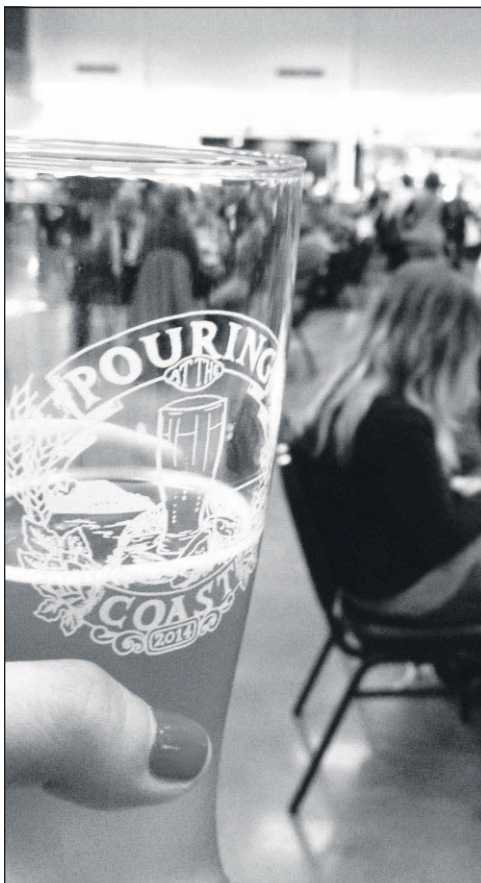




Submitted photo

Everyone who buys a ticket to the festival Saturday gets a complimentary pilsner tasting glass.

POURING AT THE COAST

This sixth annual Seaside beer festival offers tastings from almost 40 breweries and gives back to the community

Story by ANDREW TONRY

Alongside the burgeoning craft beer industry, Seaside's Pouring at the Coast festival is blowing up. Entering its sixth year, the event is essentially doubling-down, boasting twice as many exhibiting breweries and new fundraising efforts to bolster community.

Pouring at the Coast falls under the official umbrella of Seaside's Chamber of Commerce, but the additions to this year's festivities — including a Brewer's Dinner catered by students of Seaside High School's Culinary Arts Program — have come largely from the efforts of Jimmy Griffin.

"Quote me on this," said Chris Duffy, the

chamber's events director: "Jimmy is the guru of this event."

Griffin, co-owner of Seaside Brewing Company, approached the chamber after last year's festival with two basic pitches: Fill to the brim the Seaside Convention Center with more exhibiting breweries, and tie the Brewer's Dinner more tightly in with the local community.

His first task, wrangling more brewers to come share their suds, was a breeze.

"It's not hard," Griffin said.

"I mean, who doesn't want to come to the beach and bring their beer?"

Among 30-some beer-makers scheduled to attend, almost every commercial brewery from the North Coast region — from the big dogs to the pups nipping at their heels — will be on hand.

"You've got your old standards like

your Full Sails, your New Belgians, your Rogues," said Griffin. "But you've also got newcomers like Wild Ride and 1188."

"We tried to focus on newer breweries," he added. "I'm just as excited as everybody else to see those new breweries come. And some of those new guys, on the phone they're just giggly. They're so happy to have a place to come and showcase like that. For some of them, this is their first show."

It's an opportunity for more than just the brewers, as attendees who travel to the festival from Portland and beyond will be afforded tastes they can't get anywhere else.

"A lot of the young breweries are self-distributing, and they haven't reached the valley yet," said Griffin. "So a lot of

the people who are coming out will get to try those beers for the first time. That makes it really cool for people."

Whether established or upstart, all exhibiting beers will be entered into the People's Choice Contest, decided by attendee voting. According to Griffin, breweries both big and small stand on equal footing in the contest.

"There are tiny breweries that make amazing beers," he said. "The process, whether it's a tiny brewery or a gigantic brewery, is the same. It's been the same process for thousands and thousands of years. So as long as somebody is really paying attention to what they're doing and being creative and forward thinking, they can really come up with some interesting stuff. It doesn't really matter if they're big or little."

Also, Saturday, a panel of distinguished tasters will judge the Homebrew Competition, where all entries will come from amateur, noncommercial brewers. And as much as it is a contest, it's also a way for homebrewers to improve and refine upon their craft.

"What homebrewers are looking for is notes on what they're doing," said Griffin, who himself began tinkering in the garage. "They can always pass a glass off to their buddy on the couch and say, 'Hey, what do you think of that beer?' But when an actual accredited judge comes and they get notes from a person like that, they get really excited because they're getting pure feedback."

A day earlier, another cadre of up and

Oregon Coast Brewer's Dinner – EVENT SOLD OUT

Five-course meal and dessert, paired
with Oregon Coast craft beers
Menu by Chef Chris Holen and the Seaside
Culinary Arts Program
5:30 p.m. Friday, March 6
Seaside Civic & Convention Center
\$65 per person, reservations required

Tasting Festival and Homebrewer's Competition

Over 35 breweries, wine, local food vendors, live music
3 to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 7
Seaside Civic & Convention Center
pouringatthecoast.com
\$10 glass and four tastings
\$20 glass and 10 tastings
Extra tastings available: three for \$5
21 and over



Photo by Joshua Bessex

Kegs are stacked in the corner of the brewing room at Seaside Brewery.