



THE

Northern Brewer

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWERS CLUB

MAY 2007

The Prez Sez

by *Steve Schmitt*



By the time you read this National Homebrew Day, AKA Brew-A-Thon, will be done and gone - another year brewing at John and Rose's house with a bunch of beer and bratwurst. John and Rose, thanks again for allowing us to invade your yard and make use of the BBQ. Also - a big round of thank-you's go out to Pete and Lisa at Arctic Brewing Supply for providing the port-a-potty again. I'm sure the neighbors really appreciate it.

Thanks also to Kerri Canepa for her presentation at the April meeting regarding her tour of the Kenai Peninsula in search of beer, wine, and mead. Her Powerpoint presentation was almost as cool as the beverages she shared with the group.

Ira organized the Snowgoose Competition last month and even though we didn't have a lot of entries (12) we still had some excellent beers to judge. Congrats to Steve Jayich for winning Best of Show with a Helles. Finally someone was able to kick Jason's out out of the way and put some pressure on him.

The judging for the National Homebrew Competition is currently talking place and various other competitions are happening, so if you're interested check within this newsletter or on our website for more information. The E.T. Barnette competition in Fairbanks happens in July and I know that Scott is always looking for judges interested in a road trip north.

Remember that the May meeting (Tuesday the 22nd) will be our final 'official' meeting this spring. In June we will be at the Eklutna Lake group campground for our annual summer campout. We'll have the site reserved from noon on Friday the 15th through noon on Sunday the 17th so bring your best girl (or boy), beer, and a bicycle - plus some food and firewood of course. This year we plan to have an Italian night potluck dinner on Saturday night and fines will be levied to people who bring spaghetti sauce from Costco for the pasta. "Italian night while camping out," you ask?!? Yeah - it's easy - put your lasagna (or whatever) in a vacuum sealed bag and dump it into some hot water for 10 minutes - bam!

The July meeting will be the annual BBQ at the Loughery residence and in August we'll be having a BBQ at the Kiker's again (probably be forced to drink mead there). And remember - mark your calendars for December 8th for the GNBC Christmas party at the Snowgoose.

The Prez Sez

Secretary's Corner

Twenty Years of Great Northern Brewings

E.T. Barnette Homebrew Competition
Calling All Judges!

Insider's Scoop

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Secretary's Corner

by Dena Sessler

I want to start out by saying WOWIE! At the April meeting, all of the food dishes that were cooked with beer and provided by members were phenomenal. A few of my favorites were the jalapeno poppers, decadent chocolate delight, and mead infused chocolate strawberries. I can't wait until next year's event and more homebrew-inspired and infused culinary delights!

Members of the GNBC met in the theatre at the Snow Goose on April 17th. The new GNBC web site is up and running. We are still working out a few bugs (very few) but the site is fantastic! Thank you again Robert!

This Saturday, the 5th of May is National Homebrew day. It will mark the 3rd year that John and Rose Craig have hosted the event. The National Homebrew Day Coast to Coast Toast is at 9:00am sharp. There will be a BBQ/potluck and of course lots of great beer, so bring a friend, your rubber boots, something to grill and share with others and the ingredients you'll need to make homebrew. Don't forget carboys or other containers to bring your beer home in. Even if you don't plan on brewing, plan on stopping by to enjoy some camaraderie with your GNBC friends.

April 14th was the Snow Goose Breakup Homebrew Competition. There were only 12 entries this year and one man's competition. Steve Jayich won Best of Show with his Munich Helles. As a matter of fact Steve had 4 out of the 5 beers in the Best of Show round. Congratulations Steve, and to all that placed.

We still are in need for someone to take over the State Fair Competition. Since no one volunteered at the last meeting, a compromise is trying to be made with the ladies at the State Fair, so stay tuned for an update. Basically, the biggest burden in administering the State Fair competition is having to accept entries and judge the beers in Palmer. This is taxing for the organizer and the judges and puts our people at risk by having them judge beers for the better part of an afternoon, then drive back to Anchorage. GNBC is building a compelling argument that in order for us to continue to manage the event, we need the flexibility of judging the entries at our convenience and on our turf here in Anchorage. The administration of the State Fair has been approached with this and we're awaiting a response.

The summer schedule is as follows: The May club meeting will be at the Snow Goose as usual. This will be the final "regular" meeting until this fall. June's meeting is the summer campout at Eklutna Lake the 15th-17th and the theme (at least for food) is Italian. July's event will be our annual summer BBQ at the Lowry's house. Details are being worked out and a date is yet to be determined. In August, we'll enjoy another annual BBQ at Mike Kiker's house, and again, the date hasn't been set. Monitor the newsletter and other areas on the GNBC website for updates. On Saturday August 4th is the GNBC Golf Tournament at the Moose Run Golf Course on Ft. Richardson. It is still being decided whether it will be a joint effort with Humpy's or not, so stay tuned.

December 8th is our Christmas party at the Snow Goose. Steve says the theme is "Static House Crawl." Bring your food and beer to the party.

The increasingly popular GNBC House Crawl is being resurrected by Carl and is tentatively scheduled for the first week in June. In this fun event, we rent a bus and drive from homebrewer's house to homebrewer's house, share beer and engage in beer-induced activities that bring the competitive side out of our members and guarantee a good laugh for all that participate.

Kerri Canepa took a little trip to the Kenai Peninsula and decided to stop by a few local breweries. She made it to all of them. What a trooper. Her first stop was Kassiks Kenai Brew Stop, a small brewery in Nikiski that will mark it's 1st year in business on May 26th. Kassik's fine beers often show up in limited quantities at both Humpy's and Café Amsterdam. The 2nd stop was at the Kenai River Brewing Company in Soldotna. Kerri says that they are operating at ¼ their capacity and have lots of room for growth. They will be brewing up a series of single hop IPA's. All six will be available on tap at the brewery in January of 2008. Kerri's 3rd stop was at the Bear Creek Winery. Bear Creek uses local "Country fruit" and grape juice from California. The winery has been open for three years now and has a nice variety of wine. The fourth destination on her agenda was the Ring of Fire Meadery in Homer. Lawrence Livingston

just came back from a trip to Hawaii and brought back some tropical honey, so we can look forward to a little aloha in Ring of Fire's future meads. Kerri's last stop was at the Homer Brewing Company. Here's an interesting fact: they started in 1996 and are a year younger than Midnight Sun Brewing Company. Kerri brought back so many wonderful samples that I lost track of which one belonged to which brewery. Thank you Kerri, they were all great! Maybe a beer run in the fall? She will keep us updated on the details.

Last but not least, CELESTIAL MEAD'S ARE ON THE SHELF and available at LaBodega and Gold Rush Liquor. Until our next meeting on the 15th of May, Cheers to you!



Twenty Years of Great Northern Brewings

by John "Suds" Craig

As I wandered deep in the woods in my bunny boots, the March winds are slapping me in the face at minus 20 below. With a ring in the air, a buzz and a vibration in my pants pocket, I throw off my mittens, unzip my parka, and un-flap the beaver hat flaps on my ears. I reach into my pocket to pull out my cell phone. On the other end is Steve Schmitt, president of the Great Northern Brewers Club (GNBC). After asking how I was, he asked me if I would write a short history on our homebrew club.

How could I resist? It made me warm all over, even excited, thinking about allo of the good times over the last twenty years as a club member. "Sure, Steve, it will probably take me a month to do this in my spare time, but I'm more than happy to do it."

Now it's going on to the end of April and the snow is about gone, but Jewell Lake is still frozen and I still have a chance. I thanked the beer Gods that Steve gave me two of his smoke beers years ago. I think tonight is the night to crack them open, to get me started.

EVENTS

Every First Thursday

Moose's Tooth First Tap

Every Friday

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

01 - 04...*Ring of Fire Meadery Goblets of Gold Mead Only Competition Entries Due at Arictc Brewing*

01 - 10...*Ring of Fire Meadery Goblets of Gold Mead Only Competition Entries due at Ring of Fire in Homer 907-399-MEAD (6323)*

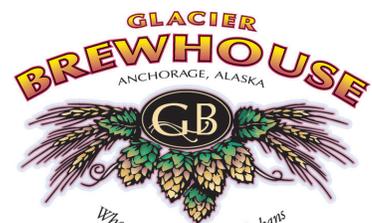
05.....*GNBC Brewathon at John Craig's Jade Street Brewery*

19.....*Celestial Meads Grand Opening Noon to 5:00 PM Free Mead Samples and Snacks Call 250-8362 for more details*

22.....*GNBC Monthly Meeting at the Snow Goose 7:00PM*

25 - 26...*Haines Beer Festival*

15 - 17...*GNBC Summer Campout at Eklutna Lakes Campground*



La Bodega

WINE BEER SPIRITS

With this being the 20th Anniversary of the Club, I would like to raise a toast to a couple of key members. First there's Dave Yanoshek. Then there's me. There's Gary Busse, Steve Baxter and lots of other beer lovers of the years. We are the oldest living GNBC dinosaurs in the club.

I'm not bragging, but in my old age, the wiser I've become, I've found myself to be a true connoisseur of beer. I have seen a lot of changes over the years, even before the club was founded. A fellow named Herb Brasseur was teaching people how to brew. He held classes at different Anchorage community schools. I took one of his classes at the Sand Lake School. The recipe we used was a lot different from the recipe my dad passed on to me but basically, what I learned is school is essentially the same method we homebrewers use today. It was of European style. Remember that we didn't have microbrews back then and the beer was either from Europe or was mass produced in America. We also had a wine and beer brewing club in Anchorage back in 1980 and I went to a couple of the meetings. Their name was the Alaskan Fermenters and they held their meetings at Alaska Mill Feed and Garden Center, the same place Great Northern Brewers first started its meetings.

If anyone is interested in a May 19, 1980 newsletter of the Alaskan Fermenters, I have a copy that I can send you. I also have every GNBC Club Newsletter from Day one. That would be two hundred and forty issues in twenty years of great homebrewing.

I remember our early meetings in the Mill Feed and Garden warehouse trying to stay warm. We wore parkas, mittens, and bunny boots to keep from freezing. We wouldn't be here today without Pat and Randy Oldenburg, the Club's first presidents. They spent hours and hours bringing the club together. One of the highlights back then was fighting the State of Alaska. At the time, marijuana sales were illegal but it was okay to grow your own at home for personal use. Ironically, it was illegal to make beer. The state was not going to let our club set up a display at the annual Fur Rendezvous event. The club members were hot! We wrote and talked to our legislators to have this outdated law abolished. We won (see AS04.2I.015). At about the same time, we came up with our present club name and the logo that remained intact until it was redesigned last year.

Thinking about the last twenty years and explaining all the things that have happened, I could write a book about the club. We had meetings at the Oldenburg's house for many years, then at the Brown Jug Warehouse. We held meetings at the Catholic Church on East 20th Ave off Muldoon Road. . That's where I suppose I learned about the Beer Gods. Thank you Father Leo!

Some of our homebrewers ultimately turned professional including Mike Hartman, Shawn Wendling, Ken Pajak, Ray Hodge, Ike Kelly, S.J. Klein, Kevin Burton, Gary Busse and probably many more to come.

I do enjoy being with old and new friends at our brew club. We've had some crazy, wild times over the years. House parties, house, crawls, pub crawls, summer and winter camp outs, pot lucks and dancing around the camp fire or doing the chicken polka all come to mind. I would say we are a group of homebrewers that make damned good beer and have a good time doing it. I'm increasingly impressed with our recognition across the nation as a true homebrewing force in the United States. No matter what, we always have a great time doing it.

Our competitions include the Fur Rendezvous Homebrew Competition, the Snow Goose Restaurant and Sleeping Lady Brewing Company's Annual Breakup Homebrew Competition, the Humpy's Bigfish Homebrew Competition and the Alaska State Fair Homebrew Competition bring great exposure to our efforts and it's always fun to be a beer judge or to volunteer by helping out. In the early days of our club, you even got extra points at judging if you used a cork-lined bottle cap. Even the beer dregs were an important part of judging. The empty bottle was held up to the light and the judge looked like he was looking into a pocket telescope, checking for runny or sticky bottom sludge. Times have certainly changed.

I could write about our club for hours sharing the good, bad and ugly beers over the years. Beer is my life. I was born and raised on it and have had some ups and downs with it, but it's still with me until I leave Mother Earth. As I close with a Jade Street Smoke Beer, tonight I will dream about all the beers and club friends over the last twenty years. Remember, relax, don't worry and have a homebrew!

Calling All Beer Judges!

by *Scott Stihler*

We need BJCP judges and/or experienced brewers to help judge this year's E.T. Barnette Homebrew Competition!!!

The overall quality of the entries is generally quite high and it is a lot of fun.

Judging will take place on July 14 at the Silver Gulch Brewing and Bottling Company located in beautiful downtown Fox (~10 miles north of Fairbanks).

Judging should start at around 10:00 a.m. or so.

Once again judges will be able to save the cost of shipping their entries by pre-registering them. All they need do is fill out the Entry and Bottle ID each entry and mail them to us along with the appropriate entry fee payment. Then all they need do is simply show up on the competition day with their entries in hand.

Please send your pre-registration and payment to:
Scott Stihler
P.O. Box 84988
Fairbanks, AK 99708

If possible, please send pre-registration materials early enough for us to have them when we check in the entries on July 11. At the very latest we need these materials by Friday, July 13.

I hope you can join us in judging this year's E.T. Barnette Homebrew Competition.

We REALLY do need the help!

For more information about this competition as well as Entry and Bottle ID forms please go to the following URL: <http://www.mosquitobytes.com/Den/Beer/Events/Events.html>

If you are interested in judging or have any questions regarding the competition please contact Scott & Chérie Stihler at stihlerunits@mosquitobytes.com or (907) 474-2137.



MEETING SETUP

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

Insider's Scoop

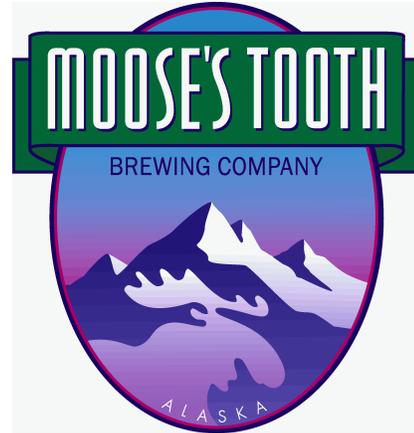
by *Dena Sessler*

Arctic Brewing Supply. The hop rhizomes are in and ready for planting. Arctic Brewing Supply has at least 10 varieties. Lisa said that her hops, planted in previous years, are starting to come up. They should be able to be planted directly outside if it stays above 40 degrees at night. Check Arctic Brewing out for all of you beer and wine making needs at www.arcticbrewingsupply.com.

La Bodega has Celestial Meads on the shelf. The prices range from \$16.00 to \$28.00 a bottle. Effective May 1st, La Bodega will have stock Meantime Brewing Company's London Porter, IPA, and and Coffee Porter. Meantime is a prolific brewery in London adjacent to the Thames and resurrects historical recipes from this area where both IPA and porter were born. . A link to one review is www.ratebeer.com/beer/meantime-london-porter/48499/. Also, the Thursday, May 3rd Anchorage Press Brew Review article by Dr. Fermento covered this brewery and their wares. La Bodega is still waiting on beers from Lagunitas but Stone's Russian Imperial Stout is in.

Celestial Meads grand opening is scheduled for May 19th between noon and 5 pm. . Mike Kiker's grappling with the details and arrangements, but monitor the GNBC website for updates. Check out Celestial Meads' website at <http://www.celestialmeads.com>. Mike can be reached at Celestial Meads at (907) 250-8362 as well if you need immediate and specific information.





Midnight Sun Brewing. On Friday, April 27th, Saison of the Sun will be available on draft and in bottles. On Friday, May 4th, Old Whiskers Hefeweizen will also be available in draft and in bottles. On Friday, May 25th, MSBC's Witbier will be available. It's keg conditioned only, no bottles. In June, Greed, a Belgian style single, will be available in kegs and is also bottle conditioned. There is not a date yet, but the pre release party for Greed will be at Subzero the Thursday before the Friday release. Keep an eye on MSBC's web site www.midnightsunbrewing.com. In late July, Midnight Sun is having a poker run downtown. This will feature five bars and a five card stud game where participants receive a card at each stop. Play your hand at the last stop for prizes. Stay tuned for details.

Café Amsterdam is releasing an awesome armada of great beers in the coming weeks. Look for the following at the Café: May 03: Monk's Café Ale and Bavik Pilsner; May 10: Petrus Brown and Musketeers Trubador Obscura; May 17: La Divine Dark Triple; May 24: Tikka Gold; May 31: Des Rulles Triple; June 07: Dupon Moinette Brune and Des Rocs Reserve Special; May 14: Het Anker Goulden Carolus Triple (keg fermented).

Kassik's Kenai Brew Stop's one year anniversary is looming ahead and if you happen to be on the Kenai Peninsula over Memorial Day weekend, plan on attending the celebration at the brewery (47160 Sprucehaven Drive, in Nikiski). Call the brewery at (907) 776-4055 for directions. This brewery can be a bit tough to find, but it's a great trip for the adventurous, and the rewards are great at the end.

That is it for now. Keep the information coming. If there is anyone who would like beer information added to the "Insiders Scoop" e-mail it me at sessak@mtaonline.net. As always be safe, and get out and support the folks that support us!



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

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



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

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3705 Arctic Boulevard
Anchorage, AK 99503**

**NEXT MEETING: May 22, 2007
7:00 PM at the Goose**