

THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

MARCH 2015

The Prez Sez

by Peter Hall



The season of change is upon us again. With so little snow covering the ground, I feel it may just disappear overnight and all of a sudden it will just be summer. Hopefully this spring will be a

smooth one, and we don't all disappear in a cloud of wildfire smoke when everything dries out a lot faster than usual. I do certainly prefer nice sunny days, but some rain will probably do us all a lot of good this spring. All will be good as long as everything clears up for GNBC events. We have the usual myriad of events to partake in. This transitional time from winter to spring is a great time for the GNBC. We take full advantage of the season and have a ton of fun doing it.

Thank you to everyone who made it out to the Fur Rondy homebrew competition. It turned out to be one of the most successful competitions we have ever had. Big Fish is easily the largest competition we have, but this one really gave it a run for its money. We were well stocked on judges, and all of the judges had plenty of great beer to judge. I was fortunate enough to be paired up with a couple of novice judges and we hammered out the IPA's without any particular trouble.

I listened to the folks at the tables around me while many novice judges were being coached through one of their first judging experiences. We even had a good showing of entries from the Kenai Peninsula Brewing and Tasting Society. I like to see the GNBC have serious competition come from outside of Anchorage. We have great beer within our club to keep standards high, but an outside touch is greatly appreciated to push us even harder.

Talkeetna Beer Tripping is upon us! In a short 3 weeks from now a large number of us will head out to Talkeetna to revel in the town's hospitality. I figured out my family's accommodations a few weeks ago and bet that there isn't much left. I wouldn't rule it out, though. If you have not already made plans, get to it. Shannon and I will be there with Clark and our dog Jelly Bean. This, obviously, family friendly event is a great time. There is an article included that has a full rundown of events and details. I hope to see you all out there on March 27.

The Prez Sez

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

GNBC WEB SITE:

WWW.GREATNORTHERNBREWERS.ORG

NEWSLETTER EMAIL

bushy@alaskan.com

PRESIDENT: PETER HALL

alaskabrewer@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT: Mike Fisher

mikefisher.ak@gmail.com

TREASURER: JODIE MACK

treasurer@greatnorthernbrewers.org

SECRETARY: JEFF SHEARER

secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JIM O'TOOLE

jiminak46@hotmail.com

KEVIN SOBOLESKY

metkonig@gmail.com

JASON LEWIS

lakeman775@gmail.com

SEAN MACK

seanmack@yahoo.com

CHRIS CRUTHERS

christopher.cruthers@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

DEBBIE GRECCO

bushy@alaskan.com

March will be a great month to catch up on a little brewing. We have a few events on the calendar, but the days are waning in which we will have good stable fermentation temperatures. You may even have more beer equipment with which to brew. Jeff Shearer just offered up a good lot of stuff at our last meeting. Now, Curtis Kreid is headed out of state. Much warmer and sunnier days are in his future. Look out for more beer stuff to show at the next meeting or posted on our Facebook page. I happen to be moving too, but only a few miles across town. Sorry but I'm going to hold onto my beer gear.

Brew-a-thon is on track for Saturday May 2nd. I'm sure it will be a wonderfully sunny day. Maybe not too sunny... Last year, we almost had worse attendance on a gorgeous day as we had the year before in the miserably cold, wet and snowy day. I guess warm but overcast is the best we can ask for to get good attendance. All of those that do intend to brew there, would you consider hosting someone new to brew with you? We have already been talking up Brew-a-thon to the BJCP class and have a few people excited to check it out. I had a great time hosting a brand new brewer last year. It helped me to better work out all the steps I go through to make a batch of beer. You don't often think about it until put on the spot to explain it all. Plan to be at 9551 Emerald Street on Saturday May 2nd for the nationwide toast at 9am.

I get a warm feeling thinking about the summer events coming up. Almost like I can already sense the bug dope and sun on my skin. Surely the sun will make an appearance for us at the Trail River group site for our summer camp out on the weekend of June 12th - 14th. I haven't really told them yet, but I had the intention of inviting out the Kenai Tasters to hang out with us. Seems like good middle ground and a good opportunity to share good beverages at another great family event. Details will come out as the event draws near. Kat Karabelnikof has offered to coordinate this event, and gets to call the theme for the weekend. I'm sure I will have more info for you in next month's newsletter. Please plan to join us all at the Trail River campground for our summer camp out.

I seem to have rambled on and filled a pretty long Prez Sez. I still don't necessarily get to elaborate a whole lot. I am happy to field any questions that you have. Send me a questions at president@greatnorthernbrewers.org Keep your brews hot and beers cold, Prez Peter.



Secretary's Corner

by Peter Hall

I don't do this very often, but every once in a while I have to fill in and write a little more for our monthly newsletter. Jeff Shearer has been a great secretary and has helped the club in many ways over the last few years.

Jeff has pushed all of us to make better beer. He has set a great example of how to partake and contribute to the GNBC. Jim O'Toole has offered to step into the Secretary spot for the remainder of the term. The means that I am now looking for a new board member.

This is all pursuant of article V sec 4 and article VI sec 4 in the clubs bylaws. If you haven't reviewed our bylaws before, I would encourage you to do so. It can be rather dry, but I like to see where we came from and how well our club is set up.

Going forward, there's not a whole lot listed here, but the events are both big ones. There are at least two opportunities to get out of town. Check it out! This may be a good opportunity to break Jim O'Toole into being Secretary. If you have questions, send him an email at secretary@greatnorthernbrewers.org

Events:

Talkeetna Beer Trippin' Weekend

Friday, March 27th – Sunday, March 29th. You're doing yourself, and your liver, a disservice by not attending this event. Too many details to list here, look for event info in the March newsletter and club email postings.

GNBC Summer Campout

Friday, June 12th – Sunday June 14th – Trail River Campground Group Site
If you have been before, you know the drill. If you haven't, watch out for articles. You could just show up too and plan to have a great time with friends.

Rules of Conduct:

All GNBC Members have been asked to sign an updated Rules of Conduct form. Please contact Ross/Membership Coordinator for a form or you can obtain a Rules of Conduct form at our next GNBC meeting. This implementation will continue at each meeting for the current year/ annual membership.

We will have some new procedures for our events and meetings. Our monthly meeting will now have a designated start and ending time, as well as a last call to serve homebrew at 9pm. Lights out, closed up and a final walk through will be conducted at 9:45pm by a GNBC officer/ board member.

Miscellaneous:

TAP (Training for Alcohol Professionals) classes are held at CHARR's Charlie H. Selman Training Center located at 1503 W. 31st Avenue, Suite 101 Anchorage, AK. This certification is required if you pour or steward at any fests or competitions. For the latest training schedule, check out their website: <http://alaskacharr.com/training/tap-schedules/>

EVENTS

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Friday

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

13.....*St. Pats in the Mats*

*Palmer Train Depot
6 - 10 pm pay as you go*

27 - 29...*Talkeetna Beer Trippin*

Various Times/Locations

21.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting*

7 pm at the Snow Goose

2.....*GNBC Brewathon*

*at Jeff Shearer's House
9:00 National Toast: Details TBD*

22 - 23...*23rd Annual Great Alaska Craft*

*Beer and Homebrew Festival
Haines, Alaska*



Talkeetna Beer Trippin' 2015

By Joe Michael

It's hard to believe that it has been six years of jaunting out to Talkeetna with the GNBC, but here we are once again. It has been so neat to see this event grow from its quiet and humble beginnings in 2009 to what it has become in 2016: a weekend replete with events, competition, food, and friends in this gem of a town. Some years in the past, we've had snow, cold, rain, blizzards during this event, but 2015 appears to be a little milder than we've experienced. Regardless of the weather; the GNBC invites you to go Trippin' with us in Talkeetna during the weekend of March 27-29, 2015!

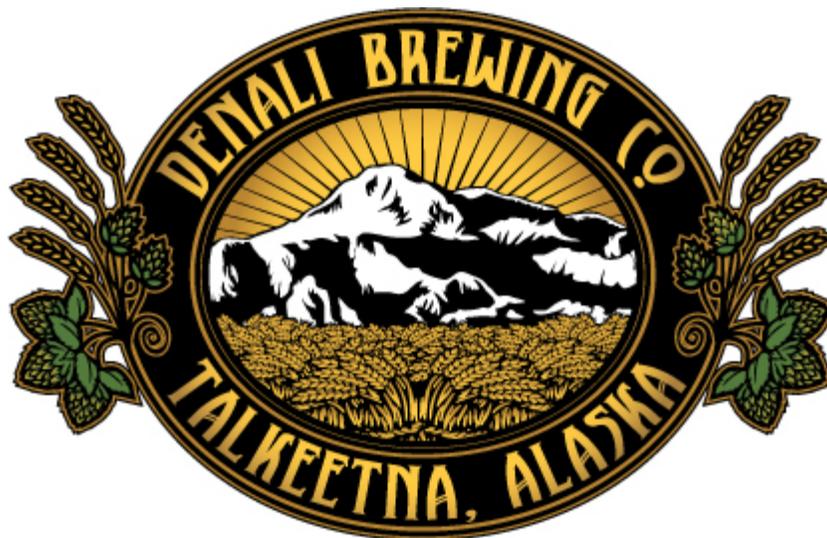
We kick off the weekend on Friday night, March 27th, with a beer dinner at Twister Creek Restaurant, hosted by Denali Brewing Company. This gig fills up fast and as of this writing it was already getting close to selling out. Give Twister Creek Restaurant a call to get on the reservation list right away!

If you can't make the formal dinner, or want to try something a little more casual, we are thrilled to see a new participant to the Trippin' weekend – the West Rib Pub! At the same time as the Twister Creek dinner, you can enjoy a burger and brew at the West Rib. You won't miss out on sampling Jeff Shearer's winning beer from last year. Jeff's beer will premiere at the West Rib at the same time during your meal there. In any case, a hearty cheers and welcome to the West Rib – check them out over the weekend, and bring your GNBC membership card! With your card, you'll enjoy a 10% discount all weekend long for the event!

There are a lot of other fun activities to be found over the course of the weekend...from the popular Beer Bakin' event up the way at the Flying Squirrel, to the homebrew taste and share and the informal competition on Saturday. The Golden Carboy has become quite the coveted trophy...this year's winner will join the ranks of names featured on the carboy itself, and the winning brew will be re-made by Denali Brewing for release at TBT 2016. I am pretty excited to taste Jeff Shearer's winner this year! Check out the schedule (posted on the Facebook event page and in emails to the club) for the full rundown of events – there's a lot to see and do in and around Talkeetna.

A word about lodging – it does fill up fast. I've heard that a few have got their situations secured, but don't hesitate to call some of the fine establishments out there for somewhere to lay your head. A good listing of the various lodging options can be found at: <http://www.talkeetnachamber.org/directory/category/lodging>.

Again, take a look at the schedule (just recently updated) and make your plans to join the annual pilgrimage to Talkeetna for Beer Trippin' 2015. If there are any questions, email me at joeofak@gmail.com and I will do my best to get you pointed in the right direction!



American Brown Ale

by *Jeff Shearer*

I remember the first craft beer I ever drank – Big Sky Brewing Company's Moose Drool. I'm guessing I selected Moose Drool because it had a cool name and I wanted to try something far different than the lite American lagers I exclusively consumed up until that point. Roughly ten years later when I started homebrewing, a Nut Brown Ale was the first beer I brewed.

My first homebrew was one of those pre-hopped extract kits and it was quite forgettable, perhaps due in part to my brewing skills. Last summer I decided to brew a Brown Ale again and this time the results were vastly different. The beer had just the right amount of caramel sweetness with some chocolate notes. Hop bitterness was right where I had hoped. The recipe I followed is below – it may or may not get you something very similar to Moose Drool.

Batch Size: 6 gallons

OG: 1.052

FG: 1.014

IBU: 30

Color: 19 SRM

Alcohol: 5 %

Boil: 60 minutes

Pre-Boil Gravity: 1.040

Pre-Boil Volume: 7.27 gallons

Extract:

Pale LME

Weight

7.4 lb (3.37 kg)

Percent

82.0%

Steeping Grains:

Crystal 80L

1.25 lb (0.57 kg)

13.8%

Chocolate 350L

0.35 lb (0.16 kg)

4.0%

Black Patent 500L

0.02 lb (0.01 kg)

0.2%

Hops:

East Kent Goldings (5% AA) – 40 g @ 60 mins, 27.8 IBUs

Willamette (5.5% AA) – 17 g @ 10 mins, 2.6 IBUs

Liberty (4.3% AA) – 17 g @ 0 mins

Liberty (4.3% AA) – 28 g @ 7 day dry hop

Yeast:

White Labs WLP002 English Ale, Wyeast 1968 London ESB, or Safale US04 dry yeast. Ferment at 67 F.

All Grain Option:

Replace Pale LME with 10.8 lb (4.9 kg) of US 2 Row malt. Mash at 154 F for 60 minutes.

* Recipe calculated for 70% mash efficiency. Use malt percentages to scale batch size.

MEETING SETUP

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

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Suds Corner

by John Craig

Beer-Beer-Beer!
Mush-Mush-Mush!

This is my favorite time of the year: Fur Rondy days! It's all down hill for winter. Rose and I are now Talkeetna Snow Birds and spend our winters in the banana belt of Alaska. It's not better than Anchorage in Talkeetna. Anchorage is my favorite Big City for a retired person. There are lots of things to do; explore the beers and have at least two pints a day to get me out of the house. Cabin Fever!

Anyhow, a good deal is at Koots. Check out the new Connoisseur's Club. Its only \$5 and a super good deal for beer and food and exploring different beers of the world. Also, they have \$2.75 pints between 11 am and until 10 pm every day.

Another favorite spot now-days closest to the house is King Street Brewery. I think it's becoming my second home, before my retirement home.



On February 22, 2015, I celebrated my 73rd birthday. In honor of my birthday, I'm reprinting something I wrote back in March of 2001. Here's my Suds Corner that was printed in the GNBC newsletter back then.

A Lucky Lager Birthday Weekend

I spent my birthday in Talkeetna. It was a wonderful day. I was listening to the Denali Trapline at noon on the local Talkeetna radio station and I heard a messa from some brew friends that I know from the club. "Paul Stowell and 'so-and-so' will meet you at Moose Creek at such and such a time," said the radio.

Minutes later, Mark Stasik, one of our club members, also had a message on the airwaves about a weekend photo slide show at the Denali Park Visitor's Center. Mark doesn't make it to very many homebrew club meetings, but I will never forget the smoke beer that he brought to our Christmas gathering at Mike Hartman's house some years back.

It was creosote smoked beer, and one of the best smokes I'd tasted at the time. He made the beer by firing up his cabin wood stove with a mix of green and dry alter lims and chips. Mark would put moist, cracked grain on a screen at the end of the stovepipe, and after a couple of hours, it would have truce creosote flavor. I call this THC or "True Hybrid of Creosote," the resin of smoke. I believe both Paul Stowell and Mark Stasik made this brew at Question Creek on the Talkeetna Spur Road.

The day before was my birthday; the Big 59. No more old 55 for Suds. I sure do miss Bird Creek Brewery. It was steak night at the Talkeetna VFW and I decided to go because after all, it'd been five days since I'd seen another human. At my cabin, it's spit showers and brushing my teeth with Lucky Lager, my favorite cheap-assed beer.

There is no more Yakima Beer. Miller Brewing Company shut down the brewery when they bought out Rainier, which, incidentally, is not a coffee roasting plant. And, Henry Weinhard's is not an Oregon beer anymore. After starting there nearly 150 years ago, when the land was a territory. I do enjoy their Blackberry Wheat.

It's now brewed in Tumwater, Washington. The Miller Brewing Company now owns that famous artesian well that was used to make Olympia Beer. They are proud to be part of the Northwest, and call Tumwater home. Welcome to Buttweiser country with new shelf space. These days I have to look hard for my Lucky Lager. I like it, in part, because it thaws out great next to the wood stove even when it's minus 20 outside. I can also chop it open with an axe for a beer slushy.



At the WFW Hall, the steak was great and pints of Killian's were only \$2. The place included lots of local folk, neighbors and homesteaders full of Alaskan politics.

There was lots of bull flying while I chewed my steak. Too much beer can get you into trouble, and its easy to over-consume at those prices. I knew it was time to find a different environment and headed to my favorite Talkeetna watering hole: The Fairview Hotel and Bar.

As I pulled open the door (it's as stubborn as a mule...I hope one of these days they fix it), I knew I'd died and gone to heaven as I looked at the old faces of the past. Either their pictures wee on the wall, or they were sitting at the bar.

When I first stepped into this bar in 1972 on my way from a peanut butter eating contest at the Montana Creek Lodge, a moose tongue would buy you a beer.

That night, the stool next to Cliff Hudson was empty. Cliff was the founder of Hudson Flying Service. Cliff doesn't fly anymore; his son owns the business. Once he flew me to Bald Mountain. He piloted his super cub with his white poodle on his shoulder. We were looking for my new Honda ATV that was buried up to the handlebars in mud. We found it from the air. "How in the world did you get that machine up here," Cliff asked?

"I rode it up here. How do I get it out of here," I replied?

His suggestion was that I leave it and come back in the winter on a snowmobile to get it out. After I'd gotten stuck, I hiked out the 17 miles back to my cabin. I had two grizzlies on my ass. Thank God for Lucky Lager; it saved me. I'll save the full story for another time.

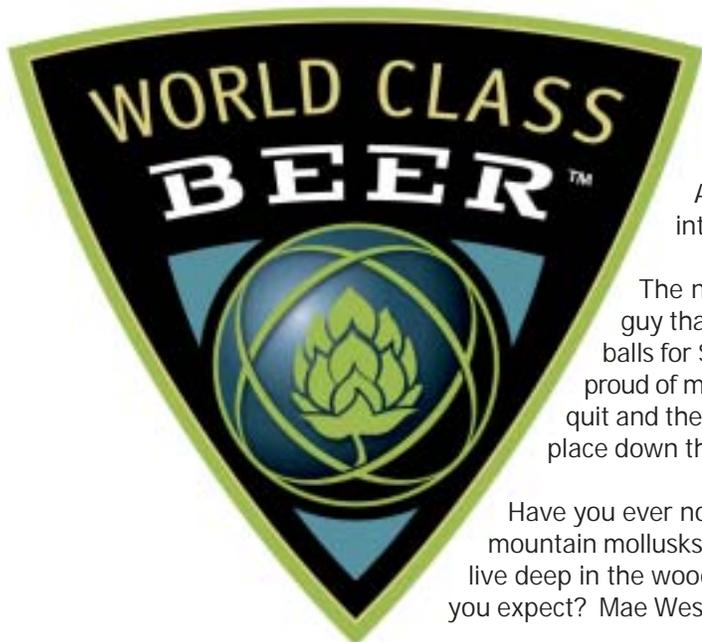
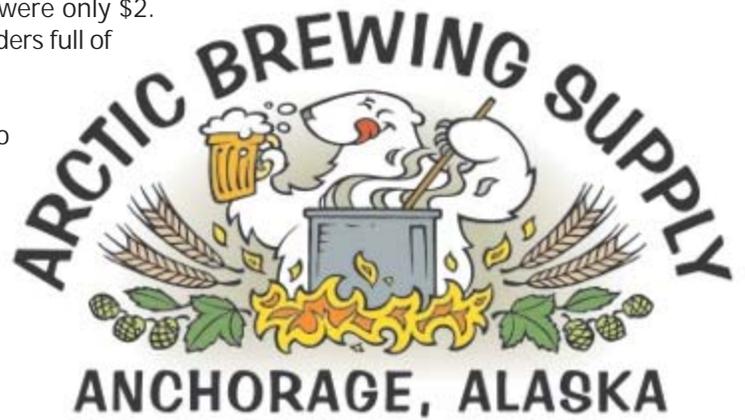
As Cliff said, "fly and hour or walk a week...the Talkeetnas can get nasty." I still love them.

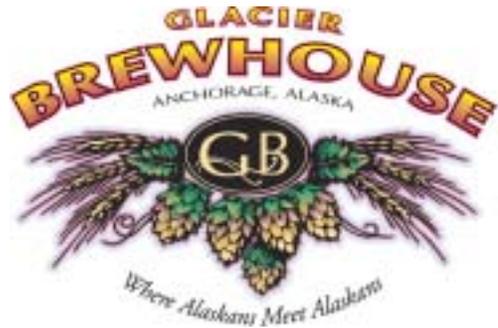
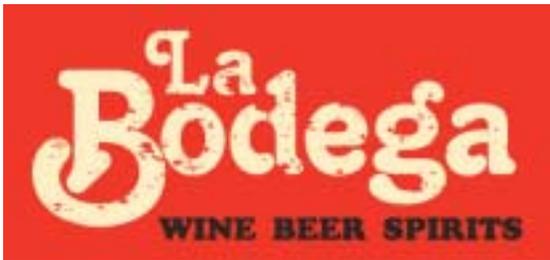
As the Fairview, I needed a Lucky Lager. It's \$1.75 a bottle and you have to ask for a glass. Last year, it was \$1.25 a can. A lawyer from Anchorage bought the place last year and turned it into a first class joint.

The night I was there, the bartender remembered me. "You're the guy that ate three large platters of all you can eat spaghetti and meat-balls for \$6.99. No one has ever eaten that much," he said. I was pretty proud of myself that night. With an oink-oink! After that, the cook, Michael, quit and they shot down the kitchen at the Fairview. Michael opened a new place down the street. I wonder if it's all you can eat?

Have you ever noticed the women that hang out in the Fairview? They are real mountain mollusks (a large group of animals with soft bodies and hard shells) that live deep in the woods. With the highest mountains in North America, what would you expect? Mae West, you'd love our jugs. I left my growler at home.

I did recognize the mollusk at the end of the bar as a Playboy playmate and asked for her autograph. As she ran over to me, the mountains moved and the floorboards squeaked. Her fingers wrote the name "Sousa" on my Miller Genuine Draft napkin. She made my day. The autographed napkin is now hanging on the inside of my outhouse wall.





The night was still young. They don't close the bars in Talkeetna until 5 am and it was both a Saturday night and my birthday. A few more Lucky Lagers were in order. Cliff was full of stories, and a couple of mountain climbers were eating pizza from down the street. Soon, it was time to leave my good friends to head across the street to Nagley's Store for a bag of salted peanuts in the shell. These make good cabin snacks.

In the back of the store is the West Rib Bar which usually has about six beers on tap. A young crowd filled the bar. Most of them worked at Denali Park and spent their weekends in Talkeetna. With Guinness on tap at \$4 a pint, this was my goodnight brew before leaving town on the 18 mile trek to my cabin. It was snowing like crazy and I didn't need a DUI.

Back at my cabin, there was a voice mail from Rose on my cell phone. She'd stayed in Anchorage to help her brother Lynn move to Washington State. She told me about the club meeting at the Elks. Thanks to all of you very much for the gift certificates. We will enjoy the oysters and beer at Café Amsterdam, along with the company of our good friends Ken and Shauna Pajak, the owners. Also thanks to Dave and Sue for their beer supply coupon from Arctic Brewing Supply. And, I can't forget the Oldenbergs for starting the club and working together to put homebrew in the Fur Rendezvous festival. Thanks also to Debbie Grecco for putting the newsletter together. It's a hell of a lot of work and looks better and better with each issue.

Finally, don't forget to wear our green on Yanno's birthday on St. Patrick's Day. It will be Truth or Consequences on the banks of the Rio Grande in New Mexico.

As I settled in for the night in my cabin, I realized I left my growlers in Anchorage. I'll dream about them tonight.

Suds



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

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



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

Online: bushy@alaskan.com
Phone: 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 27th - 29th Talkeetna, Alaska
Talkeetna Beer Trippin 2015**