



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BREW CUP

Friday to Sunday, Sept. 25 to 27

Astoria waterfront at the Barbey Maritime Center, just east of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, 2042 Marine Drive

Hours:

Friday: Noon to 10 p.m.

Saturday: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission: Free and open to all ages

Souvenir tasting mug \$9

Tasting tokens \$1 each

pacificnorthwestbrewcup.com



Submitted photo

The Pacific Northwest Brew Cup is open to all ages, featuring more than 40 beers, live music, food and kids' activities.

LET THE GOOD TIMES POUR

The 14th annual Pacific Northwest Brew Cup comes to Astoria Sept. 25, 26 and 27 with regional beers, live music, family activities and more

Story by DAN HAAG

School is back in session and summer vacation is a memory, but there are still reasons to celebrate. Case in point: the annual Pacific Northwest Brew Cup. In its 14th year, it's a North Coast showcase for the phenomenon that is Oregon craft beer.

It's also become one of Astoria's signature events.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

The Pacific Northwest Brew Cup is held Friday to Sunday, Sept. 25 to 27 at the Columbia River Maritime Museum's Barbey Maritime Center. It features a glorious array of Northwest beers on tap, along with live music, food vendors, prizes and a bevy of family-friendly activities.

Alana Garner, executive director of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association, has a front-row seat to the enthusiasm the event generates for local beer.

"It's really showcasing Astoria and our four breweries — Hondo's, Fort George, Astoria Brewing and Buoy," she says.

Now in her third year at the helm, Garner appreciates the community spirit upon which the Brew Cup was founded.

"It was started to really bring the community together, rooted in fundraising for a number of local organizations and charities," she says.

Creating an event that aided local organizations was the principal goal of Baked Alaska owners Chris and Jennifer Holen, who put together the inaugural Brew Cup in 2002 at Pier 12. The event's early years

as small but effective. "We really made no money, just broke even," Chris Holen says. "Everything we made went to the food bank."

Though the Holens handed the event to the ADH-DA five years ago, the good will and community action it generates has not only been kept intact but grown.

ADHDA concentrates on development of Astoria's downtown core — Fifth through 17th Streets to the west and east, and Exchange Street to the Columbia River to the south and the north. The association's mission of ensuring that people who visit downtown have a good experience was key to the growth of the Brew Cup.

All funds raised at the event go back into ADH-DA for future events. "It's by far our largest fundraiser," Garner says.

BRING ON THE BEER

When ADHDA took on organization of the Brew Cup, it meant attracting more brewers.

Last year's Brew Cup hosted 42 breweries from Oregon and Washington, and nearly that many are slated to appear in 2015.

Jack Harris, co-owner and brewmaster at Fort George Brewery, is in charge of bringing together a variety of breweries to participate. Garner said Harris' unofficial title is "beer curator." "I ask everyone to send two tanks of what they feel is their best beer," Harris says.

There are entries from Portland, Redmond, Ashland, Pendleton, Sisters, Bend, and Seattle to name a few.

The Brew Cup has rapidly become a recognized

destination event. John Foyston of The Oregonian, named the event "Best Beer Festival" in 2010.

And make no mistake, Astoria's breweries are ready to shine.

"It's really impressive, for people to see a town of about 10,000 people having four breweries," Garner says.

For other tastes, there's wine and spirit samplings.

Hoping to get a sneak peek at some new brews? Check out the Brewer's Reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24 at the Barbey Maritime Center. A ticketed event with snacks from North Coast Food Web, the evening gives attendees a chance to rub shoulders with the brewers who give life to great Oregon beer. "We've got 12 breweries who are bringing in specially growlers for that evening," Garner says. "Those will be beers you can't get the other three days."

There's also the Brew Cup Brewer's Breakfast set from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26. This event gives ticket-holders a chance to experience a combination they may have enjoyed during their college days: beer and pizza for breakfast. There's also the chance to try something called a "beer-mosa."

Though it had previously been an event only for brewers, the event was opened to the public in 2014. Held at Baked Alaska, the highlight of the breakfast is a panel of local and international brewers and economic developers engaging in conversation on the economic impact of beer.

Holen calls it a great time for interaction between people who might otherwise not get the chance to chat.



Submitted photo

The Brew Cup is a dog-friendly beer festival.

'BEER-ENOMICS'

The economics of beer can't be understated.

By the end of August, many Astoria hotel rooms were already filling up with Brew Cup attendees. That's good news for a time of year typically known along the Oregon Coast as the beginning of the "off-season" for tourism.

Garner sees full hotels, dinner reservations and patrons in local shops during the fall as the events' main purpose.

To that end, organizers have created a "downtown passport" program. Consisting of 20 participating businesses, it's a way for Brew Cup attendees to get to know Astoria. Each passport holder gets a stamp from participating merchants, which are then redeemed for raffle tickets. Prizes include fun items such as a scarf from La Luna Loca and beer calendars from Lucy's Books.

For those who collect stamps from all 20 shops, a chance to win a stay at the Cannery Pier Hotel awaits.

"It gets people from the festival to experience our downtown and our variety of shops," Garner says.

"Beer-enomics" is a discussion that takes on an international flavor at the Brew Cup. Representatives from Pacific Power are hosting a contingent of colleagues from Australia. They are here as part of a week-long tour of Pacific Northwest breweries, starting in Astoria during Brew Cup.

"They're here to look at the impact of breweries, how breweries are community-drivers," Garner says.

VOLUNTEER!

Contact Alana Garner at
503-791-7940 or at alana@downtownastoria.com

The notion is not lost on Holen. "Before breweries started here, there wasn't a lot really happening downtown," he says.

FUN FOR ALL

While the draw at the Brew Cup is suds, Garner points out that there's something for everyone to enjoy.

"It's always been a family-friendly, dog-friendly event," she says.

There's also a full slate of live music from 16 bands spread over all three days, including the Brownsmead Flats, Hook & Anchor, Jaime Leopold & The Short Stories, and The Student Loan String Band. Dancing is, of course, encouraged.

Harris, who spends much of his summer attending beer festivals across the Pacific Northwest, is happy to have one in his backyard.

He also feels the Brew Cup offers something not many other festivals can.

"Often you're stuck inside a building," Harris says. "This one has a beautiful outdoor setting, and everyone loves being right on the river."

While the event usually draws around 3,000 people, Garner feels it generates an intimacy that not a lot of other comparable festivals can boast. That extends to the participating brewers, who, Garner says, look forward to returning each year.

Volunteers also have ample time for fun and many are eager to return.

"I've had so many people coming up to me and asking about volunteering for the event, just because they say they love coming to Astoria," she says.

That being said, more volunteers are always welcome. Garner estimates at least 200 volunteers are needed over the course of the weekend. A four-hour shift earns volunteers a T-shirt, tasting tokens, and a front-row seat to the proceedings.

"There's a lot more work than for just one or two people," Harris adds.

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY

Holen is happy to see that the event he started has taken on a life of its own. He recalls 2002's event, when craft beer hadn't quite caught the imagination of Pacific Northwesterners the way it has today.

"Deschutes and Alaska were the hot items, there was barely any IPA," he says. "We had to get creative to round up brewers."

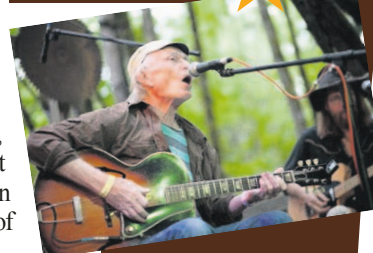
Now, with patrons and brewers eager to return each year, Holen says success is measured by the attention the community as a whole gets because of joint efforts.

"A quality event that draws people, gets them to walk around, stop in shops and eat at restaurants is a win-win," he says.

What better way to usher in fall along the Columbia River?



SMOKEY BRIGHTS



MICHAEL HURLEY & THE CROAKERS



HOOK & ANCHOR



VAUDEVILLE ETIQUETTE



BART BUDWIG

LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE

Tune in to Coast Community Radio, KMUN 91.9 FM Astoria or KTCB 89.5 FM Tillamook for all-day Saturday coverage of the Brew Cup

Friday, Sept. 26

1 – 2:30 p.m. Brownsmead Flats: Brew Cup officiating old-time folk from Brownsmead

3 – 4:30 p.m. Boomrad: country croon from Seattle

5 – 6:30 p.m. Talbott Brothers: Heartland rock from Imperia, Nebraska

7 – 8:30 p.m. Three for Silver: anti-Americana, world non-folk from Portland

9 – 10 p.m. Vinyl Gold: neo soul and funk from Portland

Saturday, Sept. 27

11 a.m. – noon KMUN's "Troll Radio Review": Kids variety show!

12:15 – 1 p.m. Kelsey Mousley: R&B songstress

1:15 – 2 p.m. Jaime Leopold & the Short Stories: Americana acid memory from Portland

2:15 – 3 p.m. Bart Budwig + Band: Americana and nuevo-country-folk from Enterprise

4:15 – 5 p.m. Michael Hurley & the Croakers from Planet Earth

6 – 7 p.m. Beach Fire: Psych-soul-pop-disco from Portland

7:30 – 8:30 p.m. Vaudeville Etiquette: Ameri-soul-acana from Seattle

9 – 10 p.m. Smokey Brights: AM pop magic from Seattle

Sunday, Sept. 28

11 – 11:45 a.m. An American Forrest: Western Americana from Adna, Washington

Noon – 12:45 p.m. Hook & Anchor: Americana rock-in-stock from Astoria + Portland

1 – 2:15 p.m. Student Loan String band: Bluegrass and newgrass from Portland

2:45 – 4 p.m. Robt Sarazin Blak & The put-it-all-down-in-a Letters: Celtic folk-punk from Bellingham, Washington