

Another Round: More Words of Wisdom About Beer

By Scott Laird

North American Organic Brewers Festival Report-- As promised, I did attend the NAOBF in late June, and, as promised, here is what I found: A really great Beer Fest! Held at North Portland's Overlook Park, this outdoor festival had it all-- sunlight, fresh air, space to move around, shady spots to relax, live music, healthy food vendors, and, to top it all off, some really great beers! The weather was especially cooperative and I made the rounds and found these beers in which you might be interested. We'll start at the top: my favorite beer was the **Backhand of God Irish Stout** by **Crannog Brewing, Sorrento, British Columbia**. This was really smooth and drinkable at 5.3% ABV, that was balanced and mellow, with a hint of espresso-- but not overpowering. An almost perfect Stout. I also tasted the **Overcast Espresso Stout from Oakshire Brewing in Eugene** again, one of my favorite brews from this year's Spring Beer and Wine Fest, and still found it an excellent beer. Also tried the **Organic Coffee Stout from Elliot Bay Brewing from Seattle**. This one was really heavy on the coffee; it started out really big and flavorful, but didn't have much of a finish. If you like a big coffee Stout you might enjoy this-- I was a little disappointed. **Bison Brewing from Berkley California** had a **Honey Basil Ale**, that was a nice summer-time beer with honey and herbal flavor shining through. It was well rounded and balanced and something new and interesting to try. It was poured from bottles, so you might be able to find this one in a local store. I also tasted the **Reggae Junkie Gruit from Upright Brewing in Northeast Portland**, a farmhouse-style brew that was balanced and flavorful, and the **Gruit Kolsch from Roots Organic Brewing in Southeast Portland** that was tasty and well made.

All in all, this is probably my favorite Beer Fest in Portland-- well-organized, not too crowded, with a great message and values. And the beer choices were incredible! There was just about something for everyone-- with styles and varieties too numerous to mention. Make sure to put this one on your calendar for next year-- it's the last weekend in June.

B is for Beer-- Well, Tom Robbins has done it again. Robbins, if you're not familiar with him, is an author of ... well, fiction, that includes, *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, and my all-time favorite, *Jitterbug Perfume*. Robbins

lives in Seattle and often writes from a Pacific Northwest point of view. Those of you who are familiar with him will understand my difficulty in explaining his work-- lets just say he writes in an irreverent, and maverick style that has been described as satirical, subversive, wild, and abstract. Here's an example: His latest book is called **B is for Beer**, which he calls "A Children's Book for Grown-ups; A Grown-up Book for Children." Which is exactly what it is. Robbins' protagonist for his story is six-year-old Gracie Perkel, who learns all about the wonders of beer, through a number of adventures, including some time spent with a Beer Fairy. Here the Beer Fairy explains yeast and the fermentation process to little Gracie: "*Oh, beer does possess other charms, Gracie; but in the end, you're correct; that's what it comes down to. Yeast, like malt and hops and water, influences the character and flavor of beer, but its primary business, its day job, the work that pays its rent and makes it famous-- in a funky sort of way-- is to give sugar an extreme makeover. The people in the lab coats call that makeover process fermentation.*" The book is replete with illustrations and, although probably not Robbins' best work, makes for some fun and light summertime reading. It would go perfect with a cold golden ale out on the deck some sunny afternoon. It's worth checking out, and may help clarify the complicated process of beer making-- it sure made some things clearer for me, and some more cloudy. Which is the way it always is with Tom Robbins. Makes you stop and think about things.

Blue House Brews-- Brett Costley has started brewing at the Blue House in Vernonia! Since the move to downtown, Costley has been waiting to get all the new equipment installed and operating, but now the new, larger batches are starting to flow, and with four taps and rotating flavors, you're sure to find something new to try and enjoy. And just in the nick of time, as the Blue House is finding itself going through it very quickly! Recently there was a Raspberry Ale, a Kolsch, a Spiced Ale and a Rock Creek Red that were all very popular. Scheduled to make an appearance soon: a Brown Ale, a Pale Ale and some berry-flavored Wheat Beers. Bigger batches in the new equipment will mean less frequent changes of flavors and more consistency. Make sure to stop by and check out what's on tap some time soon.

See you next time for another round.

Better Parenting: (continued from page 17)

trade you their junk for your junk. Have the family meet together after the hunt to share what they got for their stuff. **Do not allow your child to go alone.**

13. **Scavenger hunt:** When my boys were growing up, their cousins often came down from the Seattle area to visit. When they were in junior high, they wanted to do something exciting in the city together. They teamed up and both teams had the identical list of items they had to acquire and be back by 5:00 PM. The team that had the most on their list chose the video for the evening and the losing team agreed to do the kitchen clean-up. You can decide the rewards for your family. The list included things like a feather, a banana peel, a tooth, a gray hair, a pine cone, a bottle cap, a matchbook from a downtown hotel, a green bean can, a piece of glass, a car part, etc., use your imagination. **Do not allow your child to go out alone.**
14. **Volunteer as a family:** There are opportunities in Vernonia for families to help out, so many hands make lighter work. Call the library and help with tasks they may need. Possibly the Senior Center knows of someone who needs help with shopping, yard work, meal preparation or errands. Maybe a park needs plants or flowers planted in the fall. Use your imagination and call around. Businesses may need a temporary helping hand, too.
15. **Sandcastles in your back yard:** Children enjoy playing at the beach with spoons or scoops making sand-castles and starfish. You can put a small amount of sand in a small plastic swimming pool and allow them to use buckets of water to make their imaginary creations.

There are many other ideas like cooking together, making picture albums and family banners, murals or newsletters. I would be interested in the traditional family fun things your family does or creative ideas you may have. Feel free to e-mail and share them with me, I would love to hear from you. Have a wonderful summer doing fun family activities the old fashioned way-- at home, together.

Resources: Craig Playstead, Melanie Cooper, and Erin Huffstetler. Sonia Spackman can be reached at: soniaspackman@msn.com or call 503-429-6540.

HAPPY TRAILS: A REPORT FROM THE RODEO ROAD



By Mackenzie Carr

Greetings!

Since my last column, I have been running around like a chicken with my head cut off. The weekend of June 20th I rode in the St. Helens parade, and on Sunday I traveled to Glenwood, Washington, for the Ketchum Kalf Rodeo. I have never been to that rodeo before, and had a great time. The following weekend of the 27th was the best little show on the coast, the Tillamook

Rodeo. I love all the people there and seeing them again was truly special.

The first week in July is known as Cowboy Christmas because there is a rodeo almost every day, and cowboys have the opportunity to earn a lot of money. My week began on Wednesday the 1st with the Miss Rodeo Oregon Fashion Show and Pageant. I modeled in the show and took lots of notes on the pageant, since I will be trying out for Miss Rodeo Oregon next year. That evening was the very famous St. Paul rodeo. I didn't know how Pedro would handle the fireworks, but he did just fine.

Thursday, July 2nd we were off to the Eugene Pro Rodeo. This was also another rodeo that I have never been to. I helped Queen Rachel Anderson push cows and pack flags. The rodeo was so much fun; the crowd was really rowdy and did a great job cheering on the cowboys. Friday the 3rd, we came back toward our neck of the woods to the Vancouver Rodeo. After the rodeo was over, we high-tailed it home to get cleaned up for the Clatskanie Parade the next morning. Lisa Edgar of Vernonia Florist made me fresh flower arrangements for the parade. They were absolutely beautiful. Thank you again, Lisa, for all of your kindness. That evening was the Vernonia Parade. Not only did it feel good to be home, but it was really nice to see all of the familiar faces. The next day, Sunday the 5th, we traveled to Yoncalla for their afternoon rodeo. I helped their Queen push cows and pack flags. Despite the heat, it was a great time.

In my last article, I said that I'd have some great stories, and-- oh, boy-- do I! On the way home from Yoncalla, seven out of the eight lugs and studs broke off of the rear driver side tire on our truck and stranded us on I-5. Luckily, Gerald, our I-5 angel as we've come to call him, rescued us. He towed our trailer and Pedro to a barn in Cottage Grove where his wife boards her horse. The truck went to Les Schwab in Cottage Grove, and we were at the Comfort Inn. We were so fortunate and I cannot thank Gerald enough.

The following weekend, July 10th and 11th, was the Sweet Home and Philomath Rodeos, the Sweet Home Parade, and an NPRA Director's Meeting. At Philomath, I hopped off to pick up what I thought was an empty beer bottle out of the arena, and when I wiggled it to show someone, I poured beer all over my shirt, sash, and chaps. The joke that night was that Miss NPRA was an alcoholic, and everyone teased me that I smelt like a brewery.

The next week, on July 16th, I traveled to The Dalles for the Fort Dalles Days Pro Rodeo. The rodeo has been part of the PRCA for some time, but this year they switched to NPRA. I had two radio interviews, attended a Kiwanis Luncheon, and rode in the rodeo that night. The turnout was amazing. There were over 500 cowboys and cowgirls competing there that weekend. Once again, I should not have said that I'd have great stories, because, leaving The Dalles, the other rear truck tire blew out on I-84. I think the big man upstairs is trying to tell us that a Dodge needs to be on my mom's Christmas list.

Fortunately, we were traveling with the Junior Miss Rodeo Oregon. Nicole Bishop and her family took Pedro and me with them, while my mom waited for the tow truck to get there. We all made it safely to St. Helens for the Columbia County Fair and Rodeo. On Friday the 17th I watched the pageant and then rode in the rodeo that night. Pedro and I once again pushed cows and packed flags. The next day, I was up bright and early to push cows for the slack performance. Once that was over, Pedro and I were due for a nap. That night, we again rode in the rodeo: pushing cows and packing flags. I also got to help out with the announcement of the court. Congratulations to Queen Leilani Schmidt, and Princesses Stephanie Esterly and Emily Simpson.

Whew! As you can see, I have been very, very busy. Despite the long hours, I am having the time of my life, making new friends and thoroughly enjoying every experience. On the weekend of the 25th, I'm off to Long Beach, Washington, for their rodeo. The following week, I'll be in Redmond Wednesday, Corvallis Thursday, McMinnville Friday, and Santiam Saturday. It should be very fun, and I hope our truck survives.

Until next time, Mackenzie

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