pay with cash, check, or credit card at the meeting please email your information to me at the email below and I will have a card ready for you to pick up.

You can renew your annual membership online on our website <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/membership.html> with a credit or debit card or send a Check or Money Order (made payable to Great Northern Brewers Club) to:

GNBC Membership Coordinator
c/o Kat Karabelnikoff
9601 COPPER DRIVE
Anchorage, AK 99507

If renewing online or via mail please don't forget to include your full name (and spouse's too on the same name line if applicable), Full Street Address (street, city, and zip code), Phone Number, and Email.

You can contact me at membership@greatnorthernbrewers.org if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing all the familiar and new faces at the September 19th meeting!
Cheers,
Kat Karabelnikoff



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
Anchorage, AK 99503



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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:

Online: bushy@alaskan.com
Phone: 907-333-8985
Mail: 6933 Soyuz Circle
Anchorage, Ak 99504

GNBC Web Site: www.greatnorthernbrewers.org



**Great Northern Brewers Club
PMB 1204
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Anchorage, AK 99503**

**NEXT MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting
49th State Brewing Company - 7 pm**