



THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

APRIL 2010

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Prez Sez

by *Dennis Sessler*

Personally speaking, it's like a week has barely passed since writing last month's article. The weather has not improved much; a few more snowfalls and, may I add, slowly melting away. Breakup is definitely taking its time. One good thing about this time of year is all the daylight. Hopefully all the snow will start to disappear quickly and I can get on with all my outdoor brewing activities.



As I write this article I am enjoying a pint of Kassik's Smoked Russian Imperial Stout. My mind is all over the place trying to put into words everything that gets tossed my way about this time every month. There is so much to say and never enough time for me to do them all justice. By the time the members at large are reading this, about 30 or so of your fellow brew club members will be recovering from a fun filled weekend up in Talkeetna. I want to thank Boe Barnett of Denali Brewing Co. and of course our own John Craig for coming up with this relaxing spring time event for our beloved club. I hope this was a success for Denali Brewing Co., Twister Creek Restaurant and all the local lodging establishments who opened their doors to the best homebrew club in Alaska! On behalf of the GNBC I thank all of you for your hospitality.

The first weekend of April the Snow Goose will be sponsoring the Spring Breakup Homebrew Competition. We will be reprinting Dan Bosch's March last call article, so get your beers ready to enter. See Dan's article for all the particulars. Please come down and judge, steward, or just hang around and see who will win the Best of Show title. It's always tense around the Best of Show judges as they decide the winner and then pick the beer which will be brewed commercially at Sleeping Lady Brewery. Rumor has it the beer will be brewed and ready in the middle of May. I can't wait; it just may be my co-brewed beer!

If you were fortunate enough to attend the March 16th GNBC club meeting, the educational part of the meeting was about BJCP style 17 B., Flanders Red Ale. All members were served some very fine commercial examples and I gave a little history of the style, the prominent breweries, and also of the BJCP style guidelines. You will find the informational presentation in its entirety in this newsletter for all who missed it. This presentation was a prelude of what's to come for our club. A club brew has been scheduled for April 17th. We have our work cut out; we need to brew about 80-85 gallons of a stylistic Flanders Red to be fermented in a 85 gallon fermentation vessel in my garage, then racked into a waiting wine barrel for it long journey to sourdom. Yes, this club brew won't be done for a while.

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

GNBC WEB SITE:
WWW.GREATNORTHERNBREWERS.ORG

NEWSLETTER EMAIL
bushy@alaska.com

PRESIDENT: DENNIS SESSLER
sessak@mtaonline.net

VICE PRESIDENT: STEVE SCHMITT
sschmitt@alaska.com

TREASURER: BRECK TOSTEVIN
keegan@gci.net

SECRETARY: JEN BISSON
suncluster1@yahoo.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JIM LAMB
jlamb@anmc.org

JOHN TRAPP
johnctrapp@hotmail.com

JOE MICHAEL
joeofak@gmail.com

TIM BISSON
tbisson123@yahoo.com

TIM STRAYER
tim@strayermail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
DEBBIE GRECCO
bushy@alaska.com

NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR
KERRI CANEPA
kacanepa@uwalumni.com

Most commercial examples take 12-18 months minimum. But with patience and time this beer will develop those signature flavors and esters that so many enjoy. We are still looking for members to volunteer for this massive brew. All beer will be brewed on the 17th, and the big ferment will commence. If you are interested in getting in on this club brew please email me at sessak@mtaonline.net to get on the list.

First thing next month, John and Rose Craig will be welcoming the GNBC back to their digs for the annual Brew-A-Thon. Please see Tim Strayer's article about this event and if you're available, volunteer to make this a memorable event. For me, this is the beginning of summer, (work wise). I enjoy this event every year, and I am looking forward to brewing at least one mead and possible two beers. Tim will be keeping track of all the beer brewed as we attempt to brew more beer than any other home brew club in the nation.

Soon after Brew-A-Thon GNBC members Karl and Deb Morgan will be venturing down to Haines, Alaska for the Great Alaskan Craft Beer and Home Brew Festival. Check out his article about the festival, and getting your entries submitted for the competition. He's offering to drag them through Canada on his vacation down to Haines. Free shipping doesn't sound too bad does it; on second thought, Karl might be charging a few homebrews in order to guarantee that your entries are safely delivered. A man needs some beer on an 18-20 hour cruise in and out of Canada.

Upcoming events to put up on you calendar. GNBC Summer Camp out. June 25-27th. Keep an eye out for Joe Michaels upcoming article about this annual event.

The E.T. Barnett Home Brew Competition will be held on July 17th in Fox, Alaska. There will be more information to come on this worthy event.

Our July meeting/picnic will take place at Jeff Loughery's home, date and time TBD.

And finally the Humpy's/GNBC Golf Tournament will be on July 24th. Volunteers are always needed for this fun filled event. Jason Ditsworth and Mike Hartman will be steering the ship this year. Keep an eye out for upcoming emails and articles in the newsletters for information about playing in and volunteering for this event.

Well, I can finally say that I have the educational events for the next few months all scheduled. The April meeting on the 20th, GNBC member Bill Luskutoff will be giving the club some pointers on riddling. Yes, the art of turning bottles to force dregs into the neck prior to making sparkling wine. I'm sure there are more reasons than that and Bill will have us all up to speed on the proper way of *method Champenoise*. John Trapp will be giving the informational segment on May 18th. Topic will be Oktoberfest beers; brewing, lagering, and drinking. John makes a mean O'fest; I'm thirsty already and am ready to taste his latest batch.

In the Homebrewing Gadget article this month I made a CIP keg cleaner. Catch this one; it will save you a ton of time cleaning and sanitizing all the corny kegs you have.

New GNBC Club Sponsors; yes, that's right, your membership is even more valuable. Board member Tim Strayer has secured two sponsors that will require your membership card in order to receive a 10% discount. Both business share common ownership, the first is **Dimond Liquor** located at 1901 W Dimond Blvd. It's located just west of the Minnesota interchange. The second local establishment is the **Wine House** located at 8841 Jewel Lake Road. It's located just north of Dimond near Jewel Lake Bowling Alley. The third sponsor just contacted me about posting the GNBC location on their business's webpage brew club map. The name of this business is **www.kegcowboy.com**; it is an online website that deals with kegging supplies. Their prices are very reasonable and you will receive a discount if you input coupon

code **CO2+BEER=:**) at check out. Send them an email and request USPS as the shipping option. Please remember to show patronage to all of our sponsors, be proud to be a club member, show your membership card and receive your discounts.

And on a serious final note I received an email from a member about a very worthy cause. It's called "Pints for Prostates". Pints for Prostates is a grassroots campaign that uses the universal language of beer to reach men with an important health message. Founded by prostate cancer survivor Rick Lyke in 2008, the campaign raises awareness among men about the need for regular health screenings and PSA testing by making appearances at beer festivals, social networking and pro bono advertising. Pints for Prostates has registered as a 501(c)(3) charity and 100% of all funds raised by the group go to fighting prostate cancer and assisting men with the disease. Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network, a 501(c)(3) charity that works to support, educate and advocate for men with prostate cancer and their families, is a recipient of Pints for Prostates financial support. Please go to www.lyke2drink.com/pints/ for more information. I will be doing some research to see if there are any worthy causes for the female gender associated with beer. I could come up with several catchy website names but will digress. In all seriousness, please take your health check-ups serious so we can all enjoy everyone's company for many years to come. Till we meet again, please think before you drink and BrewOn!



Mead Judging Class- April 18th

by Mike Kiker

A second mead judging class sponsored by Celestial Meads and Cafe Amsterdam is scheduled for Sunday, April 18th 5:00-8:00p. The charge for this class is \$20.00. Please call Cafe Amsterdam at 274-0074 to make reservations. Attendance is limited and the class is currently half full, so make your reservations soon. You will sample 5-6 meads and snacks will be provided by Cafe Am. Topics to be covered are;

- *History of Mead
- *Comparison of Mead to Beer and Wine
- *Components of Traditional Meads
- *Judging Procedures and Forms
- *Undesirable Flavors
- *Components of Melomels
- *Aging
- *Components of Metheglin
- *Braggots



EVENTS

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Thursday

Midnight Sun Brewery Tour:

6:00 PM 344-1179

18.....*Mead Judging Class at Cafe Amsterdam.*

20.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the Goose*

22.....*Beartooth Theaterpub 10th Anniversary Party*

01.....*Brewathon at John and Rose's House.*

01.....*Southeast Alaska Craft Beer Festival and Homebrewing Competition in Haines*

15.....*Midnight Sun Brewing Company 15th Anniversary Party*

20.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the Goose*

25-27.....*GNBC Summer Camp Out at Eklutna Lake*

17.....*ET Barnette Homebrew Competition in Fairbanks*

24.....*GNBC Golf Tournament at Moose Run*



National Homebrew Day: The Brew-a-thon

By *Tim Strayer*

It's that time of year again when brew clubs across the entire United States (and locations around the world) celebrate their passion for beer by joining together for a day of brewing.

Beginning in 1988, the United States Congress recognized the first Saturday in May as National Homebrew Day. The American Homebrewers Association created "Big Brew" as an annual event to celebrate National Homebrew Day. Big Brew has been held every year since this formal declaration by Congress, and the Great Northern Brewers continues to celebrate this history as well by holding an event we call "Brew-A-Thon". This event also provides the opportunity for experienced homebrewers to share hands-on knowledge with those who desire to learn for the first time, or improve their current skills.

This year Brew-A-Thon will be held at John and Rose Craig's house (the same place it has been held for the last 9 years), located at 8757 Jade Street. The ceremonial toast and brewing kickoff will take place at 9:00 a.m. and last until John kicks us out. However, if you will be providing brewing equipment, please arrive at 8:00 a.m. to allow enough time for setup. Thank you in advance to John and Rose for providing the wonderful brewing grounds!

We will have several brewing stations available for brewing. A signup sheet will be at Arctic Brewing Supply (ABS) for those who don't have equipment to brew under the guidance of an experienced brewer or an experienced brewer can choose to donate their equipment and/or demonstrate actual brewing, and, of course you can just show up to observe as well. We will have stations brewing with both extract and all-grain. If you are unable to make it over to signup, please send me an email at tim@strayermail.com and I can sign you up.

Here is the scoop on food and drink: All brewers should bring samples of their own homebrew to share. It's a great opportunity to get some feedback on your brews. The club will be providing various grilled meats and some beverages, but we do request that those who come bring your favorite dish (with the necessary serving utensil) to share.

For more information about National Homebrew Day take a look at the AHA website: <http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/pages/events/national-homebrew-day>

Come join us for a day of great education and good times!

2010 Homebrewer of The Year Categories

Fur Rendezvous HBC

- Category 12
- Category 18
- Category 19
- Category 23
- Category 28

Snow Goose HBC

- Category 1
- Category 3
- Category 4
- Category 6
- Category 16

Anchor Town HBC

- Category 7
- Category 10
- Category 13
- Category 15
- Category 27

Equinox Mead HBC

- Category 24
- Category 25
- Category 26

Humpy's Big Fish HBC

- Category 2
- Category 5
- Category 9
- Category 14
- Category 22



Beer, it's what's for dinner!

by Julie McDonald

Just a quick note this month...

The March dinner was another success. Thanks to all who participated. Unfortunately I was not in attendance so can't give the play by play, but I can imagine that it was fun and filling evening!

The April dinner is planned and filled already! It takes place April 24 at the home of Pat and Mark Ryan. The theme is Memphis BBQ! We have several courses of ribs and beer and several with beans and beer. Should be another great dinner!

We are in the process of planning a dinner for May. The host and date have been set. We are just working out the theme details. Be on the lookout for these announcements, via email, in mid April.

If you are not already a member of the GNBC's monthly beer dinner group and want to be, all you need do is contact me at juzy@gci.net or by text or phone at 240-3688.

Announcements for new dinners are put out monthly. They are filled on a first come, first served basis. You don't need to know what your food and beer selections will be in order to reserve your spot. Just pick a course and let me know you want it ASAP! Spots go fast!

Well alrighty then! Here's to another month closer to fishing season!

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



Homebrewing Gadgets – CIP for Cornies

by Dennis Sessler

For this month's article I built a cornie keg cleaner. One of the most tedious parts of homebrewing is cleaning. It is no doubt the most important step to making quality beer, mead or cider. Without sanitary conditions it's only a matter of time before your fermented treasure will go bad. I first saw this design on the internet; it is a very simple design that took about 15 minutes to assemble and has shaved hours off the cleaning time needed to disassemble, brush, soak, sanitize and purge.

All of my cornie kegs have been rebuilt with all new gaskets and seals. Before reinstalling the new seal a thorough soaking to removal all visibly soiled areas is the first step to proper storage and serving your beverage of choice. Prior to making this CIP (Clean In Place) device, I was breaking down, brushing inside and out, rinsing, sanitizing then purging the tank with CO2. It was very time consuming to say the least.

The parts list goes like this.

- 1/6 HP submersible water pump
- Brass 5/8 Female Garden Hose X 1/2 inch hose barb
- Brass tee with 3 - 3/8" FPT
- 1 each - 3/8" MPT X 1/2" hose barb
- 2 each - 3/8" MPT X 1/4" hose barb
- 2 foot of 1/4" ID braided reinforced hose
- 3 foot of 1/2" ID braided reinforced hose
- 1 each gas and beer disconnect with 1/4" hose barb
- Required hose clamps to secure all hoses onto the barbs.



After assembling this from the discharge port of the pump into the tee, measure out and cut the 1/4" hose leaving enough slack in the line to easily connect the hose while circulating cleaner and sanitizer. See pictures below on the assembly of the hose tee. The pump that I bought will pump 1200 GPH. In essence this thing is a turbo washer on steroids. All I did was open up the dirty kegs drain and rinse out the residue. Connect both the gas and beer quick disconnects to the keg and turn on the pump. Make sure not to run the pump low on water; it could cause damage to the pump itself. My cleaning solution was a blend of PBW



(Powdered Brewery Wash) mixed with the hottest water my tap could produce, 130F. The pump was turned on, and circulated out the top manhole and allowed to run out and down back to the pump. After all my kegs were cleaned in this fashion, I discarded the cleaning solution and filled the tub with straight hot water to run every keg back through a rinsing cycle. After all kegs were rinsed an iodophor solution was made up and all kegs went through about 5 minutes of circulating sanitizer through the kegs. All Keg lids were then sealed up as the pump was running. The pump was shut off and disconnected. I used CO2 and a cobra tap to purge all sanitizer from my kegs back into the tub. After the kegs are purged, remember to smear a little keg lube, back on your post seals to make hooking up those disconnects much smoother.

There are many cleaners and sanitizers available to get your kegs back in shape. Just remember not to use any chlorine products. Also use all cleaners and sanitizers at manufactures recommended concentrations. I cleaned nine 5 gallon cornie's and one 10 gallon in about 2 hours time. All are now ready to keg and carbonate all my beers, meads and ciders. The PBW I used removed beer stone in the bottom of two kegs. A small amount of beer was left inside, which made the first step take a little longer. As a word of caution wear gloves and glasses when dealing with the chemical used to CIP any piece of brewing equipment. My hand lost at least one layer of skin and my wedding ring is shining like never before. Other cleaners I would recommend would be TSP; I would go a little more aggressive on the cleaning phase. As long as you're not deteriorating the seals in the keg or the pump I would recommend the most powerful cleaner available. When it comes to sanitizers; iodophor and Starsan product all work well in pumping situations. Find the combination that works best and get into a routine of cleaning your kegs sooner than later, your beer will thank you in the future.



Great Alaska Craft Beer and Home Brew Festival

by *Karl Morgan*

The Great Alaska Craft Beer and Home Brew Festival is coming up on the 28th -29th of May. I am planning to leave on the 22nd of May for a combined mini vacation and the beer festival and to help out with the judging for the competition. If you are interested in sending beers or meads to the competition I will be picking up all of your entries at the GNBC meeting on the 18th of May. I have also checked with Arctic Brewing Supply and they have agreed to accept entries. Last year the competition had 80 entries; it would be great to have more entries submitted from the brew club. Last year over 750 people attended the festival and it sounds like it will be getting even larger with over 100 beers on tap and more breweries scheduled to attend. Please feel free to contact me and I will be glad to deliver your entries to the competition. I can be reached at either of these numbers 688-4390 home or on my cell at 862-8332. If you have any questions about the competition please contact Rachael Juzeler of Alaskan Brewing Company at qualitycontrol@alaskanbeer.com or rjuzeler@alaskanbeer.com.



18th
Haines, Alaska
GREAT ALASKA CRAFT BEER AND HOME BREW FESTIVAL
2010

NEEDS YOU TO JUDGE BEER

When: Friday, May 28 10 am
Where: S.E. Alaska State Fairgrounds, Haines

RSVP (required):
Rachael Juzeler
qualitycontrol@alaskanbeer.com or
(907) 780-5866

STAY TUNED
FOR S.E. BEER WEEK EVENTS
prior to
BEER DINNER FRIDAY &
BEER FESTIVAL SATURDAY
IN HAINES

AHA & BJCP CERTIFIED



18th
Haines, Alaska
GREAT ALASKA CRAFT BEER AND HOME BREW FESTIVAL
May 28th and 29th
2010

Friday: Gourmet Beer Banquet 6pm
Haines Hall at the Fairgrounds
\$60/Plate. Reservations required*

Saturday: Beer Festival, Food and Live Music
1pm. Open Dutton City at the Fairgrounds
No reservations. Bring your own table sheet.

Free Shuttle to downtown after the event
ID required. No children. No dogs.

*For reservations or to buy your ticket online:
www.seakfair.org or fairdirector@aptalaska.net or 907.766.2476

2010 National Homebrew Toast and Brewathon

by *John "SUDS" Craig*

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 1strd 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.

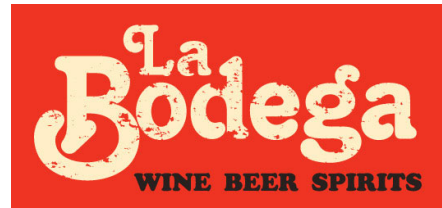
As always, there will be a BBQ/Potluck all day long, so bring along something for the grill and something to share with others, and don't forget your stash of homebrew. What makes the event great is a big array of something people can dip into, throw on the grill and toss on a plate while drinking great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

Secretary's Corner

by Jennifer Bisson



What we learned at the last meeting?

Dennis Sessler gave a great talk about Flanders Red Ale (AND he brought in samples!). Check out his article for more information.

What happened since or at the last meeting?

March 26-28. Several GNBC members got out of town for "Talkeetna Beer Trippin." Can't wait to hear some of the stories!

What is happening now?

Saturday, April 3. The Snow Goose Break-Up home brewing competition. Take a look at Dan's article for more information.

April 17. The GNBC homebrewing team will be brewing a Flanders Red Ale. Brew at home and dump your wort in the team fermenter at Dennis Sessler's house. See Dennis Sessler for more information on how to join in this collective brew.

What does the future hold?

Sunday, April 18. Mead Judging Class will be held at Café Amsterdam. Mike Kiker, Celestial Meads Mead master, and others will cover history, styles of Mead and judging information. Contact Café Amsterdam @ 274-0074 to join the class.

Saturday, May 1. Brew-a-thon! Demonstration brews, grilled meat and interesting conversation at John and Rose Craig's house at 8757 Jade Street. National Homebrewing toast at 9 am. See Tim Strayer's article for more information.

Memorial Day. Haines Brewfest. See Karl Morgan's article for more information. Since he is going, he can carry your homebrew entries.

June 25-27. Summer "Luau" Campout at Eklutna Lake. Wear your tropical skirts and coconut bikini tops. More information next month.

July 17. ET Barnett Homebrewing competition in Fox, Alaska. Judges and Stewards receive LOTS of beer schwag and great hot sauce.

July Picnic. A GNBC summer tradition. More information next month.

July 24. Golf Tourney Moose Run up Arctic Valley Rd. See Jason Ditsworth or Mike Hartman for more information.

August. Anchortown Invitational. See John Trapp for more information.

Do you like pairing beer with your meals? Join in the fun at one of the upcoming in-home beer dinners or host one at your own home. Contact Julie at juzy@gci.net for more information.

Do you like trying new beers? If you have plenty of experience or none at all find out how you can be a beer judge at one of the 2010 homebrew competitions. Make this year your year to get involved!

Wow, have you heard about the White Labs vial redemption prizes? 5000 vials and Chris White will come to your house and brew with you. See the web-site http://www.whitelabs.com/beer/homebrew_customerclub.html for more information.

Important Dates in Beer History

April 23, 1516. Hoorah for Reinheitsgebot! This Bavarian law, enacted by Bavarian Duke Wilhelm IV (a.k.a. William IV), states that beer may contain only three ingredients: barley, hops, and water. Yeast was added as an "allowed" ingredient until the 20th century.

LAST CALL! Snow Goose Break-up

by Dan Bosch

The competition will be held on April 3, 2010 in the basement of the Snow Goose. Remember the Break-up is only open to the following BJCP categories: 1 (light lagers), 3 (European amber lagers), 4 (dark lagers), 6 (light hybrids) 16 (Belgian and French) and the brewers challenge the Noir Wit. There will be a best of show, and a brewer's choice, both to be chosen during the BOS round, and these may not be the same beer. The brewer's choice will be brewed by the pros at the Snow Goose, and featured on their deck this summer. This is someone's chance to brew with the pros at the Snow Goose and have bragging rights with their friends.

Entries will be accepted at the Snow Goose (in the basement) on Friday April 2nd from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. There will be no entry fee for this competition, so enter as many beers as you can. If you want to be one step ahead of the game you can find BJCP entry forms at http://www.bjcp.org/docs/SCP_EntryRecipe.pdf and have this already filled out, or you can wait until you arrive at the Snow Goose and use the club's copies.



Don't forget, you will need to provide three 12 oz. bottles for each entry. If you are unable to drop them off during this time, please contact me to make other arrangements. I can be reached at the following email address, skibosch@gmail.com.

Judging will begin at the Snow Goose at 10:00 a.m. sharp on Saturday April 3rd. This competition is an AHA/BJCP sanctioned event and we will need all the judging help we can get, so please show up about 9:45 a.m. if you'd like to help so you can be assigned to a flight.

Good luck and may the best brewer win.



Great North Brewers Club (GNBC) Board Meeting Minutes

by Jennifer Bisson

3/26/2010

Attendees:

President - Dennis Sessler

Treasurer - Breck Tostevin

Secretary - Jennifer Bisson

Board Member - Tim Bisson

Board Member - Jim Lamb

Board Member - Joe Michael

Board Member - Tim Strayer

NOTICE: This will be the last GNBC board meeting until late summer/Fall 2010

Discussion:

1. Talkeetna HBC
 - a. 3rd week-end in March
 - i. non-AHA competition
 - ii. 3-bottle entries will be accepted and NOT labeled with style categories.
 - iii. Judges will be Talkeetna locals
 - iv. Entries will be judged on taste and not subjected to style guidelines.
 - v. First place will receive special Talkeetna reward
 - vi. GNBC members invited to celebrate in Talkeetna during HBC week-end
 1. Accommodations will be the responsibility of the member
 2. Family friendly
 3. Dinner will be provided by the Talkeetna HBC organizers
 4. A local musician will play
2. Snowgoose Spring breakup HBC
 - a. Organizer will be Dan Bosch
 - i. Side challenge will be a Black Witt
3. GNBC club homebrew
 - a. Flanders Red Brew
 - b. April 17
 - c. Brew at your own house and dump wort in Dennisí fermenter.
4. National Homebrew Day/Brew-A-Thon
 - a. Will be hosted at the Craigís house but will be organized with aid of board member, Tim Strayer
 - i. Volunteers needed to support mentor and structured brews.
 1. Signup sheet will be at Arctic Brewing Supply.
 - ii. 10 stations for brewing sessions (extract and all-grain)
 1. Solicit for brewing equipment so others can try before they buy.
5. Summer Camp-Out
 - a. June 25-27
 - b. Will be held at Eklutna.
 - c. Theme = iLuauí
 - d. Organized by Joe Michael
 - e. The group pass has been purchased.
6. ET Barnett HBC
 - a. July 17
 - b. Fox, Alaska
7. July Picnic
 - a. No specific date yet
 - b. Jeff Loughery will organize
8. Golf tourney
 - a. July 24 at Moose Run (Arctic Valley Rd)
 - b. Organizers are Mike Hartman and Jason Ditsworth
 - c. Volunteers will be needed
 - i. A sign-up sheet will be used instead of vocal agreements
9. Educational topic brainstorm for fall 2010.
10. Anchortown Invitational.
 - a. John Trapp will lead

D I M O N D
L I Q U O R

Flanders Red Ale/Flemish Red Ale/ Burgundy of Belgium



Flemish – Flanders what's in a name? Here's a little history!

Known as the Burgundy of Belgium this style is more wine-like than any other beer style. The reddish color is a product of the grist although the traditional less-than-rolling boil may also add a reddish hue. The extended aging in wood may also darken the beer. Some examples can have a moderate cherry note in the flavor.

The style is indigenous to West Flanders. The beer can be aged for two or more years, traditionally in large oak vats. Blending of young and old batches can be used to increase the smoothness and complexity of the resultant blend. Instead of blending the aged version is sometimes released by the breweries as a connoisseur's beer. For example Rodenbach Grand Cru is the well-aged beer with just a touch of sugar added before pasteurization. It is common for breweries to use a different recipe for the aging beer than for the young beer used for blending.

The style uses microorganisms similar to those in lambic so apparent attenuation levels approaching 98% are likely. Apparent attenuation of 98% would result in a Flanders Red with a final gravity approaching 1.001, well below the BJCP style guidelines given below. The sweetness of some of the commercial examples available today is the result of blending with younger beer or even sugar or artificial sweeteners followed by pasteurization to stop the fermentation.

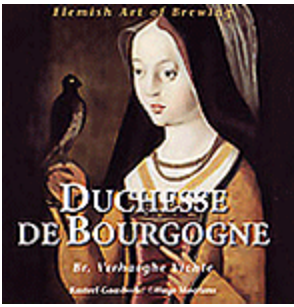
Brettanomyces strains of yeast are essential to developing the proper flavor and aroma characteristics of Flanders Red. Brettanomyces is a super-attenuating yeast; it will continue to ferment sugars and even dextrins for years. Most but not quite all the sugars in a beer containing Brettanomyces will eventually be consumed; since Brettanomyces needs a little sugar to survive it will leave just a little sugar around. Brett will produce both lactic and acetic acids though the production of acetic acid requires an aerobic environment (needs oxygen). Brett ferments best at lower pH such as found after primary fermentation by normal Saccharomyces. The Brettanomyces bruxellensis strain is the one most commonly associated with beer production.

Both Lactobacillus and Pediococcus are responsible for the production of lactic acid in Flanders Red. Lactobacillus can ferment with or without oxygen but prefers low levels of oxygen. Some lacto strains are very sensitive to hops and won't grow in the presence of hops. Pediococcus grows very slowly even under the best of conditions, it prefers no oxygen. Both pedio and lacto will stop growing as the alcohol levels rise in the beer.

Unlike a lambic beer, the Flanders Red must be racked after primary fermentation. If the beer was left on the lees (something that is required for lambic production) the autolyzing yeast would provide food for all the secondary organisms still in the wort and would result in too much growth of some of the organisms like lactobacillus. It is essential to rack the beer again before starting the long aging process to make sure there is no sediment left to autolyze and feed the slower growing organisms.

The standard mash process used to produce Flanders Red favors the rapid start of fermentation and favors the micro-organisms active early in the fermentation. The rapid start then leaves little nutrient for the slower growing organisms like Brettanomyces. This difference is the major reason the flavor profile of Flanders Red is so different from that of lambic. Lactobacillus will benefit from some starch in the wort for food later in the fermentation.

Classic production of Flanders Red depends on aging in wood vessels. Some commercial producers these days do ferment and age their beers in stainless steel vessels but the resultant beers are seen as lacking in complexity. Alternatives for homebrewers would include the addition of small pieces of wood into the fermenter during aging and even the deliberate use of various plastic fermenters to allow some oxygen to infuse into the beer during aging. The addition of oak cubes or staves to a carboy won't allow the infusion of oxygen but it will allow the beer to pick up some of the tannins and other flavor components from the wood.



DUCHESSE DE BOURGOGNE (6.2% ABV) is a traditional Flanders/Flemish red-ale style beer produced

by the Brouwerij Verhaeghe in Vichte, Belgium. Though stylistically a Flanders red, it shares characteristics with a sour lambic, too. The name of the beer is meant to honor Mary of Burgundy, a duchess and the sole daughter of Charles the Bold, born in Brussels in 1457, who died young in a horse riding accident.

After a primary and secondary fermentation, this ale is matured in oak barrels for 18 months (just like some wines). The final product is a blend of a younger 8-month-old beer and an older 18-month-old beer. Made from reddish malts and spicy hops with a low bitterness quotient, the resulting beer is a slightly sweet and fruity ale that has a beautifully pleasant sour finish that makes it both a beautiful meditation beer for serious beer aficionados, as well as an awesome "food" beer.



Brewery Rodenbach has specialized for 160 years brewing only specialty beers. All of them are brown sour ales.

Michael Jackson classifies them as the Red Ales of Flanders, although this is a name that isn't in use in Belgium itself. In Belgium those beers are rather classified as brown-sour ales. Rodenbach had a market share in 1994 of 90% of these beers. A brewer can only dream of this! But the whole market of this beer was only around 110000 HL., or just over 92,000 barrels US. In the US, such brewery should be a regional brewer.

What is special about the Rodenbach brewery is mainly the fermentation and more particular the third fermentation that takes place in huge oaken barrels for up to two years. The process of making and selling the Rodenbach beers will be discussed in the following text.

1. Raw Materials

The brewing water is gained in a restricted park area, the backyards of the Rodenbach castle. In this beautiful park, some wells are collected in an artificial lake. This water is adjusted to brewing water. The adjustments of the water mainly consist of: disinfection, filtering over sand and active carbon, ion exchange and an atmospherical degasser. Calcium hydroxide is added as the last treatment to remove temporary hardness.

The brewery had its own malting plant, which stopped in 1974. Beautiful parts of this floor malt-house can still be visited, for example the old germinating floors. The old kiln (1864) certainly is most special. The kiln tower would have been broken down, if English students wouldn't have been interested in it. It seemed to be the only still existing kiln typical for the northern England region. So better than reconstructing the kiln in England, the Rodenbach brewery started to restore the tower herself.

Wondering how this type of kiln was found in Roeselare brought Rodenbach back to a member of the family: Eugene Rodenbach. Eugene learned the job of brewer around 1860 in northern England. Returning to Rodenbach he copied two things he had seen: the kiln construction, but still more important is the way of making beer. During the time he was in England, a pub could buy fresh beer in a brewery. But there were traders who kept the beer for some years stored, and sold it for the double of the price. Visitors to a pub could drink the young or the old ale, or ask the bartender to blend both in a certain amount. The consumer paid respectively 2, 4 or 3 pence.

Brewers never have been so stupid and saw that there was a lot more to gain when they stored their ales themselves, or even better, blend it their selves. These should be the real roots of Porter beer in England. And this was what Eugene Rodenbach saw happening when he looked around in these English breweries.

So it isn't alone the kiln, who is the only remainder of his type. Maybe much more important than that is that Rodenbach should be the remainder of the roots of the English Porter! Worthwhile mentioning here is the Green King brewery in Bury-St-Edmonds, England. This brewery still uses these large upstanding oaken barrels for blending beer. Green King has still two barrels, covered with marl, where strong alcoholic ale age, without acid formation. The classic Rodenbach is really the beer of this blending Porter process more about that blending later on, in the third fermentation or aging.

Three kinds of malt are used to make the Rodenbach beers. All of them are color malts. Two are very slightly heated in a kiln, while one is shortly roasted in a drum. Different mixtures of these malts are used to make the two kinds of brews.

As starch adjunct corn grits is used in amounts around 10-12% for economical and taste aspects. Beer brewed with some starch adjunct gives a lighter, more digestible beer. Almost all Belgian beers use some corn grits or rice.

The hops used for Rodenbach are Belgian bitter hops. Belgium isn't a big hop producing country, but the main hop area, Poperinge, isn't so far..Rodenbach, being a sour beer, it doesn't need a lot of bitterness: 14-16 EBU. Varieties of Northern Brewer, Brewers Gold, Target and Yeoman are used.

A first thing in being special is that Rodenbach doesn't use single culture yeast. The yeast added to the Rodenbach wort is a collection of yeasts. This collection of yeasts is kept "infected" with a whole range of lactobacilli.

Such a collection of yeasts and lactobacilli is difficult to maintain. A stock culture of such a mixture would already be a selection. The only thing Rodenbach can do is to reuse this mixture over and over again. The only way Rodenbach has to keep the yeast "pure" is selection and washing. Selection starts by following the fermenting wort, to decide which yeast is going to be collected and in which amount. Washing yeast is a strong acidification of the yeast shortly before adding it to new wort. With this washing, a correction can be made in the number of lactobacilli compared to the number of viable yeasts. In Rodenbach we are talking about lactobacilli percentages.



To keep the yeast in a good condition, you have to brew enough this is a difficult for smaller brewers, who are trying to brew a Rodenbach like beers. To make sure that beers are good, Rodenbach provides yeast to these brewers, for every brew they make.

2. The Rodenbach process.

The Brewhouse dates back to 1920. This is remarkable because many breweries had to stop during the Second World War because of the German need for copper. Rodenbach was one of the breweries who could continue brewing, because soldiers had to be fed. The wartime beer wasn't that much because of the lack of raw material. Older brewers tell stories of Belgian brewers who came to Rodenbach to drink beer brewed before the war, with the usual raw materials. Thanks to the large stock of beers in oaken barrels Belgian brewers could survive the war. It was easy to mislead the Germans in this labyrinth of barrels.

Brewing isn't so special. Two kinds of brews are made: an 11 degree Plato (1044) and a 13.5 degree Plato (1055) wort. There is little difference in the way of brewing and fermenting, only the recipe for the malts and corn is slightly different. A brew starts with corn grits that is cooked up in a cereal cooker with some milled malt to provide the enzymes. Meanwhile the mash is started at 50C (122F) and heated to 63C (145F) and 72C (162F) with the cooked corn and a steam jacket (something between decoction and infusion method). The mash is filtered in a classical lauter tun and boiled 90 minutes with hop addition. Until 1992 a large coolship was used, but better trub separation and less infection risk are now reached with a centrifuge and heat exchanger. The wort is cooled to 17C (63F) and aerated with sterile air. One brew is 250 to 280 Hl about 250 US barrels. Every four hours a brew can be started.

Since early 1995, the first or main fermentation has been done in cilindro-conical fermenters. Before this period, fermentation took place in 110 Hl flat-bottom rectangle tanks. Changing over to large cilindro-conical fermenters is a difficult for every brewer due to the changing ester formation. But for Rodenbach the more difficult part was the behavior of the mixed culture, more

specified, the lactobacilli.

Three brews are collected in one fermenter within 10 hours. The mixed Rodenbach yeast culture is added. Temperature rises to 21.5C (71F) and is then held constant by cooling. When 75% of the apparent extract is fermented, the beer is cooled to 15C (59F). Yeast settles down and is collected before beer is transferred to the lagering or second fermentation.

The second fermentation or lagering is continued at an ambient temperature of 15C (59F) in epoxy coated metal vessels. The 11degree Plato beer is hold for 4-5 weeks in horizontal tanks. The 13.5 Plato beer stays a bit longer in vertical tanks: 7-8 weeks. Most of the ale type of yeasts settles down. The aim of this warm lagering is to give the lactobacilli some time to softly acidify the wort by producing lactic acid.

Only the 13.5 degree Plato wort is transferred after the lagering to oaken barrels for an aging of two years. During these two years the beers change a lot. The huge ageing cellars are the soul of Rodenbach. 294 vessels with a volume of 100 up to 660 HI are spread in 9 cellars. Every beer that has "Rodenbach" in his name contains at least partly (classic Rodenbach) or 100% (Rodenbach Grand Cru and Alexander Rodenbach) beer out of these cellars.

The main thing that happens within this aging period is further acidification of the beer, and that in two ways: aerobic and anaerobic. Lactobacilli continue on an anaerobic manner in the inner part of the vessel. The lactobacilli seem to be more sensitive for ethanol formation and their own lactic acid. Within 12-16 months lactic acid formation seems to stop. This period is variable from vessel to vessel, and doesn't seem to be constant for one vessel during repeated fermentations. On the other hand oxygen is provided by diffusion through the oak. This is the main reason for using oaken barrels. A whole range of micro organisms can live thanks to this oxygen supply. This micro organisms lives in the beer near the walls or even more likely in the wood itself. They don't seem to be inhibited by acid formation and are difficult to monitor.

The formation of the different components by these micro organisms, lead to derivate formation of components such as esters. The two most important ester that are found are ethyl lactate and ethyl acetate, the ester formation of the two acids and the alcohol that are present in the highest concentrations. These esters are very important for the final taste pattern of the Rodenbach beers.

In the oaken aging vessels, yeast can also be found. The yeast cells continue to live in the beer, and they still can produce a considerable amount of alcohol. The ale type of yeast slowly disappears during lagering, but different Brettanomyces (mainly lambicus and bruxellensis, but several others) yeast cells starts to grow. Brettanomyces is a very slow developing yeast that is mainly known due to the geuze.

A lot is happening in Rodenbach's large oaken barrels. But as a practical brewer, Rodenbach doesn't have much of an impact on the process. Tasting and pH control from time to time is the most important things. Control of temperature and time are two parameters to keep an eye on. Inspection of an empty vessel is important, and sometimes beer is transferred from one vessel to another, partly or the whole of it. The inspection of an empty vessel leads to decision on the maintenance of it.

3. Maintenance of the oaken barrel

There are three kinds of maintenance on the barrels. Rodenbach has three coopers, who have to learn the job within the brewery (where else?). One of the coopers has to make a daily tour and has a look to all the barrels. Mainly in periods with temperature differences, leakages can happen. Small leakages are treated with cotton wire to be pressed between two staves. Bee-wax is being put on it afterwards. More difficult and larger leakages are stopped by hammering the rings of the barrels down. The barrels are slightly conical and pressure on the staves can be increased by doing so. It happens that a leakage can't be stopped. Then the barrel is emptied and it will be broken down as described further.

Beer stone (Calcium-oxalate), forms at the inner side of the oak barrel. This beer stone can lead to a partial or total blocking of the oxygen diffusion. So on an average of two filling times, decided by visual inspection, the inner surface of the barrel is scraped. The vessel is cleaned and sulfur is burned in it. Before refilling the barrel, 10% of beer of two years old is added as an inoculum, to restart the vessel.

Approximately every 20 years a barrel is, stave by stave, complete taken into pieces. All of them are transported to the cooperage. The staves are shaved at all sides, taking into account the round shape of the barrel. The inner side is shaved concave, the outer side convex. While all the sides are shaved, the total diameter of the oaken barrel gets smaller, so mostly one

new stave has to be made. Sometimes it happens the diameter of the rings is reduced by replacing the clinch-bolt. The barrel is reconstructed without one nail, only pinhole constructions are used. Between the staves, the coopers place new rush or reed. A difficult thing is hanging the ceiling of the reconstructed barrel. The ceiling has to fit within a spared place in the staves. This whole process takes an average of three weeks.

Now the barrel has to be refilled. Therefore, the barrel is first filled with water. The wood and the rush swells and makes the barrel watertight. This can last for weeks. Then, the barrel has to be refilled. This happens just like the end of the second level of maintenance: cleaning, sulfur burning, 10% old beer and finally refilling. This barrel can contain Rodenbach again for some 20 years.

4. The three Rodenbach beers

The tricky thing about Rodenbach is making three beers out of two worts. The 11degree Plato wort isn't even sold as such, but only used for blending. The 13.5 degree Plato wort, which passes over the oaken barrels, is used for all three of the beers! The oaken barrels are the soul of Rodenbach. The soul is to be found in every beer!

The Rodenbach Grand Cru is the easiest story. After an average of 20 months the beers from the oaken barrels are tasted by our tasting panel. The times of tasting can be earlier or later. It all depends on the size and wall thickness of the barrel. Smaller barrels have relatively more surface compared to the contents. So the ageing goes faster, the 100 Hl barrels are tasted after 16 months. Until now, these smaller vessels were not chosen for Rodenbach Grand Cru or Alexander Rodenbach. A faster aging, by thinner wood or smaller vessels doesn't seem to be appreciated by our tasting panel. The thicker the wood, the slower the oxygen diffusion happens, so the slower the ageing. The thickness of the wood can be up to 7-8 cm.

The tasting panel has to choose one vessel out of all the vessels that are ready. Rodenbach has 294 barrels, what means that there are 294 beers. When a barrel is chosen for Rodenbach Grand Cru, then 120 Hl is taken from that barrel and cooled to 1=B0C. The beer is then stored cool for at least a= week. The final clarification is done only by a centrifuge to bright beer. We have to add CO2 to the beer because we can't keep pressure on an oaken barrel. The beer is then ready for bottling.

The second beer is Alexander Rodenbach (now retired). Alexander Rodenbach was the founder of the brewery. In 1821 he bought a small existing brewery from a certain sir David. There isn't known more about the history of this brewery before that date. 15 years later Alexander and his brother Pedro start a corporation: the brewery Rodenbach. It is therefore that 1836 is considered as the founding date of the brewery. (De Bruyne, 1986)

This Alexander Rodenbach was a very remarkable person. He got blind at the age of 11. He started a school for blinds in the Netherlands, owned a brewery and a distillery, and was mayor and a member of parliament for 37 years, from the beginning of the Belgian parliament, with the independence of Belgium in 1830. But he didn't have any children. Still, the owners of the brewery are the ancestors of Pedro Rodenbach.

The new beer, Alexander Rodenbach, was created for the 150th anniversary of the brewery and was named after this remarkable person. The beer is also for 100 % old beer with a slightly different taste pattern. Again 120 Hl of beer is cooled to 1C and placed on a tank with cherries. At least a week later the beer is clarified for the first time with a centrifuge. The beer is then kept again for one week with sugar before the final clarification. The beer has the same pH as Rodenbach Grand Cru, but has a sweet-sour taste, with the flavour of the cherries.

The Classic Rodenbach is drunk in a higher amount in the brewery region and at the Belgian coast. In the summer sales triple because of the very thirst quenching properties. The taste is much better known, so taste difference may not be so big for that beer. Although we have to start with the old beer, where there are as much differences as Rodenbach has barrels.

Therefore the old beer is first blended with other old beer as decided on tasting. Then this beer is blended, just before cooling, in a ratio of 30% old beer. The rest of the beer is the young or the 11degree Plato beer. Again, the beer is kept cold for a week and then clarified. This beer is then ready for bottling.

5. Selling Sour Beer

For Belgian people, who are used to a very rich beer culture and a wide variety of beers tastes, it is easier to accept a sour beer. The Rodenbach brewery mainly produces for the nearby region. Around the brewery, the classic Rodenbach is drunk as a pils is drunk in other regions.

The brewery is producing only sour ales. Therefore Rodenbach is very fashion dependent. When Belgian people turn over on sour beer, Rodenbach has difficulties to follow the demand. Rodenbach has survived fashion by producing constantly the same beer type.

But a quite recent development is that Rodenbach, and other Belgian breweries are asked to deliver their beer in a much wider region. The rich Belgian beer culture was Belgium's best kept secret. Brewers have seen a worldwide growing interest in beers, with maybe 99% pilsners in volume. Other countries develop an interest in specialty beers. Doing so, they have to arrive in Belgium. But within this wide variety of beers produced in Belgium, there are types that are difficult to copy. Rodenbach certainly is such a kind of beer. So Rodenbach started to export because there was a demand.

References and Acknowledgments

- Steve Piatz
- Raj B. Apte
- Michael Tonsmeire "Mad Fermentationist"

BJCP Style Guidelines

17B. Flanders Red Ale

Aroma: Complex fruitiness with complementary malt. Fruitiness is high, and reminiscent of black cherries, oranges, plums or red currants. There is often some vanilla and/or chocolate notes. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. The sour, acidic aroma ranges from complementary to intense. No hop aroma. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary aroma.

Appearance: Deep red, burgundy to reddish-brown in color. Good clarity. White to very pale tan head, average to good head retention.

Flavor: Intense fruitiness commonly includes plum, orange, black cherry or red currant flavors. A mild vanilla and/or chocolate character is often present. Spicy phenols can be present in low amounts for complexity. Sour, acidic character ranges from complementary to intense. Malty flavors range from complementary to prominent. Generally as the sour character increases, the sweet character blends to more of a background flavor (and vice versa). No hop flavor. Restrained hop bitterness. An acidic, tannic bitterness is often present in low to moderate amounts, and adds an aged red wine-like character with a long, dry finish. Diacetyl is perceived only in very minor quantities, if at all, as a complementary flavor.

Mouthfeel: Medium bodied. Low to medium carbonation. Low to medium astringency, like a well-aged red wine, often with a prickly acidity. Deceivingly light and crisp on the palate although a somewhat sweet finish is not uncommon.

Overall Impression: A complex, sour, red wine-like Belgian-style ale.

Comments: Long aging and blending of young and well-aged beer often occurs, adding to the smoothness and complexity, though the aged product is sometimes released as a connoisseur's beer. Known as the Burgundy of Belgium, it is more wine-like than any other beer style. The reddish color is a product of the malt although an extended, less-than-rolling portion of the boil may help add an attractive Burgundy hue. Aging will also darken the beer. The Flanders red is more acetic and the fruity flavors more reminiscent of a red wine than an Oud Bruin. Can have an apparent attenuation of up to 98%.

History: The indigenous beer of West Flanders, typified by the products of the Rodenbach brewery, established in 1820 in West Flanders but reflective of earlier brewing traditions. The beer is aged for up to two years, often in huge oaken barrels which contain the resident bacteria necessary to sour the beer. It was once common in Belgium and England to blend old beer with young to balance the sourness and acidity found in aged beer. While blending of batches for consistency is now common among larger breweries, this type of blending is a fading art.

Ingredients: A base of Vienna and/or Munich malts, light to medium cara-malts, and a small amount of Special B are used with up to 20% maize. Low alpha acid continental hops are commonly used (avoid high alpha or distinctive American hops). Saccharomyces, Lactobacillus and Brettanomyces (and acetobacter) contribute to the fermentation and eventual flavor.

Vital Statistics: OG: 1.048 – 1.057 IBUs: 10 – 25 FG: 1.002 – 1.012 SRM: 10 – 16 ABV: 4.6 – 6.5%

Commercial Examples: Rodenbach Klassiek, Rodenbach Grand Cru, Bellegems Bruin, Duchesse de Bourgogne, New Belgium La Folie, Petrus Oud Bruin, Southampton Flanders Red Ale, Verhaege Vichtenaar, Monk's Cafe Flanders Red Ale, New Glarus Enigma, Panil Barriqué, Mestreechs Aajt



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Anchorage, AK 99503

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

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

GNBC Web Site: www.greatnorthernbrewers.org



**Great Northern Brewers Club
PMB 1204
3705 Arctic Boulevard
Anchorage, AK 99503**

**NEXT MEETING: April 20th, 2010
7:00 PM at the Goose**