



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

APRIL 2009

The Prez Sez

2009 GNBC House Crawl Slated for May 30th

Golf Tournament Plans Formed

Brewathon at The Jade Street Brewery on May 02: Plan to Brew!

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GNBC's Social Networking Site: Facebook! Sign Up!

Kenai Peninsula Bus Trip Recap: Can you say Hummmmmerrrrrrrrrr?

Home on the Range

The Prez Sez

by Ira Edwards

Ahhh, Springtime in Alaska... Warmer weather, lots of daylight, plenty of snow, abounding outdoor activities to participate in, and volcanic activity. Volcanoes? Damn, I guess this ash is putting a damper on all the great things about spring. Guess I'll stay in and brew up some great beer while I enjoy the last of my Rye P.A. (IPA Style). And I can go sweep up the ash on my driveway to help scrub my kettles clean. Thanks Mother Nature, you are SOOOO helpful. Well, at least she seems to be trying to make up for her blunder by hiding the latest ashfall with a bit of cold powder for my skiing pleasure. That was nice of her..



April is going to be another great month for us up here in the Great Land. Hopefully a few of our fine brewing members were able to send in their finest to the 2009 National Homebrew Competition. The club has not made a big push as in past years to get entries submitted, but we always seem to take home some ribbons and medals. I slacked a little on my brewing with all the home projects this winter, but I am sure many of you have some great brews that were sent on. Coming up in a couple of weeks is the 2009 Snow Goose Break Up home Brew Competition on April 18. Check out the article on this event for more information.

Our meeting in April has traditionally been a potluck style event and we invite all the staff at the Snow Goose Restaurant and Sleeping Lady Brewing Company to attend. We have a great place to meet and host events at the Goose and this is our little way of showing our appreciation for all that Gary Klopfer and his staff has done for us. So put your thinking caps on and prepare a dish that can go with one of your fine beverages.

I know it is a bit early, but on the First Saturday in May is our annual Brew-A-Thon. This year it will take place on May 2 at John Craig's house again. Check out the info in this month's newsletter on the event and pay attention to the club Email Spam list for more details as the date gets closer..

Well, that is again all for this month. Keep on Brewing as a way to combat this current economy. As always, enjoy your fine Beers, Meads, and Ciders responsibly.

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2009 Snowgoose Breakup Home Brew Competition Announcement

by Ira Edwards

Well, in case you have not seen a newsletter recently, the next Homebrew Competition for the Great Northern Brewers Club is the annual Snow Goose Break-Up competition. This competition came about because the Snow Goose many years ago wanted to get some new ideas for great brews to serve on their deck in the summer. If you have not been to the Goose deck on a warm sunny day, it is a thing not to miss. Even with the crappy summer we had last year, the staff told me that they did just as much business as usual. I guess Alaskans are tough...

Since this is a competition to find that special summer beer, the categories this year have again been selected to provide something that will sell well on the deck. The categories open for the 2009 Snow Goose Break Up Home Brew Competition have been broken into 3 general categories that the brewery is interested in producing.

- Light Ales- lagers (BJCP categories 01, 02, 03, 06, 07)
- Wheat Ales (15, 16A)
- Belgian Pale Ale (16b, 18-a, 16-c, 16d)

When no substyle for the category is indicated, we intend for the entire category to be admissible.

This Comp is scheduled for Saturday April 18 at the Snow Goose, and is a great way to relieve some tax day stress. I will take entries in the Snow Goose Brewery (Sleeping Lady Brewing Company) on Friday April 17 from noon to 6pm. Judging will start at 10 am on Saturday and judges and stewards are needed. For those of you who have just completed the BJCP course, this is a great opportunity to judge in a low key comp with experienced judges and gain a little experience. Water and snacks will be provided as well. We will need three 10-16oz (500ml is OK) bottles and a standard AHA recipe sheet/entry form. You can find these forms at http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/pdf/entry_recipe.pdf Keep your eyes tuned to the GNBC website and the Club Email Spam list for more details as they become available.

For those of you gunning for the Brewer of the year status this year, the open BJCP categories that you can score BOTY points in are 01, 03, 06, and 16. Only the top scoring entry in each category will count... Take care and we'll see you there!



EVENTS

2009 GNBC House Crawl is on its way!!!

by *Ira Edwards*

Here it is, the announcement of this year's House Crawl. I am sure you have all hear of Pub Crawl events happening from time to time in Anchorage. Well, since we are a Homebrewing club, many years ago the members of the GNBC got together and decided to do something on a similar vein, but only a lot more fun. This is The House Crawl! There are home brewed beverages at each stop and special food prepared by the host of each stop. The real draw is the games that are played at each stop and the prizes that come with them. The overall winner of the game series often has another special prize as well.

It has not always been an annual event, but it seems to happen more years than not. This year's edition is being organized by Pat Ryan, who is currently traveling out of state and conned me into writing up this article for her...So, here are the details:

-The date is Saturday, May 30, 2009 and it will run from 12pm to 7pm. This was rescheduled because Mark had an event on Memorial day weekend. This is a DESIGNATED DRIVER EVENT...

-We are renting a party bus to haul everyone around safely. Colin is again going to be the driver (Pat said he has driven the last 2 or 3 of these events for us.)

-Everyone will meet at Mark and Pat Ryan's house to board the bus and get on our way. Their address is 3428 Purdue. It is in East Anchorage in the College Village Neighborhood. After the last stop, you can get picked up at the Ryan's house.

-The cost will be \$25 per person and there will be a 25person limit. It will be first come, First served and reservations are taken when payment is received. Make Checks out to GNBC. If more than 25 people sign up, any payments received will be returned. Pat said to send her Payments in the Mail to:

GNBC House Crawl
c/o Pat Ryan
3428 Purdue
Anchorage, AK 99508

-Stop #1 Board the bus at Mark and Pat Ryan's and get on the road...

-Stop #2 Dennis and Dena Sessler in Eagle River

-Stop #3 Ira Edwards

-Stop #4 Dave Swanson

-Stop #5 Tim and Jen Bisson – FINAL STOP...

Well, that is about it, pay attention to future Newsletters and club email spams for any updates that may arise. Get your reservations in!

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Friday

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

08.....*Glacier Brewhouse Beer Dinner
Time and cost TBD*

14.....*MSBC Beer Dinner at Gallo's
Mexican Restaurant*

17.....*Entries accepted for the Goose
Breakup Homebrew Competition
at the brewery: Noon - 6 pm*

18.....*Snow Goose Restaurant and
Sleeping Lady Brewing Company
Homebrew Competition Judging
10:00 - ??*

21.....*GNBC Monthly meeting at the
Goose 7:00 PM*

01.....*Cafe Amsterdam's 10th
Anniversary Celebration
(Time/Price TBD)*

02.....*Brewathon at John Craig's
(Jade Street Brewery)*

22.....*Goblets of Gold Mead Compe-
tition at Ring of Fire (Homer)*

22.....*Haines Craftbrew Festival and
Homebrew Competition*

30.....*Annual GNBC House Crawl*

CAFE



AMSTERDAM



The Monthly Puzzle –

For last month's solution, one entrant responded, "If you ever reach total enlightenment while drinking beer, I bet it makes beer shoot out your nose." Deep thought Jack Handy

"If that's correct, there is a mistake on the 5th word, it reads kgzqs, but I think it should be zgzs. If not, oh well, I tried!" Oops, sorry everyone as the misspelling was non-intentional.

I believe the efforts of those that answer more readily should benefit from some sort of advantage in the drawing, sort of "weight" the entries. For example, if 10 people responded correctly/similarly, the first person solution would have 10 opportunities to win and the person that answered last would have one opportunity to win. If one was #10 of 10, that equates to a 1 in 55 chance of winning. Except, I would have to make out 55 pieces of paper. One potential problem with the weighting might be that some members would be discouraged from entering future competitions because of a perception of lousy drawing odds (in the event that they didn't have opportunity to solve the cryptoquote until late in the month). The advantage was reduced so that if someone's entries were in the first third, they get 4 tickets; second third, "then 3 tickets each" or two tickets to win if in the last third of entrants. Kind of weighted like the selection for the Iditarod start.

A list was assembled such that each entrant was assigned a number (9 entrants = 9 numbers). Numbers 1-2 had four entries each, numbers 4-6 had three each, etc. The numbers of the entrants were printed and dropped into a brown paper bag and taken to Arctic Brewing Supply. Along the way, I found two dice and recovered two cents from the loose change cup. Pete and Lisa drew twelve numbers from the hat and assembled them in order of the draw. 1, 2, 3, ... 11, 12. The coins were flipped. If both coins land heads up or tails up, then one dice would be used. If both were heads, numbers 1-6 would be in play; if both coins land tails then numbers 7-12 would be in play. If one coin landed heads and the other tails then both dice are in play. The dice were rolled and the number from the dice selected the winner who has already been contacted to select and collect their wine kit. Everyone, thanks for participating. And special thanks to Pete, Lisa, and Arctic Brewing Supply for their generous donation.

This month's cryptoquote is:

OIXHIJVRVSKJ HRW ARNI TIIJ R PXIRVIX USCYKNIXW VARJ OSXI

-URNSU XRSJC MRGGRYI

One reason the drawing was done this way was to provide more filler for the newsletter. Everyone, we need articles. From time to time, the newsletters get pretty thin but I've learned that our members actually do read them. And as you can tell, it really doesn't take much to create an article. A prize for this month's cryptoquote was not procured or solicited. I feel a bit guilty soliciting prizes as a lot of people and companies donate in plenty of ways already. But if you or your business have something (hopefully beer or home brewing related) that you are willing to donate or otherwise contribute let me know. As you can tell, I'll mention your generosity accordingly. Cheers and happy trails!



2009 National Homebrew Toast and Brewathon

by John "SUDS" Craig

I Love Beer! Beer, Beer, Beer, and more beer is making me thirsty for our annual GNBC Brewathon. In this event, we worship the Beer Gods up in Suds' Heaven. This is the reason Rose and I are inviting homebrewers over to Jade Street Beer Gardens on Saturday, May 2nd for the event. The event is part of a nationwide coast-to-coast brew day (even in outer space). Homebrewers gather to make as much beer, mead or hooch as possible in a one day session. We start brewing at 8:00 AM and celebrate the "Coast to Coast Homebrew Toast" at 9:00 AM sharp, brew all day, cook, socialize and wrap up around 9:00 PM.

The objective is to have about 10 brew stations set up in the yard for everyone's use, but if you're particular and like to share with others, bring your own brew supplies, equipment and don't forget propane, burners, your own carboys for your beer, and even rubber boots; it can get sloppy and wet out there. This is as much an educational event as it is social and you should invite curious non-brewers to attend with you and show them the foamy ropes. This is much of a brewing equipment road show as it is a brewing session, so plan to demonstrate your set up and learn from others at the same time.

As always, there will be a BBQ/Potluck all day long, so bring along something for the grill and something to share with others, and don't forget your stash of homebrew. What makes the event great is a big array of something people can dip into, throw on the grill and toss on a plate while drinking great homebrew.

We've had lots of fun over the years at this annual event, so we hope to see you at 8757 Jade Street (west on Dimond, , past Jewell Lake Road and right on Jade Street. We're at the corner of Jade and 88th. If you get lost, call us at (907) 243-6540. There is lots of parking along Jade Street, but please respect our gracious neighbors who have tolerated (and participated in) this event over the years. Try not to block driveways or mailboxes and access to other people's property. Common sense should prevail. Keep our driveway open as well as ordered by the Fire Marshall as part of the permit we need to have a campfire in our back yard.

We hope to see you at this great event. May the beer Gods be with us!



Random Thoughts

by Georgy Porgy

Dim the lights. It may be the last opportunity to crank up the Pink Floyd. Go ahead. Load up The Division Bell and read along.

Cluster one: Why? You may ask. It's spring breakup time. Look around. We have slushy streets, ponding at curb inlets, a slalom course of potholes. I've often wondered what a moose thinks of this time of year. Perhaps "January was so friggin cold". "Where did my antlers go?" Or "Why does wet snow seem so colder than dry snow." Or "The reflection of the snow hurts my eyes...Why can't that sun go away." I totally understand their desire to go to thickest parts of the forest and hide from the sun.

What do you want from me: Part of these thoughts reflect my own experiences of spring. I'll be able to go for hikes in the open air without punching through to my hips in the deep snow. The light is bright, daylight dominates the night, so it's time to close the drapes and put the air conditioning unit on standby. The rhubarb will emerge as will the morel mushrooms. Work gets busy. There are deadlines, deadlines as contractors and developers want to dig at the first available moment. At this point, I've had a cold for the past two weeks, missed out on ski train, but haven't missed a normal business hour except for when the temperature climbed to 80F in the office cubicle. It's a sweat shop at times. Decisions need to be made. How do I get balance in my life and get the bait stand ready for bears, attend the upcoming beer dinners, get the rifles sighted in and meet the business deadlines. The house is in disarray. My normal accumulation of junk has filled two rooms and the garage.

Poles apart: The greatest tragedy of spring is knowing that I haven't accomplished all the things I set out to do. Yes, there was fine dining with great friends. But some of the hobbies maybe approaching there end. One aquarium was decommissioned back in February and there are soft plans to decommission the major tank. I continue to struggle with my mead experiments. On a good note, my wildflower mead is coming along nicely. I had filled a growler of it around the time of Fur Rondy competition. Some sediment has settled out and it has become lightly petilent. Maybe those floating yeasties were the muddled notes the judges were tasting. I don't know if you like carbonated mead, but I do. Let me clarify, I made a multiberry melomel that developed carbonation but didn't like that one so much as it tasted more a like a carbonated merlot. Carbonated wines just haven't worked for me. It might be that the relative bitterness just gets too amped up with the carbonation. The carbonation may just strip the sugars away leaving the beverage tasting like an oak cube or piece of burnt wood.

Marooned: But this wildflower mead was different in that the carbonation added a slight bite yet allowed those spicy intangibles to tickle the taste buds. (note: paused ipod and went and poured a glass). I really like this mead. The bubbles are there. The beverage is brilliantly clear. The aroma is citrusy, more orange like. The taste is like a blend of oranges and apples. It really reminds me of a cider. It doesn't have the tannins of too many apple cores. My first reaction is, "I would never have thought to take an orange blossom honey and make a cyser." But at dry to medium body... this is what I get. I'm trying to describe the spices, but the lingering effects of my sore throat and cough meds are not in my favor.

MEETING SETUP

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

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

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





A great day for freedom: I sense some woody character. In my recent experimentation with meads, I produced a basswood mead. This mead was placed on CO2 at room temp (sorry, the freezer is full right now). At this point, it is pettulent. I've pulled a few samples off it and the woody notes are clear. These woody based tree blossoms produce some nice meads. While Tupelo gives a distinctive taste, I believe there is real potential in using meads made from basswood, mesquite, etc. On their own, they may make oak meads. Anyone know if these ever place well at competitions? But when blended with other varietals and melomels they bring pleasant intangibles. A sort of complexity while maintaining balance. In any case, this wildflower mead has some woodiness. Perceptible, but not over done.

Wearing the inside out: For those keeping track in the honey co-op, this wildflower was packaged as a desert garden wildflower. I'm thinking it has properties that I've tasted in the Arizona Orange blossom. Perhaps 5/8 of the desert garden with 3/8 of a California orange blossom and you get the AZ orange blossom. My first glass is now empty. I can't wait for my sore throat to go away, so I can give this mead more attention. I want to compare it to the non carbonated stuff left in the carboy.

Take it back: Can you feel the energy...spring is definitely near. I'm blessed that last year ended on a good note: ref the wildflower mead. In my opinion, it is one of the better meads that I've made. I've got to experience a lot of your homebrews, last year's bus tour to Kenai, the house crawl, camping trip, and the many beer dinners. This year is going to be remarkable as well. I've set some small goals. Little plans include moving the currant bushes to different parts of the yard and letting the raspberries take over more room. I have a couple of apple trees to relocate and another tree to plant in a co-workers yard (see December's newsletter for explanation).

Coming Back to life: My garden is going to double in size as well. I would really like to automate the watering system. I'm really looking forward to this year's fruit bounty of raspberries, red and black currants. I have plans to use these in some sort of a melomel and have plenty of time to find the right honey.

Keep Talking: As I write this article, the light from the LCD grows brighter. The outside light from behind the drapes dims with the setting sun. Pink Floyd plays on.

Lost for words: At this point, I dream of being a little yeastie floating in the carboy. I would be proud to have been the yeastie that helped produce this mead. On another thought, that yeastie is a friend. Those yeasties should be proud... yes, very proud. Very deserving of this private concert of mood music.

High Hopes: The second glass is nearing the end. Here's looking to next year's work effort and being able to enjoy the end product of those efforts again At about the same time next year. Perhaps it will be that currant raspberry something something. Cheers!

GNBC Golf Tournament

by Georgy Porgy

Mark your calendars. The date for the golf tournament has been set for July 25th of this year. Planning an event like this doesn't occur in one night, so we appreciate both your patience and your active participation in making this event the same big success and great load of fun it always is every year.

One of the major elements of the tournament is determining which charity will be the benefactor of the proceeds from this event. Please attend this month's monthly meeting at the Snow Goose as the charity will be selected by the close of the meeting and your input is solicited. One goal is for the charity to become more involved in the event. That effort may only be to show up and perhaps participate, but more involvement is desired. For lack of better words, a charity that is willing to "hang" with us rather than say "check please," is what we're looking for. It's an opportunity for the charity to share what they do with us and demonstrate some commitment

You may ask, "What are the goals?" The goal of last year's event, and the year's before was to obtain enough money to provide a handicap-usable golf cart for the course. One major goal this year is to actually "deliver" on the plan to provide the golf cart. We continue to learn from the past events, and it seems that if the golf carts are going to be acquired, we (the GNBC) have to take a primary role in seeing that the carts are purchased and delivered as we have promised. We are looking into the golf carts, costs, shipping, etc. If you can help with this task (for example, your company gets a nice shipping rate, or you have a contact that can get a good rate), please help us out.

What else can you do? For starters, consider playing golf. The entry fees this year are: \$350 per four person team or \$100 per person. We'll get the entry form posted on the website and otherwise made available to you in the near future. This is a pay before you play event. We would prefer to receive your payment by July 21st (Tuesday) so that we can get the teams and volunteers coordinated appropriately.

So far, we have the following always fun features:

Bloody Mary Hole
Yager Hole
Humpy Hell Hole

There easily may be more fun holes this year as the event unfolds.

Humpy's has gratuitously offered to provide the food for the event. Thanks Humpy's! But there are other opportunities to help with this year's golf tournament. Areas of need include: Consider sponsoring a hole. More detail on costs will follow. We would like for a business to support the event through the use of a truck. A U-haul truck has been used in the past. I believe the truck needs to be enclosed so that the swag, food, and various items don't get stolen or wet. [Dates needed: Figure Friday at noon to Sunday at noon.] Volunteer to be there early in the morning to help teams sign in. Volunteer to be there early in the morning to set up beer carts (never a bad chore). We'll need help setting up and clean-up as well. And of course, out-right donations towards the procurement of golf carts are welcomed. Check your business contacts and see if they are willing to donate towards the golf carts.

Where do the monies go? The event brings in monies and donations. As you would expect, there are green fees, and some operating expenses such as the wages for the chefs catering the event. After these expenses are paid, the plan is for \$500 to be placed into the GNBC account, \$500 to the GNBC Christmas Party, \$500 to the chosen charity, and the remainder towards the purchase and getting the golf cart delivered. How's that for transparent and up front governance?

We want your help to make this a success. The above is a general guideline as we will make refinements to the program over the next month. If you have questions or know how you want to help, please contact Bruce Mills @ 250-7565 or myself (hall_ce@yahoo.com).



2009 Kenai Bus Trip Report

by Kerri Kanepa

To say that the bus trip down to the Kenai Peninsula March 27-29 was adventurous would be an understatement. The group gathered at John Craig's home Friday morning where we first toasted our dearly departed and sorely missed GNBC member Dave Yanoshek with several bottles of Viking. After a spell of "cat herding", we boarded the bus and headed out at about 10 am. After taking a brief pit stop in Girdwood, we got about three miles out of town and got stopped along with a bunch of other people heading south. Seems there had been a planned avalanche event. I'm all for them shooting howitzers at mountain peaks especially this time of year because no one needs to get caught by a spontaneous avalanche. After we sat there for a while sipping beer and hiking down the road a bit to see what was up, we were told by the troopers that it might be sometime between 3 and 5 before the avalanche got cleared away. So we turned around and went back to Girdwood where we spent the next five or so hours at Chair 5 drinking, eating and playing pool. To kill time small groups would go for a walks around the community but otherwise it was lots of thumb twiddling.



Gratuitous beer notes: Chair 5 has a surprisingly good tap list and at \$4/pint for most beers, quite a bargain. Their bottle list was good, too. Check out their beverage list on their website: <http://www.chairfive.com/beverages.html>. The surprise happening beer spot in Girdwood turns out to be the Silvertip Grill just a door or two down from the Mercantile. They don't seem to have more than six tap lines, but they were all quality. The bottle list features Unibroue products. Check out their beverage list here: <http://www.silvertipgrill.com/menu.html>. The owner is starting to consider turning the place into a brewpub so keep your ears open for further developments.



About 4 pm, most of us had gravitated back to the bus (which was idling) and I made yet another call to check the road conditions only to find out that the avalanche was cleared. Woo-hoo! We quickly gathered up and boarded. As the bus driver slowly started to back us out - the bus dies. And he can't get it started. The driver tries for a few minutes and then hauls out a charger. He continues to try and then decides to go to the Mercantile for a couple bottles of Heet. We wait while Todd and Paul throw snowballs at the bus. The bus driver returns, dumps in the Heet, everyone gets into rocking the bus but it still won't start. This necessitates a call to the company in Anchorage and they say they'll send another vehicle. Back to thumb twiddling. An hour and a half go by

and what shows up? A black stretch Hummer. I am not making that up. I can say with authority that fourteen people can fit into a stretch Hummer but it's more than cozy and it's not at all comfortable for anyone who is over 5'10" and weighs more than 170 lbs. Which would have been most of the men on this trip. Nevertheless, we clear out the bus, move the trailer from the bus and

to the Hummer and off we go. I have no earthly idea what time we actually got on the road but it was probably close to 6 by then. The avalanche, by the way, was pretty substantial. It was about 25 ft deep and 100 wide when it crossed the road. No wonder it took so long to clear.

We were scheduled to visit two places on Friday (St Elias and Kassiks) but through many phone calls back and forth, we only ended up getting to St Elias and even then, it was about 9 pm. Once we got seated, Zach (the owner and brewer) split the group into two and gave tours. He's looking at getting some bigger fermenters in the near future as demand for his beer keeps increasing. Once summer hits, he plans to increase the hours of the brewpub to include lunch. He had several beers on tap but what got everyone's attention was a Baltic porter that's still finishing. Zach says he tastes it every few days but it's not quite ready. Someone joked that if he keeps that up, there might not be any left to put on tap! Our dinners got served while the second group was touring but they ended up sweeping around us by the time we were paying to leave at 10:20 (closing time was 10).



We checked into the motel and fell to bed. I had told everyone we were getting on the road to go to breakfast by 8 because we added Kassiks to the Saturday itinerary. In the morning, we're all pretty much ready by 8 so we troop down to the trailer with bags in hand, the bus driver puts the key in the lock on the trailer - and it snaps off in the lock. Okey dokey, now we're to Plan M having flown past Plan B some time back. It's decided that everyone will check out but me and we load the luggage in that room then the bus driver drops us off for breakfast (and causing much excitement over the Hummer) before he heads off to Fred Meyer to look for a grinder. He returns before we're done eating with a new lock on the trailer. We pile in and head off to Kassiks after going back to the motel and retrieving our luggage.

We quickly came to understand the power of the Hummer. Everywhere we went; people would stop what they were doing and stare at it. Cars driving past it would stop, turn around, pull up next to it and everyone would get out and snap some pictures before driving off. Many of the brewers we visited just had to poke their heads in and have a look around. I think we were the most exciting going on the Kenai Peninsula all weekend long.

When we arrived at Kassik's Kenai Brew Stop, Frank Kassik was doughing in diligently. Deb cordially welcomed us and gave us each a very nice tasting glass with their logo printed on it as a gift. Once he got to a stopping point, Frank talked about his background and gave a short history of the brewery. Seems the brewery got started around the purchase of a refrigerated trailer. Who knew? We toured the fermenter room and the cooler as Frank talked about expansion ideas. Deb tried to get us to start malty and work our way to the hops but most of us abandoned that after getting a taste of the oatmeal stout and the smoked imperial stout. And besides, they were out of their IPA anyway (that's what was on the brewing schedule that day!). After plenty of samples and purchases of beer, glassware, t-shirts and stuff, we rolled back on the Hummer in a fine humor. Next stop, Homer...



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To be continued in the May issue!

For a look at photos from the trip, visit the GNBC Group on Facebook and click on Photos.

“FACEBOOK” Networking Nirvana

by *Dennis Sessler*

Hello all fellow GNBCer's, I hope the wonderful late winter is treating everyone well. I hope everyone has their carboys full or getting there soon. I was asked to submit this article by Kerri Canepa our beloved Vice prez, to inform all club members of a new or maybe not so new way to network with friends, family, and most importantly other GNBC members and people in the beer community. Facebook is an internet based network that is very simple to sign up for. It is free of cost and allows members to converse, instant message, post pictures, videos, links and much more that I don't have space to write about. I was invited by a friend from the homebrew club about a month ago to join, and since have compiled over 190 friends, mostly family and classmates, most of them I have not had contact with in almost 20 years "reunion time." One day I decided to begin a new group based solely around the homebrew club. I wanted a way to blog the club without inundating their e-mails with messages. As the originator of the group, I am also the administrator, not a job that I wanted, but oh well more on this later.

It works like this, get on your computer and go to www.facebook.com, sign up and go to the group section and search for the Great Northern Brewers Club. Add yourself to the club and you will have access to up-to-date info like never before.

Our club newsletter and the clubs e-mail messages do a great job of notify all members of issues pertaining to official club events both past and present. Facebook give access to info both past and present that are unable to be compiled in the monthly newsletter or inappropriate to be email blogged to the membership at large. This is a club orientated group so all beer/mead and cider comments and posts are more than welcome. Recently pictures of a past beer diner were added for all to see. Say that you were brewing this weekend and wanted to invite members over to help or watch. This would be a great way to reach out to our newer members at large. Do you have a brew question that you need answered? Your answer could be seconds away. Would you like to let others know what you will be brewing this weekend? Do you need help picking and crushing all those apples and pears this fall? Do you have some brew equipment that you would like to sell? Say I'm heading down to the Snow Goose or Humpy's for some of their awesome halibut tacos, and want to invite club members to come on down and play a little ring toss or listen to some great music in the company of friends, then Facebook is the place. If you go on vacation and you have some cool pictures/ info that you would love to share about breweries/wineries, feel free to slap a post on the board. Have you had a great commercial sample and want all members to get the skinny? Then post it.

There is an official link to our clubs website for easy access. You will also find links to a plethora of both local and not so local breweries and classy liquor stores. For the businesses that are having specials, new releases, and open houses please feel free to post. The possibilities are endless. I only have one request that we keep this group, club orientated, please no political post and post that have nothing to do with beer/mead and cider. If you feel so inclined to add such items they will be deleted.

GNBC Summer Camp Out

by *Tim Bisson*

Mark your calendar's for the Annual GNBC Summer Campout!!

Where: Eklutna Lake Group Campsite A (The old air strip)

When: Friday June 12th (noon) – Sunday June 14th (noon)

How much: Free! (for your wallet, not your liver)

Saturday's dinner will be pot luck style. The dinner's theme is to be determined. Feel free to email me suggestions at tbisson123@yahoo.com. GNBC will be providing meat for Saturday's dinner as well. More details on dinner and activities will be provided next month.





Home on the Range

by John "Suds" Craig

Howdy. Today I'm back in Anchorage, Home Sweet Home, and back is my own Jade Street Beer Gardens. I truly missed my smoke brews back in the beer den. This Snow Bird was in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, which is the beginning of the end of the world in this part of the land. Truth or Consequences lays along the banks of the Rio Grand River with Turtle Back Mountain looking down on it. It's my twelfth winter in this wonderful small southwest town. I have hot springs to soak in fifty feet from my front door late at night with my big fat plastic beer mug. Here in Anchorage, I sometimes miss the sound of the doves as the sun is rising over the Turtle Back.

Nowadays, in my old age, retired, and on vacation, I find this as my new home for the winter. When it gets up to 90 degrees, it's Jade Street or Talkeetna that I'm thinking about, believe it or not. I now hang out in the coffee shops with a bagel in my hand, strange but true, but I drink no beer until high noon. For me, there's no more happy hour at Rocky's bar. I miss the 7 am until 9 am happy hour with a tomato juice combo for the true beer hangover from the night before. Amen. Sometimes cowboys can't stop drinking beer. Even this Alaskan loves beer. I think I was nursed with Coors growing up in Colorado. My first batch of homebrew was in 1965. It was hijacked by my old girlfriend. I remember the bottles blowing up in her basement. Today my goal in life is to explore all the beers in the world, and spread Peace on Earth. How many beers will that take?

Happy hour nowadays consists of \$2 mugs of beer or \$3 for a small pitcher. That's a good deal at the local private clubs along the Rio Grand. The V.F.W. or Moose, Elks and American Legion are good places for cheap beer too. It seems like the tap lines are getting much better with a better selection; most of the beers are from the Budweiser family. I heard that you can't find Coors on tap anymore in New Mexico, and this state is even next to Colorado. If that's so, what a shame.

Today it is 90 degrees. I'm at the V.F.W. with a small pitcher of "Bud" Shock Top Belgian style wheat beer: its super great. The bartender hung an orange slice on the rim of the glass; I could smell fruits in the nose of the beer. The body was hazy cloudy like a Hefeweizen style. It was tart, dry, sweet, sour, and fruity. Did I forget anything? It hit the spot for the couple hours of beer drinking with the Vets.

I was also a beer drinking sailor in the Navy. I've been beer drinking all my life. I love beer. The west is still wild. Today, "Bud" is like Billy the Kid, it's out to kill Coors and Miller in this part of the southwest.

For the winter this is a great place to be with family. I have made lots of friends over the years. Rocky's Bar is now closed down; they sold their liquor license to Wal-Mart for \$250,000.00. It's now the Pine Knot Saloon or Buck Horn Bar. Its fun watching the cowboys roll around the dance floor fighting over a woman as I drink my beer.

I'm glad to be home. I hope to see you at the Brew-A-Thon.

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 \$25 to:

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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:

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**NEXT MEETING: April 21st, 2009
7:00 P.M. at the Goose**