



THE

# Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB  
FEBRUARY 2017

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## The Prez Sez

by John Trapp

I survived another January Beer Week, and I definitely hope you all survived too. There were some fantastic dinners eaten and malty events attended.

The Thursday Club meeting at 49<sup>th</sup> State Brewing Company was incredible; it's so nice to see others in the brewing industry that show up to this event once a year. A big thank you to all the volunteers that made it happen; we couldn't have pulled it off without you. A special thank you goes out to David McCarthy and Jason Motyka and the rest of the staff at 49<sup>th</sup> State for hosting us. They put on a hell of a show (OMG the Duck Poutine) and deserve lots of credit for a successful night. Here's the 3 month calendar of events. Jason Ditsworth's organizational prowess in the background is noteworthy.

**Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup>.** Monthly Meeting at 49<sup>th</sup> State – 7:00 p.m.

**March 4<sup>th</sup>** – Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition. Please see article.

**Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup>.** Monthly Meeting at 49<sup>th</sup> State – 7:00 p.m.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** – Possible Curling Event at Anchorage Curling Club, Promise to have more details later.

**March 31<sup>st</sup> thru April 2<sup>nd</sup>,** Beer Tripping weekend in Talkeetna.

**April 1<sup>st</sup>,** Equinox Mead Competition (Spring Equinox) sponsored by Celestial Meads in Talkeetna.

**Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup>** - Monthly Meeting at 49<sup>th</sup> State – 7:00 p.m.

At the Thursday meeting, the Homebrewer of the Year (HBOTY) was announced. For those who couldn't make the meeting, please help me congratulate Mike Cragen for a job well done. Mike makes some tasty stuff and worked hard to achieve this impressive status. Way to go Mike.

Mike and Chris are heading up the Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition, so please see their article for details. The article also contains information on the HBOTY categories for the different competitions entered.

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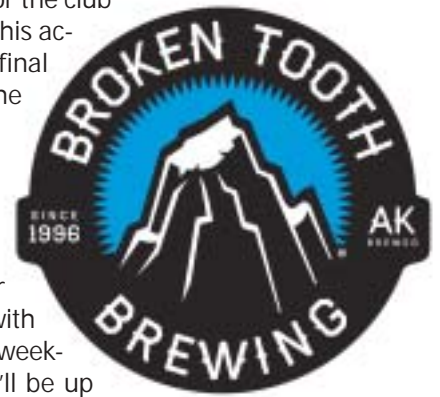
**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

**Debbie Grecco**

[bushy@alaskan.com](mailto:bushy@alaskan.com)

We are working on a possible curling event for the club on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Jim O'Toole is spearheading this activity and is in the process of nailing down final details. We will get that information out to the club as soon as we have it. If you've never been curling you're missing out on some sweeping fun times.

Oh Talkeetna! Hopefully everyone has received the news that the dates for Talkeetna Beer Tripping have changed. There was a conflict with another event and we decided to change our weekend to better accommodate the town. We'll be up there from March 31<sup>st</sup> thru April 2<sup>nd</sup>. And don't forget, the Equinox Mead competition will be held on Saturday April 1<sup>st</sup> - no joking - so dig out a



few bottles of mead to enter. This will be on top of the home brew competition the same day. Hotels and B&B's book up pretty quickly, so plan ahead and make your reservations now. I hope to see everyone there.



In the April and May meetings there will be a beer challenge that I hope everyone will take a jab at. Look for a full article explaining the challenge in the March newsletter.

This month's "Meet Your Local" article features Petr Dohm and Lisa Peltola of Arctic Brewing Supply.

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

## Secretary's Corner

*by Jim O'Toole*

How was Alaska Beer Week for everyone?

I have to admit that I let most of it slide by except for a couple of stops at La Bodega to pick up something I saw advertised and stopping by Midnight Sun's loft with a buddy who was visiting from Ketchikan.

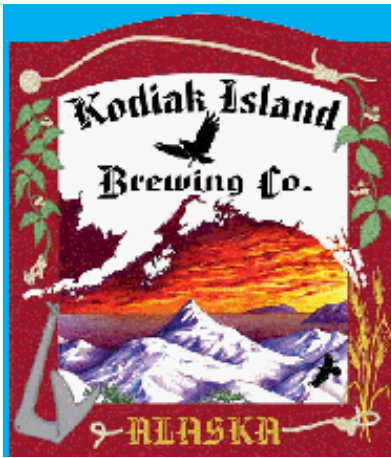
I lived in Ketchikan for 15 years when I first came to Alaska and still have a lot of great friends there and from there. Some of them even live here now.

One thing I remember from those days was that there were two liquor stores in town, one of which had the only drive-thru window I've ever seen. The competition between the two stores didn't have to be too acute as, like I said, they were the only places to buy booze in town and there were a lot of people in Ketchikan buying booze.

Every weekend one of the stores would put Rainier six packs on sale for 99 cents and the other store would put Olympia on sale for 99 cents. If we were going to a really

fancy party we might spring for a bottle of wine and the prices of the stuff we bought was much above what we were paying for the beer. The most expensive beer available, even if you walked inside the place, was Heineken and it ran about \$2.50 a six pack.

I was thinking about this at the GNBC "meeting" a couple of weeks ago. When I first saw the variety of beer that was available on ice in bottles and cans I thought I would count them but then I got to drinking them and you know what happened.



My son came with me, his second year in a row and him being as lofty a beer snob as anyone I know he appreciated what was available and we both took full advantage of the price.

Just for full disclosure, I don't remember anything after Kathy pulled up in front of the Glacier Brewhouse that we had just been tossed out of as the last customers of the night and the next thing I remember after that is her standing over me in the morning trying to tell me she was leaving for work.

So I know I had a good time. I ran into a retired optometrist from North Carolina who came up last year to judge the Great Alaska Beer & Barleywine Festival for the first time. He told me when I first met him at the "meeting" last year that he's been judging beer competitions around the US for years and kept hearing people tell him that he should come up here for the GABBF and, apparently, he had a good enough time that he came back.

I met another guy who was here as a beer judge for the first time. He's from Eugene, Oregon where I lived for a while and where I have a growing family base through my sister who migrated west following her big brother and decided to stay where she first settled. I wish I could remember the great conversation we and his friends from here had but all I can recall is that his kids went to the same college and it was his first time in Alaska. That little sister of mine, by the way, is taking full advantage of the great beer scene around the Eugene/Springfield area and lets me know every time she finds something new that she likes. My dad raised us well.



Our guest speaker was Rogue Brewing's head brewer, John Maier who clearly was more interested in drinking beer and personal conversations than his headliner speech. He told me a lot about Rogue Brewing and I got to tell him the story of how I stumbled on a Rogue beer festival a few years ago and was lucky enough to score the last hotel room available or I would have been sleeping in the brewery parking

# EVENTS

*Every First Thursday  
Moose's Tooth First Tap*

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

21.....GNBC Monthly Meeting  
7:00 PM 49th State Brewing Co.  
Anchorage

4.....2017 Fur Rondy Homebrew  
Competition 10 AM at 49th State  
Brewing Company Anchorage

24-26.....Talkeetna Beer Tripping Weekend

25.....Mead Equinox Competition

18.....GNBC Monthly Meeting  
7:00 PM 49th State Brewing Co.  
Anchorage



lot. He mentioned that it wouldn't have been the first time and, that night, I probably would not have been alone. I introduce him to GNBC board member Brian Hall who was strolling around with two growlers all night and, within 30 seconds the conversation was so far over my head that I just stepped back, shot a photo of them and moved on.

I think Jason Ditsworth and the crew who organized this "meeting" and everyone else who helped out should be commended for pulling off another great party. They helped make the GNBC look pretty good in the eyes of some people who are going to travel elsewhere and tell people about what we've got going on here.

I don't know about all of you, but I'm already thinking about next year's "meeting" and planning my ride home.

## **GNBC Schedule 2016-17**

### **GNBC Monthly Meeting**

Tuesday  
February 21, 2017  
49<sup>th</sup> State Brewing Company

### **Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition**

See the included article

### **Equinox Mead Competition**

Talkeetna, Alaska  
April 1, 2017

### **Talkeetna Beer Trippin'**

March 31-April 2, 2017

### **GNBC Campout**

June 23-25  
South Rolly Lake Overlook  
At the end of Nancy Lake Parkway  
6.5 miles from the Parks Highway.



## **Sud's Corner**

*By John Craig*

Brrr! With a blast of cold air we find ourselves in Febeerary as we hibernate in our nice cozy cabin this winter night. As I find myself in my favorite rocking chair in front of the crackling fireplace with a smoke beer in my mug, the weather lady has forecasted a minus 20 with a nasty wind blowing in from the north. I'm staying home tonight.

I thank the beer gods for smoke beer, or did it come from down below? Heat and hot coals; is the grain smoked with wood or peat, sometimes I wonder? Smoke beer is one of my favorite styles of beer. It reminds me of being around the camp fire with smoke in my eyes. I think I will have another to wash this one down. It could be a long night as I write something for this month's newsletter. What better to do on a cold winter's night?

In 2017, my body has been on this Mother Earth planet for the last 75 years this month. As you can tell, I'm part of the fish family, being a Pisces. I have a big mouth, beer lips and scale-like skin; sort of like a drunk Alaskan Irish Lord.

This fish remembers his first beer in his lifetime. I was in diapers, crawling around on all fours in the living room. As my dad and his buddies were watching the Friday night fights on the black and white TV in the early 1940's, I was sneaking around on all fours drinking their beer between rounds of boxing.

This was the first taste of beer on m lips and I love it even to this day. That was the beginning of my life, and beer will be with me until the day I die. Amen.

I bless the beer gods in Sud's heaven. I wonder how many taps there are there beyond the sky and into the clouds. There's a tap line there for sure.

There was a cig butt in one of the first beers I had. I remember even today choking half to death when it went half way down my throat. My dad just said, God damn; I hope he learned a lesson. I did. If you hear or see something floating or swimming in your can, check it out.

Denver had a local downtown brewery near Cherry Creek named Tivoli. Spelled backwards, it reads "I love it." Later in life I was hooked on their bock beer. In the 1960's in only came out a couple of months of the year when they cleaned out the scum and dredges from the tanks. It was good stuff on a cold winter night. I love it!

Later on, growing up, my dad would take my brother and me with him down to the railroad yard's bottle junk yard. He would buy bottles and wooden beer boxes that were surplus. Us boys washed down a lot of bottles for my dad; seems like everyone was making beer and wine back then.

Safeway had the Blue Ribbon Malt in the baking section and the yeast in the dairy case. I don't remember hops in the beer. It was more like malt liquor that gave me a nasty hangover, but it was good stuff.

My dad had a big pickle crock that held about 10 gallons that he used to brew with. He used a light bulb to keep the beer warm during fermentation. He even got the local police department drunk one night; he was so proud of himself. He was a big time homebrewer and loved beer. I guess we have the same blood.

For 75 years now, beer has been my life. The good, the bad and the ugly. Being alive today, I can't believe I've lived this long without getting shot or drowning in a tub of suds. I'm very lucky. Life is life. If you see me this month, please buy me a beer. Let's visit and see what we can talk about. A smoke beer is my favorite; don't let me die of thirst. Beer is life, body and soul. I love it.

My Indian name is Crawling Drunk. 75 years of beer is in my body, veins and soul. So many drunks in my life. With this old creaky body, but doctor told me to cut back from a growler a day to two pints a day. A shot of blackberry brandy keeps me happy and ticking. This way, I might make it to my next birthday. I still have a lot of beer exploring to do in my lifetime; I love it.

Chilkoot Charlie's is having a celebration with their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Birthday Bash on February 23, about 8 pm near the swing bar. There's live entertainment and it's free. Food is pot luck style, drinks are cheap. Bring a dish. Rose and I have gone the last two years and have had a blast. Sandy, the day time bartender at Koots and Wanda, the tender from the Bird House Bar want us to share their birthdays with them.

Life us good for us fish heads. As I swim in beer tonight, I love it.



# 2017 Fur Rondy Hombrew Competition

It's time for the 2017 homebrew competitions to start in Alaska. GNBC is proud to announce that the 2017 Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition will take place at Noon on Saturday, March 4th at 49th State Brewery. Judges, this is the same day as the Ceremonial Iditarod Start, so please plan accordingly. The Ceremonial Start is at 10 am, so that gives you a few hours to watch the race before judging. This also means that 49<sup>th</sup> State will be crowded and parking will be challenging. Get an early start so judging can go smoothly.

49th has graciously agreed to brew the Best of Show (BOS) beer or Brewer's Choice (in case the BOS winner isn't realistic for them to brew, sell, etc).

Points will be awarded as follows:

- 1st – 6 points
- 2nd – 4 points
- 3rd – 2 points

If your HBOTY entry wins BOS, you will receive another two points.

Homebrewer of the Year (HBOTY) points will be different for this competition. Each entry will need 2015 category/subcategory for judging purposes. Also, one of the below categories needs to be designated. If above category isn't specified, competition organizers will place the beer into what is deemed to be the most appropriate category.

What this means is that all lagers will be lumped into one grouping to "compete" against each other for place/points, while simultaneously being judged according to their separate BJCP category/subcategory. In other words, for all lagers there will be only one 1st place, one 2nd, and so on.

This new categorization method is based on the specific needs of smaller competitions in Alaska. The 2015 BJCP categories are just too numerous to allow us to have a true "open" competition and judge them in a timely manner. This is our experimental work-around and is well within the BJCP guidelines for a sanctioned competition.

## Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition (March)

Lager	HBOTY
Stout/Porter	HBOTY
Imperial (8% & up)	HBOTY
Belgian/French	HBOTY
IPA/Pale	non-HBOTY (You can earn your points at the IPA Masters!)
Wild/Sour/Brett	non-HBOTY
Other (any other category may be entered but will not be eligible for HBOTY or BOS)	
No Meads/Ciders	

Entry drop-offs will need BJCP Entry/Recipe forms. Entries will be accepted at Resolution Brewing Co. Monday February 27 to Thursday March 2 between 3pm - 8pm . . . and at Arctic Brewing on Friday, March 3 from 3 pm until 6 pm.

\*If you are Valley resident and can't make it to town contact Chris at fergchri@gmail.com for a possible pick up.



# GNBC January Industry Meeting

by *Peter Hall*

The 2017 Alaska Beer Wee (AK Beer Week) is now a thing of the recent past. I get excited and dread a little every year as it approaches. Now I'm happy for it to be done, but miss all the great beer and visiting friends. It is a strategically challenging time. We can all consume a good amount of food and beer, but 10 days is a solid test for even the most experienced.

Aurora Productions brought up John Maier as the keynote luminary for beer week this year, and he was available to visit with the GNBC. We heard much about the 20,000<sup>th</sup> batch brewed at Rogue Brewing. We also heard a little about John working for Alaskan Brewing in their early years before Rogue. Everyone savored some delicious grub (duck poutine) and enjoyed what was shared. Thank you, John Maier, for joining the GNBC and we hope to see you again soon.

First big thing to cover is to say thank you. There are many who stand out that this meeting could not have been what it was without. 49<sup>th</sup> State Brewing in particular has been a tremendous asset to the success of the January meeting. Thank you David McCarthy, Jason Motyka, 49<sup>th</sup> front of house, and 49<sup>th</sup> kitchen staff. You were all there with eager smiles and a pep in your step. Jason Ditsworth, thank you for your tireless efforts in the background to organize the event and make sure everyone had a great time. Thank you. Everyone can say thanks by buying Jason Ditsworth a beer and thanks by visiting 49<sup>th</sup>, bringing friends, and tipping well!

Much of the planning for this meeting is concerned with paying for it. At the moment we are still a couple thousand dollars shy of our funding goals. We will be ok, but are trying to avoid paying more than initially intended from the GNBC itself. We keep our funds in good health with a lot of effort. Many of our local professional beer friends have already stepped up to help cover the costs of this large party. We still hope many more will have a little room to throw in and keep this party going for years to come. Funding strategies will probably shift next year, but this is working for now. Please contact Peter Hall at [alaskabrewer@gmail.com](mailto:alaskabrewer@gmail.com) if you are one of those beer professionals and you appreciate the value of this meeting. Thank you!

Thank you GNBC! This event took planning. Logistics of a party for 300 can get a little complicated. We have been doing this for a long time, but it is a new adventure every year. There are many who happily step forward to run the door, set up, clean up, pour beers, and handle any other vagaries that may have arisen. Even all the rest of the GNBC, who may have not been available to run the door, were courteous and accessible for all our visiting friends. We can't do this meeting without every one of you participating. Thank you.

Positive changes are in the future for this meeting. It will continue to be a great success with all the help provided and with happy participants. Beer week is a busy time with much pushing for your available stomach and liver space. I think this event stands out right in the middle of it all. We will be back at planning for 2018 in about September or October. I'll see you there!



# Easy Brewing

By Brian Hall

Newly minted GNBC President John Trapp issued a great challenge to the club this past month: brew some damn beer. This seems like a "duh" statement, we are a homebrew club. However, for some of us it's been a while. For others, there's so much information available and so many kits to buy - where does one start? I'd like to kick off this year by laying the groundwork for getting back into brewing - all grain brewing - without investing in a ton of new or upgraded equipment. Let's take a look at a simple brew day and the time it takes, the methods involved, and the necessary - as well as extra & fun - equipment needed. Obviously if you're new to the hobby you'll be spending a little more up front. If you've got some stuff in your garage covered in dust, here are a few additions to make it easier.



Step one is to establish is the basic equipment setup. This article will describe doing batches the simplest way I know possible: All Grain, No Sparge, Brew in a Bag (BIAB.) The great thing about BIAB is that instead of moving wort out of the mash tun into another brew kettle, we simply use one big pot and remove the grain out of the mash, leaving us with a kettle of wort.

The first thing you'll need is a boil kettle of at least ten gallons. Because we'll be including [almost] all of our brewing liquor (water) in this single vessel, it's important we have enough room. This kettle can be as simple or as tricked out as you like. Volume markings are great, but you can always etch your own easily. My only recommendation is to make sure your kettle is stainless. Price varies.

Second, we'll need a bag to hold the mash (it is called Brew in a BAG, after all). The best bag on the market, in my opinion, is the Brew Bag, found at <http://www.brewinabag.com/> You can customize your order to fit any kettle, keggles, etc. Best of all, there's no such thing as a stuck sparge with a Brew Bag. The Brew Bag boasts support straps as well as ~210 micron mesh size. Nothing's going get through that except clear wort. I know I sound like a salesman, but I assure you this is the best bag I've ever used. It costs around \$30.

Next, we'll need something to heat our wort. What is great about doing BIAB is you can do it all on your stovetop. If you're going to brew outside, you probably can just use your propane burner and skip this step. If you are going to brew on your stovetop, I recommend getting a heat stick to assist in your heating. They provide a more rigorous boil and significantly reduce heating times. The great thing is that you can get an immersion one that requires NO installation. At the cheapest end of the spectrum is the \$10 Amazon heatstick. It works for a while but gets hot and eventually will die. Mine lasted a year. On the other side is the Hot Rod Heatstick from BrewHardware. These run about \$130, but are built to last. You can also do it yourself (DIY) with this one. Just watch out with water and electricity!



We'll also need something to cool our wort. The fastest, easiest chillers to use on the market are the immersion chillers from JaDeD Brewing. They run three coils in parallel, rather than just one long coil. They are fantastic but run \$150 and up, which can be spendy. Fortunately for Alaskans, our groundwater is cold, so you can probably use whatever copper coil you can get your hands on for about half the price or less if you DIY. Plate chillers are great too, but at the five gallon homebrew level are more trouble than they're worth.

After the chill, we'll need something to ferment in. I always recommend the glass carboy, unless you have the desire to have stainless



fermenters. If that's the case, great. But glass carboys are easy to come by through the local community more often than not, and tend to run Around \$20. If you can't get one and want to try turning around a few quick beers first, a bucket will work - but watch out as they have eight to nine times the permeability of a silicon bung'd glass carboy. See *Wild Brews* for more info on fermenter permeability.

The last item I highly recommend is a Thermapen. They run a steep \$90, but have a two-to-three second response time for temperature. This means you can stir your mash and get almost real time temp data and make quick adjustments. Thermapens also carry over in the kitchen for precise cooking when grilling meat or roasting a turkey. Thermoworks also makes a cheaper model that runs about ~\$20 if you would rather have a 5-6 second response time.

Assuming you can get your grain crushed somewhere, that's most of what you need for brewing a five gallon all grain batch, and it all fits in one pot except for the fermenter. Other items that are needed/used that are pretty standard at most brewing levels are: scale for weighing grain/hops, smaller scale (1-100g) for water adjustments, large whisk for mashing in, PVC coated gloves, a spray bottle for sanitizer, hydrometer, funnel, stirring spoon, silicone bungs, airlock, siphon, and bottling/kegging supplies.

At the risk of turning this into a book, this will be a multi-part series. Next month we'll go over the basic No-Sparge Brew in a Bag method and see how this equipment is put to the test!

If you're new to brewing, welcome to the obsession! If it's been a while, welcome back. I'm glad you're here.

*Note: All this equipment includes items I have either tried previously or own currently. If you have any further questions, you're more than welcome to email me directly at [iheart314@gmail.com](mailto:iheart314@gmail.com). I'd be more than happy to demo any of it for you, or brew a batch to show how simple it can be.*

## Beer Judge Certification Program 2017 Tasting Exam

by *Kevin Sobolesky*

Howdy brewers and judges! It's time for another American Homebrewer's Association Beer Judge Certification Program Exam (BJCP). If you want to become a ranked beer judge, passing the BJCP Exam is required.

There will be a 12 seat BJCP Judging Exam (AKA Tasting Exam) on May 14 at p.m. at Cafe Amsterdam.

The exam will consist of tasting and scoring six beers over a 90 minute window to BJCP 2015 guidelines.

One of the best ways to prep for this Exam is to enroll in the Beer Tasting and Palate Training Class. See my other article in this newsletter on that subject.

Seats for the exams are open to enrollment now. Email me at [metkonig@gmail.com](mailto:metkonig@gmail.com) to get your seat. Tasting exam seats are \$40 for new takers and \$15 for re-takers. Please note that fees are due when you sign up for the exam, not the day of the exam.

Note that you need to take the Online Entrance Exam (which costs \$10) before you are eligible to sit for the tasting exam, and then you require a passing score on the tasting exam before you are eligible to sit for the written exam. Also be aware that the Entrance exam result is only good for a year after taking it, so it's recommended only to take it once you've secured a seat for a tasting exam. Also, you require five experience points from judging events before you can sit for the written exam.

More details can be found here: <http://www.bjcp.org/examcenter.php>

### MEETING SETUP

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

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

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

# Our Newsletter (reprint)

by *Fermento*

If you're reading this, you obviously have some interest in our homebrew club. We're the Great Northern Brewers (GNBC). Thanks for being a part of our ongoing homebrewing and craft beer community in Alaska.

By way of introduction, I'm your newsletter editor. I'm reaching out to you because I need some help.

A bit of history is in order before I make my request.

There's a long, sordid history surrounding my introduction to homebrewing, but somewhere along the line, I heard about homebrewing classes in town and in 1987 or 1988, and with a friend in tow, I paid a couple of bucks and showed up at Pat and Randy Oldenburg's house in east Anchorage and watched a guy make beer on a stove.

I was rapt, sitting on one of many folding chairs, engrossed in the science and alchemy of brewing.

I learned that Randy Oldenburg was president of a homebrewing club in town, the Great Northern Brewers, and meetings were held at his house. I joined, and carted off my first load of homebrew supplies to make beer on my kitchen stove.

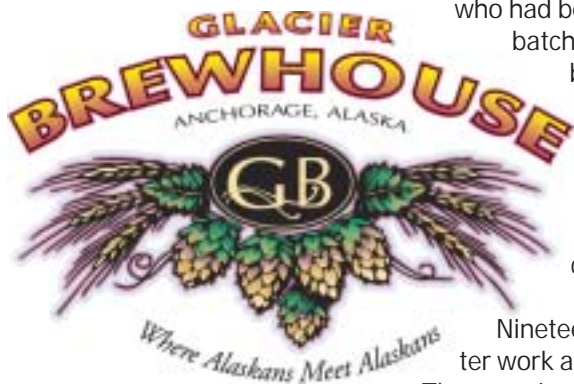
At the first meeting I attended, I met an exuberant, buoyant guy named Geoff Larson who'd recently opened a brewery in Juneau. Since then, Geoff and Marcy Larson, owners of Alaskan Brewing Company, have become lifelong friends. Alaskan celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday last year.

Like most of us, I fell in love with brewing at first batch. I immersed myself in the kettle and the club. I attended every activity and started judging beer, although it would be years before I became BJCP certified.

I took over publishing the club's newsletter. After 27 years, it's almost as big a chore as it was back then. I became club president in 1992 and 1993 and strived to bring some organization and structure to the mix. I can't boast on being successful, but I met some of my best friends in life stirring the brewkettle.

I quickly graduated from extract brewing to all-grain brewing, learning from others in the club who had been at it a lot longer than I had. I moved from five gallon batches to 10 gallon batches on a borrowed homebrew system fashioned out of converted beer kegs. I bottled and kegged beer. In my heyday, I was cranking out two 10-gallon batches a week.

I made good beer and bad beer. I won awards and poured beer down the drain. In all, the experience was one of the richest in my life. Homebrewers came and went. Good friends lived the good beer life and some of my closest have passed on.



Nineteen years ago, I got a call from the Anchorage Press. They'd seen my newsletter work and wanted to know if I wanted to write the weekly beer column for the paper. The experience was life changing. Five years after that, Celebrator Beer News picked me up and I started writing the Aurora Beerialis bi-monthly column for that paper. I started getting picked up as a free lance writer for various beer publications during the cusp of the craft beer revolution.





One day, it occurred to me that the most expensive ingredient in brewing is time, and with a full time job and my beer chasing and writing gigs, I could either make beer and drink it, or drink beer and write about it. I hung up the paddle and put the Xtra-Tuffs under the counter in the garage. I made my last beer 10 years ago.

Once a brewer, always a brewer, as the saying goes. One thing that connects me to the club is the newsletter. It's the one thing I've never given up. Maybe that's the writer in me. I can live the club vicariously through what people contribute that way. I don't get to the meetings and I don't attend all of the events, but I see you and read you through what I assemble for you every month. It keeps me connected. I can smell the malt and hops from here.

After that long tirade about my past with the club, I'm back to asking for your help. If you feel the same excitement I feel when I think about homebrewing, I need your passion.

Your passion can come in many forms with our club. You participate. You contribute. You can also share these experiences with the others that help grow your passion. You can write something.

Are you freaked out?

You don't have to be a writer to contribute to our monthly newsletter. I'm not looking for a term paper or something you might be judged by. I just want your experiences and passion. You just have to jot something down. Send it to me and I'll make sure our readers gain from it. Hell, a crayon on a grain sack works; I'll come and get it.

What I'm after is material. Tell me about your first experience, or your last; it all matters and it's all relevant. You don't want to write at all, but feel the passion? Call me; I'll interview you.

You've got something to share and our club members need it and will gain from it. Email me at [james.roberts@gci.net](mailto:james.roberts@gci.net) or call me at (907) 441-7006 and let's connect and share!

*Editor's Note: Notice that this is a pretty full newsletter. It's refreshing to see your contributions, so we thought we'd reprint this to solicit even more. Great job this month gang; let's keep our GNBC newsletter full!*



## Beer Tasting and Palette Training Class 2017

by *Kevin Sobolesky*

### What It Is

GNBC is hosting a beer tasting class that will teach you all about classic beer styles, off-flavors and how to improve your homebrew. This class provides you with the knowledge and vocabulary to not only become a better brewer, but to properly evaluate beer beyond just having a sensory reaction to what you're drinking.

The class is an integral part of GNBC's mission to provide an educational platform as part of the club. You'll learn more in this class than you could on your own over the same period of time.

Over the nine week course, meetings will be on Sundays for a couple hours to enjoy fun lectures on topics covering beer history, ingredients, processes, and faults. During each class, we will have guided tastings of classic beers to train your palate and learn about the wide variety of beer styles. By the end of the course, you will have tasted roughly 40 different beers. And if I haven't mentioned it; the homework is a lot of fun. This class is perfect for homebrewers, servers, distributors, and package store employees.

For those who are interested, this course will also help prepare you for passing the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) tasting exam. For those who want more information regarding becoming a beer judge, please contact Kevin at [metkonig@gmail.com](mailto:metkonig@gmail.com).

## How to Sign Up

Contact Kevin at metkonig@gmail.com or in person at one of the homebrew club meetings. The class is capped at 40 people, on a first come first serve basis. We will start a waiting list if anyone does not show up for the first class (usually a safe bet to have a few no-shows). If you have any questions please direct them to Kevin.

## Where it Takes Place

Cafe Amsterdam (Next time you see Ken and Shauna, say thanks!)  
503 E. Benson #3

## Cost

\$50 a person due at the first class

## When

Sundays at 5 pm, starting on February 19

## Current Schedule

February	19, 26,
March	5, 12, 19, 26
April	2, 9, 23, 30



## Meet Your Local

Home Brew Supply Store Owners – Petr Dohn & Lisa Peltola

*By John Trapp*

Petr Dohn and Lisa Peltola (Pete and Lisa) are the owners of Arctic Brewing Supply, our local home brew supply store. Pete and Lisa bought Arctic Brewing Supply (ABS) in the spring of 2001 from the previous owner Dave Snow, who opened the shop in 1993.

Back then, ABS was located in the post office strip mall by Lake Otis and Dowling. In 2007, Pete and Lisa bought the building in its current location (8401 Sandlewood Place) and renovated it for a home brew supply store. There's plenty of room for display shelves and storage in the new spot, so there's tons of inventory available for purchase.

So what can you find in the store? Just about anything related to brewing, processing and serving home brew. Literally, they have all the materials needed to brew up a batch of beer, all the equipment to make and ferment the brew in, plus the means of bottling, kegging and pouring the beer. You can even order a keggerator from them. ABS offers homebrew manufacturing supplies from the process's cradle to grave. There's an incredible selection of yeasts, specialty grains and hard to find ingredients. In fact, if they don't have what you're looking for they'll be more than happy to order it for you, provided it exists.

Beer isn't the only thing brewing there. ABS has a fantastic selection of wine kits. I've made a few of the big reds over the years and I can attest that if you enjoy wine you should give it a try. Trust me, making wine is much easier than making beer.

The staff at ABC is well versed and most of the employees are avid homebrews. The staff can tell you how well the kits have turned out for other customers. I don't think everyone realizes just how lucky we are in Anchorage to have a store that has the selection and inventory Arctic Brewing Supply has. Next time you go in there be sure to thank Pete and Lisa for having such an awesome store.



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Great Northern Brewers Club  
Attn: Treasurer  
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Anchorage, AK 99503



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

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

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**NEXT MEETING: February 21st, 2017  
7:00 pm at 49th State Brewery Anchorage**