



THE Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

MARCH 2010

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Prez Sez

By Dennis Sessler

Can you see the light at the end of the tunnel yet? I'm at the point where I could flip a coin on wishing we get another big dump or for this winter to slide out of here with little fanfare. No doubt, the more daylight we get will have me leaning more towards the latter. It is getting much harder to enjoy the winter with all the ice and wet conditions that surround us. Neither here nor there, this is the time of year as homebrewers we should be thinking of brewing those beers to carry us through the spring and summer. When I think of spring and summer beers I lean toward lighter, snappy beers that can be enjoyed during those hot summer days. As you can see I'm praying for another summer like we had last year.



I try to keep a running list of recipes that I can brew based on the time of year. On the top of my list is a Belgian Wit, I love this light and refreshing beer for those warm days, I also have a bunch of cider that has been fermented and is easily kegged and served via tap. I want to attempt to make an American Lager and also the large variety of Continental Pilsners that will suffice the less filling-taste great requirements, but still manage that nice hop bite they are so well known for. As the summer creeps on, I enjoy those easy drinking IPAs. I still have a ton of home grown hops that my parents have been growing back in Wisconsin, that are just waiting to bask in that sweet wort. In a future article, I will be breaking down a simple brewing schedule that you as a homebrewer can use to plan the beers you need to brew in order to enjoy the particular style to the fullest. Very few people enjoy a thick luscious stout on an 80 degree day in July. With a little planning you can have all those seasonal brews fermented and aging ready for the upcoming seasons and possible entry in future competitions.

In this month's newsletter you will find the Secretary's Corner; Jennifer Bisson will get you all up to date on what you missed at our last club meeting and what to expect down the road. Ben Johnson from Midnight Sun talks about his trip to San Francisco Beer Week and that might just be enough to get people excited enough to attend next year's event. Dena Sessler will have an in-depth article on making cheese, this will combine all the information that Kyle Beus, the guest speaker at the February meeting, discussed. There was a wealth of information exposed to us in a very short time and I hope all that were in attendance left the meeting all geared up to dip their fingers in the fresh curds and whey. I want to personally thank Kyle and his wife Sandy for coming to our meeting and giving us a very informative tutorial.

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

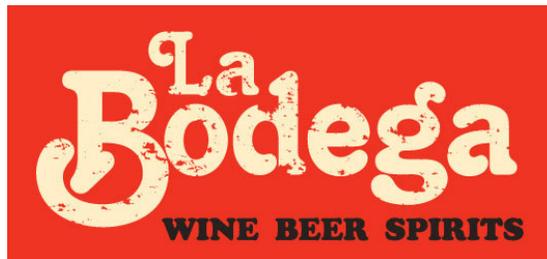
Talkeetna Beer Trippin', sound like fun doesn't it? After reading this article you will be ready to make your reservations and pack your bags in anticipation of this inaugural spring time event.

This spring our club will be hosting several events. After our winter expedition in Talkeetna, the Snow Goose will be hosting the Spring Break-up Competition. Check out Dan Bosch's last call article. Speaking of homebrew competitions, Fur Rondy was a total success. I had to leave the state for family reasons and my wife Dena stepped up and ran the competition in my absence. I want thank her, Steve Schmitt and all of the volunteers who attended and helped make the first competition of the year a complete success. As you can see there is a pattern building here, if you would like to submit your homebrews to the American Homebrewers Association National Homebrew Competition you will have to submit your entries between March 22nd and April 1st. Go to <http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/> for more information on how to enter and ship your entries.

Our next Club meeting will the 16th of March. We will be having an informative educational segment on riddling. Mike Kiker owner of Celestial Meads will be giving us all that we ever wanted to know about the traditional method of making *Champagne* or sparkling wine. Mike will also be having a mead judging class on the 7th of March. He released the date and time for this class and it was booked in 2 days. Mike has assured me that they will be trying to arrange for a second class but at this time no date or time has been determined.

In last month's newsletter Tim Bisson had an article about the upcoming "Beer Wars" movie; well scratch that off your calendar. About 2 weeks after booking the movie it was released to Netflix. The board decided this event would have met a lukewarm reception due to its release so we cancelled the event and Tim has procured the return of the clubs only investment. Thank you Tim for all the time you spent setting up this event for the club.

There are a lot of events that will be coming up in May and June, please stay tuned for updates on Brewathon, GNBC House Crawl, and the June Summer Camp out. I will add these items into the events calendar elsewhere in the newsletter. You can also find current events being posted on the clubs website at <http://www.greatnorthernbrewers.org/>. Both Tim Strayer and Julie McDonald are doing a great job keeping club members informed on our clubs website and Facebook page. I hope you come out and enjoy some of the great events the club has planned; think about some of those brews that should be brewed so you can enjoy them this spring and early summer. Please think before you drink and as always Brew On.



Beer in the land of our nation's capitol

by Mr. and Mrs. Foamy

After braving the "Super Storm", the "Blizzard of the Century", or any other retarded name the media came up with to stir panic in our already panic-stricken seat of government we settled down to find the only reason for living in that god-forsaken city. Fortunately we found it!

For those of you who hadn't heard you paid for 4 days vacation of all federal workers. In all of their paternal wisdom our current federal government decided that snow was something to be feared mightily and shut down everything. (someday when we are feeling expansive, we will relate the story of the 20 minute tour of the Air and Space museum). Everything means including all private establishments and that meant damn bloody little choice of alcohol. Even for those that chose to brave the horrendous and life-threatening weather (insert sarcastic tone here), alcohol was not available until 11:00am – we are not kidding.

As we made our way through what was barely a normal day of snow in Alaska, laughing and pointing at the incompetent boobies who thought that their tires would work best while spinning madly down to the pavement, we discovered **The Brickskeller**. This stellar little bar totes the motto "the world's largest selection of beer" and I believe them! The beer menu is 10 pages, double column, small print, listing at least 500 beers. We sat down with our first order, a Rodenbach Grand Cru and a Dogfish Head 120 to peruse our next choices. The Grand Cru was flat but to those of us in the know still drinkably good and any place that has a Grand Cru on draught and servers that actually know what they are serving has my vote.

Our next day of trying to find something, anything please! brought us to Chinatown where we decided to take our chance on an iffy little underground not very sanitary authentic looking joint. It turned out



to be quite good and we stuffed ourselves with noodles while pondering our low blood alcohol levels. We decided to try an Irish pub across the street but upon stepping up to the door instead we noticed a bar next door called **RFD Washington** who called out in big letters that they had many beers on tap. This was definitely an upscale joint with clean tables and clean floors, yikes! The beer selection was wonderfully surprising given the fact that they were even open.

If for some unknown reason, like you hit your head with a hammer, you decide to go to this land of absurdity, do not bother with **Capitol City Brewing**. It's an overhyped, mass-appeal, restaurant with limited amounts of anything resembling a hop bud in it. But this can be said of the East coast in general as they tend to be hopaphobic. Now, to be honest there was one very good beer locally made called Old Dominion. This is an English style ale which had a delightful malt flavor and sufficient hoppage to make this a well balanced and tasty beer. Of course, our views may be tainted by the sheer excitement of finding something other than Sam Adams.

So Mark, Lisa, and Don if you are on our mailing list we are extremely unimpressed with the way your peers and the airlines decided to handle what was definitely not a bad storm but at least you have access to a good selection of beer.

EVENTS

Every First Thursday
Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Thursday
Midnight Sun Brewery Tour:
6:00 PM 344-1179

7.....*Cafe Amsterdam: Celestial Meads*
Mead Judging Class: 4 pm

16.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the*
Goose: 7 PM

22.....*Nationals Beer entries Due*

26-28....*GNBC Winter Campout in*
Talkeetna

03.....*Snow Goose Breakup Homebrew*
Competition at the Goose

20.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the*
Goose: 7 PM



Bringing Alaska to San Francisco

By Ben Johnson

For the first time since moving to Alaska my flight out of Anchorage was not at 2 am. This left me plenty of time to pack the essentials. Carry-on bag stuffed with clothes. Check. iPod charged and backpack filled with various brewing periodicals. Check. Cooler on wheels jammed to the gills with beer. Check. I figure if they are going to charge me for a checked bag I might as well get my money's worth out of it.

All packed I settled in for a breakfast bottle of Fallen Angel and then off to the airport. In just six short hours I would be in San Francisco for the tail end of one of the greatest beer-centric weeks in the world, San Francisco Beer Week. To make matters even sweeter we would be presenting Midnight Sun beer to the Bay Area for the first time.

After checking in to the Hotel, Midnight Sun Brewing Company (MSBC) sales rep and my partner in crime, Grant, and I went to have a burger, and then we headed down to the City Beer Store, one of SF's preeminent beer shops, to check in with Craig Wathen. Craig is the proprietor of City Beer as well as the owner of Artesian Distributing, our new SF distributor. City Beer was also the venue for the MSBC release.

After a quick chat with Craig, he let us loose on the first beer event of a very beery three days: a sour beer fest he was hosting. They had secured a space across the street for this sell out event which had no less than 20 American made sours on draft. Some were really tart and very lactic while others were soft and reeked of brettanomyces. The stand out of the night was Cascade Brewing Company's Fall Gose. This was a sour brewed with salted hops. It was very different and unlike any fermented beverage I had ever tasted.

We then headed over to the recently opened Pi Bar, which fittingly opens at 3:14 every day, although we didn't have to worry about that. It was plenty late. Drake's Brewing Company was the featured brewery of the night and they had a vertical of their barley wine on tap. The 2008 was my favorite. I also tried Moonlight Brewing Death & Taxes. I found this to be an easy drinking black lager. Good stuff. After a long and very drunken walk back to the hotel, day one was over.

The next morning we headed to Chinatown for some barbeque pork and crispy noodles. Maybe this is not everyone's idea of a good breakfast, but we enjoyed greasy and great hangover food none the less. We hiked our way through Chinatown and up to a BevMo Liquor Store to make our first beer call. BevMo has one of the greatest selections of beer I have ever seen. I found nothing extremely rare but discovered that the store held something from most local, national and international breweries.

After BevMo we decided to head over to Monk's Kettle. One of the things you learn very quickly when moving from one beer event to another in a major city is to always use the restroom *before* you leave the spot you're at. Grant and I failed to do this, so a stop into a nearby Burger King we were passing by was in order. Naturally the restroom was for customers only so a couple of cheeseburgers were purchased. Realizing this was our second burger in as many days we made a pact to have a burger everyday on the trip.

Arriving at the Monk's Kettle, we entered a main bar that was full so we sat at a side bar. The beer menu was quite impressive. I settled on an Allagash Wit Beer and Grant went for a Pliny the Elder: both great beers. We also got a chance to try Pliny the Younger, Russian Rivers triple IPA. Having been released just a week prior to our arrival this was the hot ticket beer for the week. It was so popular, in fact, that The Monk's Kettle had it on an unmarked tap. The bartender told us they had it and that we could have some. We just weren't allowed to post it on the internet that they had it. They just wanted to avoid getting rushed and wanted

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



to allow the greatest number of people to try it. This was a bar looking out for the drinker: that's what I'm talking about. Looking around the bar we couldn't help but notice a few familiar faces. There were several industry people enjoying their lunches and beers but the biggest surprise was discovering that we were in the company of a couple of Alaskans other than Jim Roberts or Ken Pajak. It really is a small world after all.

After Monk's we headed over to BiRite Market. BiRite is a neighborhood grocer that has been in business since 1964. They are a high end grocer focusing on local meats, cheeses, breads and produce. The market makes all of their own cured meats in house as well as cheese and other specialty items. Their beer selection is small but extremely high quality. This is another perfect place for Midnight Sun beer.

We then headed back to Pi Bar for a couple more beers, a slice of pizza and some great conversation. It was Oskar Blues night at Pi and we had a chance to meet some of the folks from Oskar Blues as well as some folks from Big Sky Brewing. After a few beers we trekked back to the hotel for a little relaxation before heading to City Beer for our big release.

Arriving at City Beer the place was already hopping. We noticed when walking in that almost everyone had a Midnight Sun beer in hand. There were folks from all over the Bay Area and beyond. We meet a couple of guys from The Santa Barbarians, a home brew club located in Santa Barbara, CA. We also got to talk to some great MSBC fans who had tried our beer one way or another in the past and who were really excited for us to be in the SF market.

Soon after we got there, Jim and Deb Roberts, as well as Ken Pajak and Todd Rock showed up. The AK contention was in the house! Chicken Phil also showed up (chicken in hand), so there was no shortage of people we knew.

After City Beer we walked with some new friends down to 21st Amendment to try some of their strong beers. Everything they had on tap was 9% or higher. Talk about big beers! A few more and it was another less-than-straight walk back to the hotel and we turned in for the night. The next morning was Toronado and we needed our rest.

Saturday morning had us on the bus and on our way to Magnolia for breakfast. Located in the Haight we were in the hotbed of where the counter culture movement started, though it's hard to see that anymore. A Ben and Jerry's on the corner of Haight and Ashbury doesn't exactly scream rebellious to me. We met up with Arne Johnson, head brewer at Marin Brewing, and after a delicious breakfast of chicken and waffles we cruised up to Golden Gate Park and threw a round of disc golf. This was a much needed break from the beer scene, if only for a couple of hours. Now: on to Toronado.

Arriving, we checked out the scene from the outside and formulated a game plan. For those of you who think our fest is

crowded, you have no idea. The front bar was jam packed and the back room was not much better. We opted for the back room and the 12 or so barley wines they had on tap. After squeezing our way through the hot and sweaty main bar we made it to the back room and waited in line. At this barley wine fest you order by

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

size and number. We decided what we wanted by the time we made it to the front. We told the bartender large and then rattled off the numbers. 35,36,42,45,48,50,51,53. We found a corner of a table to set up on and proceeded to taste and compare while trying to keep them in order. This was not an easy task. We had to keep checking the menu to remember which was which. I should have kept the menu.

30 minutes was about all we could handle so we split and went three doors down to the Noc-Noc room. They were pouring a fine selection of Speakeasy Brewing Company beers. Their wit bier and IPA really stood out. It seemed a bunch of people were there to escape the insanity of Toronado and once again we got the chance to meet and talk with several other brewers and brewery reps from the area and beyond.

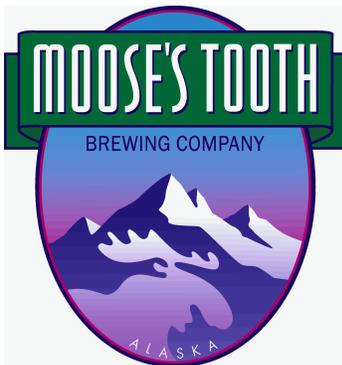
On Saturday night, Grant and I hit BurgerBar in Macy's for a "romantic" Valentine's Day dinner. BurgerBar is billed as making one of the best burgers in SF, so we settled in for burger three of the trip. The burgers we had were excellent. They were the best so far. We were also impressed with their tap selection and bottle list. It seems everywhere you go in SF there is good beer. I drank an Anchor Liberty Ale, one of the beers that got me into craft beer. In the Bay Area, this is one of the freshest and tastiest around.

Sunday morning we headed back over to 21st Amendment for their Brewers Tea. They had set up a nice outdoor area and were pouring several special beers from jockey boxes. The Fatted Calf, a local charcuterie shop, was grilling up some amazing sausages which paired quite well with the 21st Amendment oyster stout I was drinking. We also finally got a chance to try Anchorage Vacation, the Belgian style double IPA that Midnight Sun brewer Gabe and I brewed with 21st Amendment the year before. We were supposed to get a keg and for one reason or another it never happened, so it was really neat that we got to have some.

Another trip on the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) train and we were over in Berkley for the Celebrator Beer News Anniversary Party at Trumer Brauerei. Before heading over we stopped in at the Triple Rock to sample some of their wares and, of course, have a burger. Triple Rock is known for some great beers and particularly their IPA's. After another chance meeting with the infamous Todd Rock we finally made it to our final destination.

Trumer had cleared out their packaging warehouse to make space for the beer fest and this turned out to be a very cool setting. Similar to our fest, this one boasted 40-50 breweries that had set up along the outside wall and were pouring the best they had to offer. One of the highlights was Russian River opening up two 3 liter bottles. I was lucky enough to be standing right next to the guy when he popped one as a line formed quickly and the beer was gone. I also got to try Marin Brewing's ES-Chi, a beer based on their ESB with the addition of 10 different Chinese herbs. It was really cool.

After the fest we made it over to The Trappist; Oakland's premier Belgian beer bar, where I got to try Duvel Green for the first time. Several beers later it was closing time so they kicked us out and we rode the BART back to SF. It was 1 A.M. and we had a 7 A.M. flight to Seattle to catch, so we packed it in and said goodbye to a fabulous week in a city that really knows how to do beer right. Oh, that's right behind Anchorage, Alaska, by the way.



Cheese, Glorious Cheese

By Dena Sessler

All of you who were unable to attend the G.N.B.C. meeting on February 16th missed a dynamic and informative talk given by Kyle and Sandy Beus of Matanuska Creamery, located in Palmer, Alaska.

Kyle and Sandy's roots began in the dairy business. They owned a dairy in the lower 48 by the name of Tri-City Dairy. Kyle and his brother wanted to move to Alaska, solely for the agriculture, so they purchased a dairy in Point McKenzie through an auction, sold their dairy stateside and headed North. They were content running the dairy, although milking 250 cows twice daily, became mundane, so they sold that and moved into Palmer, where they purchased and developed the Matanuska Creamery.

Kyle said that there were over 1,400 known varieties of cheese and even more unknown. Did you know that cheese dates back as far as beer does? Tens of thousands of years ago, human beings would milk anything that produced milk for consumption. It is thought that the first Nomads would put milk in the stomach sack of a goat to carry it. When they got to their destination, the milk had coagulated, hence producing the first cheese. The reason....Rennet is crucial to make milk coagulate, and up until 100 years ago, could only be found in the stomach of a young goat or cow.



A few statistics about cheese....Every man, woman, and child in the U.S. consumes about 33lbs of cheese per year. Second place goes to France where they consume 52lbs per year, and first place goes to Greece where they consume an incredible 82lbs per year. Kyle said that when the creamery first started out there was a lot of trial and error, so they purchased a lot of pigs to insure that nothing went to waste. They have come a long way from where they began. They supply quite a few local restaurants with their cream, to include Sullivans, Orso, and Glacier Brewhouse, to name a few. They are very proud and boast the freshness of their products. They purchase milk from three dairies in Point McKenzie and one in Palmer, allowing them an impressive 36 hour turnaround from the dairy to the store. Their milk is already in stores and their cheeses will be available in a few weeks everywhere from Carrs to Walmart. They are also producing 25 varieties of ice cream that will be available in a month or so. Kyle describes it as a total meal replacement. The consistency of their ice cream is like that of butter. I can't wait to get a spoon in a container of that!

Now that you have some information about the man and his vision, let's get to the art of making cheese. Yes, technically it is a science, just as brewing is, but we need to appreciate the fact that it is also an art. Temperature and PH are extremely important in cheese making! The milk must be warmed to exactly 90 degrees, and then a starter culture is added. Let it ripen at that temperature for 30 minutes and add the rennet. It takes 30 minutes for the milk to coagulate to a consistency of yogurt. Next you need to raise the temperature from 90 degrees to 100 degrees over the course of another 30 minutes. Stir occasionally and very gentle in the beginning, becoming more frequent and aggressive towards the end of the 30 minutes. Drain the whey off of the curd and let the curd coagulate. How large or small you cut the curd, depends on the type of cheese that you are making. After cutting, use mats and stack, flipping it occasionally throughout the course of an hour to remove any excess moisture. To create cheese curd's, all you do is remove them, add salt, and package them. Cheese curds are just one step away from becoming cheddar. The blocks are formed with a huge amount of pneumatic pressure within 24 hours. The blocks are then aged for a minimum of 90 days for a mild to medium cheddar and 12 months for a sharp.

And there you have it, how to make your very own cheese. In the state of Alaska, it is illegal to sell raw milk, however you can make decent cheese with the milk found in the grocery store but the milk that they sell at the Natural Pantry or the milk produced by Matanuska Creamery, produces a much better cheese. The problem is homogenization. Homogenization is simply a sort of "fake out" for the consumer. When the residual cream floats to the top of the milk, some people think that it has gone bad, so homogenization is used to break up the fat molecules into 100's of pieces, suspending them in the milk permanently. Pasteurized milk is fine for making cheese. Most milk producers pasteurize their milk at 195 degrees for 3 seconds. At Matanuska Creamery, they pasteurize their milk using the "Ultra High Tech" method, where the milk is pasteurized at a much lower temp., 120 degrees, for a longer period of time, 20 seconds. As we have found with honey and making Mead, exposure to high temperatures will destroy key enzymes needed to produce the final product. The ratio of milk to cheese is approximately 10 to 1. One gallon of milk weighs about 8 lbs and will yield just shy of 1lb of cheese. If you have whole milk and a starter you can make cheese. Sound easy? It is pretty simple, just as brewing, but remember, it is also an art, so don't get discouraged if your first few attempts are unsuccessful. Kyle is extremely passionate and excited about his art and is more than happy to help or answer any questions. He can be contacted at 745-6455 or pay him a visit at the creamery located at 7805 East Palmer/Wasilla Highway.

Thank you again to Kyle and his wife Sandy for taking the time to speak at our meeting, share samples of their cheese, and getting us all amped up to make our own cheese! Be sure to look for their products in your local store. Locally grown, locally owned, locally produced, and endorsed by your Wisconsin Cheese Head President and wife!

Pairing Pointers

By Julie McDonald

While we all know that pairing wine and food can be a tricky task, beer and food have been enjoyed together going back centuries and is a much easier mission. Being grain-based, beer can be considered a food. The broad range of flavors, aromas and textures that beer can provide make it a perfect partner for any kind of food, from stadium food to the most creative gourmet dishes. When we are choosing beers and foods that work well together it really pays off to give attention to the distinct qualities of each.

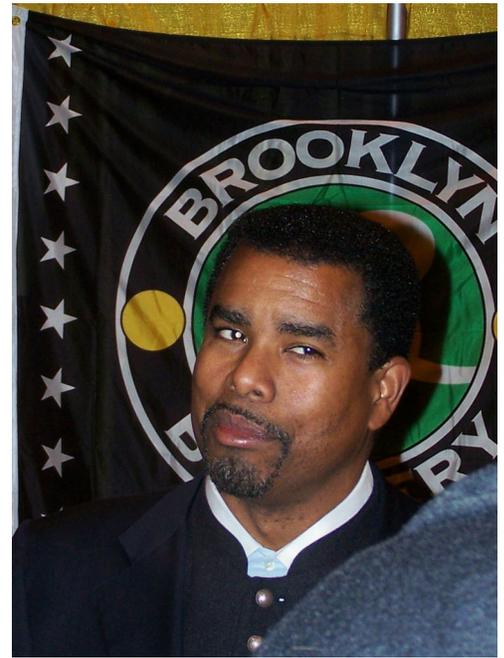
Some things that should be considered:

- **Match strength with strength.** Delicate dishes work best with delicate beers. Strongly-flavored foods command attention and therefore need assertive beers. A beer's flavor intensity varies depending on things like alcohol, malt character, hop bitterness, sweetness, richness and roastiness.
- **Consider sweetness, bitterness, carbonation, heat (spice) and richness.** This isn't as complicated as it may seem. Certain characteristics of food and beer play with each other in predictable ways. Taking advantage of these relationships can provide balance; one creating a desire for a taste of the other.
- **Look to ethnic cuisines.** The foods of beer-drinking countries offer many traditional pairing combinations. Doing a simple internet search will provide plenty of ethnic pairing ideas.
- **Practice makes perfect.** Not every pairing works as expected—as I have experienced quite a few times, however this can be fun if you learn to appreciate the unexpected. Experiment often. If you are preparing for a dinner definitely plan a “rehearsal” day where you prepare a small portion of the food and try some different beers for pairing. Build on the things that work and keep seeking those magical combinations.
- **Consider seasonality.** Warmer months seem to speak to a lighter fare and thus the beer pairings tend to follow suit. Cooler months will give us the opportunities to pull out those heavy, rich beers and foods.
- **Contrast, complement, and cut.** The 3 C's. No, we aren't talking about diamonds here. Beers and foods can interact differently depending on what you are aiming for.
- **Contrast pairings** - We are looking for things that still enhance each other, but that have their own distinct flavor profiles – one of my favorite contrast pairings is fresh chevre with Alaskan Smoked Porter.
- **Complementing pairings** - Find compatibilities. A nutty English-style brown ale and an aged Gouda; the deep, roasted flavors of an imperial stout with double chocolate brownies; and the rich, caramel flavors of an Oktoberfest lager with a roasted chicken or turkey. Keep in mind, though, that sometimes a pairing of similar flavors can have a canceling effect. For instance, smoked salmon spread may seem like a no-brainer for a smoked beer, but in my experience the smoke ends up getting lost in both the beer and the food. This can happen with chocolate also. A beer that is brewed with chocolate or just heavy on chocolate notes is not always a wise choice for a chocolate dessert. It can cause the beer to seem weak and chances are that the alcohol will end up being the dominant flavor in the end.



. **Cut pairings** – These can offer a palate cleansing aspect that is sometimes called for in very rich, fatty, or spicy foods. Try an effervescent saison with a rich, spicy Thai dish. A crisp pilsner with pasta dressed in a creamy cheese sauce. For that cutting factor, look for beers that are highly effervescent, highly hopped, high ABV, or a combination of the three. A popular cutting pairing is an IPA with spicy food. While this works in some cases, keep in mind that highly hopped beers will actually intensify the heat in the dish. While some of us enjoy this experience, many do not. It also depends on the style of IPA. For instance an East Coast or English IPA has more balance to it than does a West Coast IPA, so it may actually work very well as being a cutting tool for a spicy dish. But the West Coast IPA is going to really ramp up the spice profile of the dish.

There is a plethora of material out there, now, that you can get your hands on for more ideas or information on beer and food pairing. My favorite, the book I cut my beer and food teeth on, is *The Brewmaster's Table* by Garrett Oliver, brewmaster of Brooklyn Brewery. It's a great read that I highly recommend. It's full of information and ideas on pairing. But always remember that the pairing of food and beer can be subjective; so think of these ideas and tips as guidelines rather than rules. Have some fun in creating your own pairings and experiment with tried and true pairings.



Garrett Oliver, brewmaster, Brooklyn Brewery, author of *The Brewmaster's Table*

Rondy Wrap Up

By Dena Sessler

The 2010 Fur Rondy homebrew competition, held on February 6th, in the basement of the Snow Goose, was a huge success! Dennis had to leave town suddenly for a family emergency, which left me responsible for running it. I can't thank everyone enough for the outpouring of support shown in Dennis' absence. You all made this competition the success that it was. Many thanks to Dan Bosch and Aaron Christ who helped me take entries all day on Friday, to all of the people who showed up on Saturday to help set-up, judge, and clean-up, and my biggest and sincerest thanks to Steve Schmitt for being my head judge and wearing the numerous other hats that enabled the competition to run so smooth!

This year we had a total of 58 entries. Quite a few of them were from first time brewers and new members who did exceptionally well! It is so wonderful to see a new enthusiasm, interest, and passion from new brewers! Keep it up!

This year, the honor of the Best of Show Beer and Best of Show Mead & Cider were awarded to two sets of co-brewers. Tim Strayer & Don Lewellyn won BOS Beer with a fantastic Imperial IPA and the BOS Mead & Cider went to Breck Tostevin & Jenn Currie for a Traditional Semi-Sweet Tupelo honey Mead. Breck also entered a Bamberg smoked American Barley Wine that was chosen by Frank & Debara Kassik to be brewed for the Pro-Am competition next year. Breck was awarded a \$150.00 gift certificate from the Kassik's to cover food and lodging while in Kenai to join them for the brew day. Congratulations to all that entered and medaled!

The competition was followed up by an awards presentation at our monthly meeting on the 16th of February. Many, many thanks to our President Dennis Sessler. He arrived into Anchorage at 3am, after 23 hours of travel, exactly one week before our meeting and was waiting at Bovey Trophies when they opened that day, to ensure that medals were ordered so they could be presented to the winners on the 16th. His dedication to the GNBC and its members is second to none and it is truly appreciated! By the way, I would say that even if I didn't marry the guy!

I have included a list of all the winners and I am in the process of mailing out individual feedback sheets and medals to entrants instead of leaving them at Arctic Brewing Supply. If you don't have yours yet, and you entered, look for them in the mail soon. Thank you again to everyone!

2010 Fur Rondy Homebrew Competition Results

Pilsner

- 1st Steve Jayich (Bohemian Pilsner)
- 2nd Dan Walukicwicz (German Pilsner)
- 3rd Andy Jance & Melanie Smith (Bohemian Pilsner)

European Amber Lager

- 1st Steve Jayich (Oktoberfest)

Bock

- 1st Steve Jayich (Maibock/Helles bock)
- 2nd Aaron Christ & Sean Farley (Dopplebock)
- 3rd Aaron Christ (Eisbock)

Light Hybrid Beer

- 1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Cream Ale)
- 2nd Flash Lubitsh-White (Kolsch)

Amber Hybrid Beer

- 1st Jack Smodey (Northern German Alt)
- 2nd Steve Jayich (California Common)

English Pale Ale

- 1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Standard/Ordinary Bitter)

American Ale

- 1st Frank Bell (American Amber Ale)
- 2nd Amy DeBruhl (American Pale Ale)
- 3rd Aaron Brown (American Brown Ale)

Porter

- 1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Brown Porter)
- 2nd Steve Jayich (Robust Porter)

Stout

- 1st Tim Bisson (Foreign Extra Stout)
- 2nd Don Lewellyn & Tim Strayer (Sweet Stout)

Indian Pale Ale

- 1st Don Lewellyn & Tim Strayer (Imperial IPA) **Best of Show Beer**
- 2nd Steve Jayich (American IPA)
- 3rd Ted Rosenzweig (American IPA)

German Wheat and Rye Beer

- 1st Frank Bell (Hefeweizen)
- 2nd Dana Walukicwicz (Hefeweizen)

Belgian and French Ale

- 1st Tim Bisson (Saison)
- 2nd Flash Lubitsh-White (Biere De Garde)

Sour Ale

- 1st Todd Rock (Berliner Weise)
- 2nd Ted Rosenzweig (Flanders Red)

Belgian Strong Ale

- 1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Belgian Blonde)
- 2nd Steve Jayich (Belgian Golden Strong Ale)
- 3rd Steve Jayich (Tripel)

Spice/Herb/Vegetable

- 1st Frank Bell (Coffee Porter)
- 2nd Nicholas Thom (Christmas/Winter Spec.)

Smoke-Flavored and Wood-Aged Beer

- 1st Breck Tostevin (Bamberg smoked Am. Barley Wine) **Kassik's Pro-am winner**
- 2nd Steve Jayich (Wood aged Robust Porter)
- 3rd Aaron Debruhl (Smoked American Pale Ale)



Specialty Beer

1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Oak/Bourbon Strong Scotch Ale)

2nd Steve Jayich (Rye IPA)

Traditional Mead

1st Breck Tostevin & Jenn Currie (Traditional Sweet Mead) **Best of Show Mead & Cider**

2nd John Trapp (Traditional Sweet Mead)

Melomel (Fruit Mead)

1st Breck Tostevin (Black Currant/Tupelo Honey)

2nd Karl Morgan (B & R Currant Clover/Wildflower Honey)

3rd John Trapp (Raspberry Clover honey)

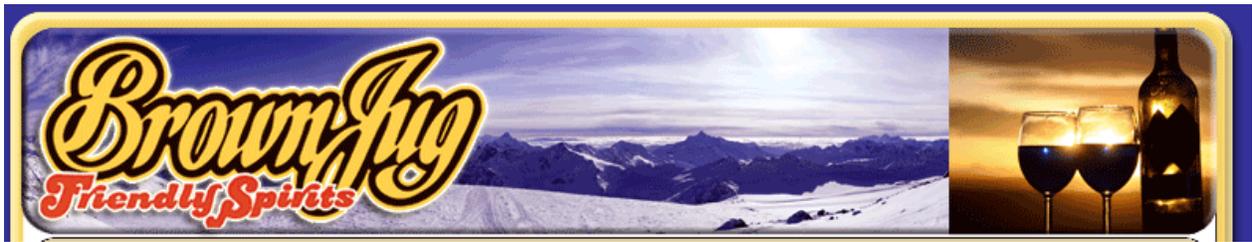
Other Mead

1st Flash Lubitsh-White (Chocolate Clover Honey)

2nd Breck Tostevin (Mint Sage Blossom Honey)

Specialty Cider and Perry

1st Tracey Lewellyn (Raisin & Brown sugar)



Secretary's Corner

by Jennifer Bisson

What we learned at the last meeting?

Kyle Beus and his wife from Matanuska Creamery gave a great talk about starting the creamery and, most importantly, cheese. We learned the basics of cheese-making and even got to try some yummy cheese curds and cheddar cheese. Check out their web-site for more information <http://www.matanuskacreamery.com/> and look out for their ice cream coming soon.

What happened since or at the last meeting?

The awards for HBC Fur Rondy were handed out. Check out the article for more information. Congratulation to all who entered!

What is happening now?

The first ever Mead Judging Class will be held on Sunday, March 7. Led by Celestial Mead owner Mike Kiker, this class will be held at Café Amsterdam. This class will cover history, styles and judging of mead. UPDATE: This class filled up in less than 24 hours so another class may be planned in the near future.

Get out of town for "Talkeetna Beer Trippin." This family friendly homebrew competition will be a joy for all. It is scheduled for March 26-28. Check elsewhere in the newsletter for information. Reserve your cabin today to share in the fun!

What does the future hold?

Brew-a-thon. Saturday, May 1, 2010. Demonstration brews, grilled meat and interesting conversation. Hope you can join us! Contact Tim Strayer at tim@strayermail.com for more information.

The Snow Goose Break-Up home brewing competition is planned for early April. Take a look at the Last Call article 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!

Important Dates in Beer History

March 1 is Beer Day in Iceland. National Beer Day celebrated on March 1st, 1989. This holiday is on March 1 every

year. Celebrates Iceland's 75 year long prohibition of beer which ended



Talkeetna Beer Trippin' LAST CALL - March 26th -28th , 2010

by *Dennis Sessler*

In last month's newsletter I wrote an article about a new winter event that Boe Barnett of Denali Brewing Company wanted to start for the Great Northern Brewers Club. All we had were dates and a basic outline of events. Now I have all the particulars for this event and ask for your participation in order to make this a success for our gracious hosts to the north. This will be a pay-as-you-go event. The basic format will go something like this: You may arrive on either Friday night or Saturday morning, your choice, transportation **will not** be provided. Below you will find a list of lodges, cabins and hostels available for rent. Please call and inquire on availability and book early. Just a side note, some of the below accommodations are a couple of miles away, and Boe has assured me they will provide transportation for those needing rides back to their lodging. Saturday morning around 10:00 a.m., Twister Creek Restaurant will be serving a late breakfast/brunch kind of service. All food and beverages will also be pay-as-you-go.

Following brunch a homebrew competition will go something like this. event; here styles **do not** matter. Boe on down for the day and help with the judging; we just want to make sure that they will continue until they have come up with the family, kids and all, around town, and do a little this time of year with spring just around the corner. There are plenty of outdoor activities for everyone to do, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, skiing, just to name a few. Please enjoy your time while in town, it will be a great time to celebrate life in the last frontier.



tion will commence, the rules of the This event **will not** be an AHA/BJCP has arranged for a few locals to come ing. You will have to provide 3 bottles of have enough to sample. The competition winner. This will be a great time to take the sightseeing. The weather should be really nice

Around 5p.m. Twister Creek Restaurant will begin serving dinner. For those who ventured out for the day we will welcome you back for a nice hot meal and the announcement of the winner of the homebrew competition. The winner of the competition will be invited up to Denali Brewing Company to help brew up a batch of their winning beer. You never know; your beer may become a regular on tap. Boe will also be awarding something special to the winner; I have not heard what this might be. I guess you will have to attend to find out.

After the awards ceremony, they will turn the lights down and the music up, a local band has been booked for the event. I'm sure this will be the highlight of the weekend; I can't wait to see John Craig cuttin' a rug!

I am looking forward to this spring time event; our family has reserved a cabin within walking distance to the brewery/restaurant. This is also a reminder to club members with young children, this is a **family friendly event**. I hope that you bring the kids and enjoy this spring time event with everyone. Most of our club events preclude children due to local/state laws. This event will be taking place in a restaurant, therefore bring them all and have a great time. The crew at Denali Brewing Company has ordered about 60 t-shirts which will be for sale. I have included the design for everyone to see. This shirt will no doubt become the crème de la crème in the world of SHWAG.



If you will be unable to attend this event, and wish to enter the competition, please feel free to contact me at sessak@mtaonline.net and I will deliver your entries for you. Boe is hoping for around 20 or so entries. Not to speculate but I am assuming they will be looking for a beer that can be easily made in their brewery and will be ready for a fairly quick turnaround. Most of all the judges will be looking for something that they will truly enjoy. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. If you have already made reservations please send me an email with how many will be attending in your group. I just want to be able to give Boe a heads up on possible attendance.

Lodging options:

Here's the breakdown on the lodging. The first three are all walking distance from downtown.

*Talkeetna Roadhouse (733-1351) has two rooms that range from \$46-\$63, three rooms from \$63-\$79, and a cabin that runs from 79-\$115, all depending on occupancy. They also have a bunk house that can sleep up to four for \$21 per night.

*Susitna River Lodging (733-0505) has 4 cabins for \$119/night (double occupancy) and \$25 extra per person. They also have 2 small suites (\$99) and 2 large suites (\$109).

*Talkeetna Cabins (733-2227) has 6 cabins (\$115) for double occupancy, as well as a 3 bedroom house \$350 for 6 people.

These are farther out of town, a four mile drive.

*The Castle B&B (733-2700) 2 bedroom house for \$120 for 4 people.

*Trilinka B&B (733-2711) 3 cabins for \$125. 2 have 2 rooms for 4-6 people. 1 has 1 room with a 1/2 loft, for 4 people. (Great mountain views, private).

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.



The Northern Brewer is a monthly newsletter published by the Great Northern Brewers Club for distribution to all club members. Subscriptions are a part of club membership and may be obtained by joining the club. Membership is open to everyone over the age of twenty-one. Please send \$25 to:

Great Northern Brewers Club
Attn: Treasurer
PMB 1204, 3705 Arctic Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503

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



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

Online: bushy@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: March 16th, 2010
at the Goose: 7 PM**