

Another Round: More Words of Wisdom About Beer

By Scott Laird



"Why we are here: To tremble at the terrible beauty of the stars, to shed a tear at the perfection of Beethoven's symphonies, and to crack a cold one now and then."

-- David Letterman

Another Brewpub-- Last month, I talked about places to have a beer when in Portland. Obviously, there is no end to the great pubs and taverns where you can find a microbrew in P-town. But we just found another one last week that we thought deserved a mention.

The Mash Tun, located just off NE Alberta Street is a casual place-- a small microbrew with very good beer and food.

First of all-- if you go looking, their address is 2204 NE Alberta, but the entrance is around the side on 22nd Street-- don't be fooled like we almost were. It's there-- just not exactly where it's supposed to be.

Next-- the name. A mash tun is the large vessel or vat in which

grains and water are mixed together at different temperatures during the process of making beer. This process, called "mashing," activates enzymes which convert starch into sugar, forming a sweet liquid called wort (pronounced "wert"). It is this wort that is drained off into the kettle, boiled with hops and then fermented into beer!

OK, about their beer. I had a Concordia Creme Ale that was light, flavorful and refreshing. Very well done! We also tasted their Penfold Porter which was dark and flavorful, but a bit on the bitter side. They were also pouring their Alberta Pale Ale, Watership Brown and Razorback Red. All their beers are not heavy on alcohol content, so you can enjoy a pint or two while taking advantage of the free pool, darts and jukebox. And their great food.

Being vegetarians, it's sometimes hard to find good pub food. You can almost always count on finding a Gardenburger on everyone's menu, but that gets a little old after a while. We specifically searched this pub out because they offered vegetarian and vegan options. Known for using fresh, high-quality and local and organic ingredients (when possible), apparently The Mash Tun takes their food as seriously as

their beer. Yes, we ended up with their veggie burger, but it was handmade in the kitchen with mushrooms, nuts and oatmeal and was excellent. We also tried their Grilled Veggie Sandwich which was also very good. Hand-cut fries and a starter of Tempeh Strips, Buffalo Style, served with mayo/mustard dipping sauce, along with especially friendly and good service, made the meal complete.

If you haven't been out to NE Alberta recently, you are in for a shock. It is the new NW 23rd, with great shops, art events and happenings, excellent restaurants and food carts. And some really good beer!

Going Gonzo-- Again!-- OK, I guess the theme of this month's column is referencing past columns. A few months ago we talked about Flying Dog Brewery and their Gonzo Imperial Porter that we picked up at the Birkenfeld Store. Well, just last week we noticed that it is now available at the Bear Creek Pub in Vernonia, along with Flying Dog's Doggie Style Classic Pale Ale. These are great beers and worth checking out next time you're in town. And it just makes going Gonzo even easier.

Another Round, we're not big on promises we won't be able to keep. So here are some words of wisdom about the New Year and resolutions, all from one of our favorite wise men, Mark Twain.

- "Yesterday, everybody smoked his last cigar, took his last drink and swore his last oath. Today, we are a pious and exemplary community. Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient shortcomings considerably shorter than ever."

- "New Year's is a harmless annual institution, of no particular use to anybody save as a scapegoat for promiscuous drunks, and friendly calls and humbug resolutions."

- "A new oath holds pretty well; but...when it is become old, and frayed out, and damaged by a dozen annual retriyings of its remains, it ceases to be serviceable; any little strain will snap it."

- "New Year's Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual."

See you next time for Another

New Years Resolutions--Here at Round!

Vernonia Citizens Rise to the Occasion Again: The Gift of Warmth and Dignity for 47J Students

Our wonderfully generous community came together once again for students in our District who were in need of some extra help.

During the month of December, a Giving Tree was set-up at U.S. Bank on which 68 tags for coats and shoes were hung on the tree with care, along with numerous tags for dignity bags and dignity bag supplies for Vernonia students of all ages.

After talking with District 47J staff, it was identified that as a way to support families and students this year, we offer a gift of warmth with coats and shoes. Kids were referred by school staff, parents and/or they referred themselves. Santa hand-picked the donated scarves

and hats hand knitted/crocheted by the Skein Slayers! to students who weren't on the recipient lists. It was obvious those kids were thrilled with their scarves and hats when they put them on right away!

All this was done in an effort to help students and families to embrace positive self care; keeping warm helps support healthy choice making. "Young and old, get overwhelmed with day to day life and find ways to "medicate" themselves through drugs & alcohol just to get through the feelings of helplessness and or hopelessness," states DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director. "Dignity at any level is imperative to positive self care." In addition to all of that generosity, other items like dish soap, fabric softener, bath salts, etc. were donated. We were able to extend those donations to the Vernonia Cares Food Bank.

On December 23 and 24, the Trillium Room of the VCLC was turned into a bit of a winter wonderland, complete with snowflakes and Christmas music, which welcomed the students to receive their

gift. Not only did the kids get to receive a gift, they got to fill a goody bag with tangerines, cheese sticks, candy canes, cookies and of course milk. Once the kids walked into the room, they were surprised by some special guests who were waiting for them.

Santa and Mrs. Claus were there to greet the kids, get pictures and tell Santa what they wanted for Christmas. Complimentary pictures were taken and given to Mrs. Kelly, Mr. Spackman and Mr. Weisel to hand out to students after Winter Break.

It was a magical event to be a part of and could not have happened without the generosity of the Vernonia Community, and the organizational efforts of DeAnna Pearl, Catherine Helmer, Scott

Helmer, Nicole Larke and the other super helpful staff at U.S. Bank. Thank you also to Mike's Tree Farm for the donation of the Christmas tree used for the Giving Tree, Mrs. Kelly from Head Start, Mr. Spackman the VSD Elementary and Middle school counselor and Mr. Weisel the VSD High school counselor and last, but certainly not least, Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Do you crochet, knit or wind yarn or have a closet full of yarn to give away? Join the volunteers of the Skein Slayers! every other Monday night. Further, if you would like to know more about how you can help support students and families throughout the year, contact DeAnna Pearl @ 503 369-7370 or DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov.



Catherine Helmer of the Skein Slayers; Marilyn Nicks of the Kiwanis; Sandy Welch of Vernonia Cares and DeAnna Pearl of Vernonia Prevention Coalition hold a card signed by gift recipients of the Christmas Giving Tree. Items pictured were donated to Dignity Bags and Vernonia Cares.

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