Malted Barley Appreciation Society

February 2008 · Volume 15 · Number 2



Cheers! From the editor's desk. —ALAN RICE

NEXT MEETING:

Wed. Feb. 13, 7:30pm, Mugs Ale House.

Our guest will be Neill Acer of Defiant Brewing Co.

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A Swell Time for Schwelmer

BY ALAN RICE



Our guest in January was Lars Dahlhaus, president of Schwelmer Imports, which is based in Brooklyn. Wolfgang Menzel assisted him. Schwelmer is a small craft brewery located near the center of Schwelm in the state of Westphalia in western Germany. They have been privately held since their founding in 1830. In 2000, Dr. Rolf Lohbeck purchased the brewery and saved it from permanent closure. He invested about 5

million in a new wharehouse and bottling equipment for flip-top bottles. He also brought in brewmaster **Stefan**

Continued on next page



Photo by Alan Rice

Hammermeister who raised the quality and brought several new styles. Production is now 90,000 hectoliters/year at the **Brauerei Schwelm**.

Schwelm is the home of Ibach, the world's oldest piano manufacturer, since 1794. It's also Lars Dalhaus' hometown. Lars has been in the US since the mid-nineties. He studied business in NYC at Pace Univ. across from City Hall. After graduating, he imported lighting.

Back in Schwelm, Lars went to school with Markus Schoebel, the president of the brewery. They lost track of each other but then reconnected. Later, Markus asked Lars to be his American rep. They signed on with an importer that went bankrupt just two weeks later. They had the capacity and the owner wanted to get into the market, so six months later they founded their own American distributorship.

They are now in 24 states, primarily in the east and mid-west. It is a big hassle to to register every label in every state. Each has different requirements and fees. Lars said that if he knew what was in store for him he probably wouldn't have done it. But he is happy now.

Schwelmer can also be found on the Spanish island



of Majorca in the Mediterranean, which is popular with German tourists. But back in the E.U., it only sold within about 60 miles of the brewery. It is available in California, but not eastern Germany!

The label features the main building of the brewery, albeit with stylized colors. It is a historical landmark with a long tradition. It was first mentioned in 1701 and is one of the oldest buildings still in use in this area. The old

baroque house was purchased by Haarmann and Kathagen, the founders of the brewery, for commercial and office space. The brewery is behind it.

Schwelmer beers are available in one-third and half liter bottles. The beers are not strong and can easily be finnished in one sitting, so the packaging is a nice marketing presentation. They are certainly appreciated by homebrewers, who should know that the labels easily soak off. And it's nice to have variety if you're tired of drinking Grolsch.

Accroding to Lars, the classic flip-top was invented in 1875 by Nicolai Fritzner in Germany, who solved the existing problem of making beer bottles with their high interior pressure ready to transport. It quickly became the main bottle-top for beer bottles worldwide. After only 30 years, the flip-top started to be replaced by the "Crown Cap", which was invented by the American William Painter in 1892. Cost-effectiveness and mass production made the "Crown Cork" quickly the choice of all large



Wolfgang and Lars

beer brands, before it brought the flip-top bottle almost to extinction in the 1950's.

Europe is experiencing the same shortages as the US for hops, glass, and malt. Last year, western Germany experience its hottest and driest April - it didn't rain at



all. This is just after planting and a critiacl stage for development. The brewmaster asked all friends of the brewery to come out and water the barley field. The first 200 to bring 20 liters received a special t-shirt.

The beers are brewed with their own yeast culture that

dates back to their founding in 1830. All are brewed with Noble hops, no Hallertau are used. The flagship is **Schwelmer Pils**, which has been brewed since 1897.

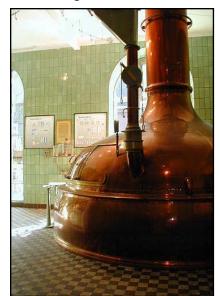
The Pils foamed only a half-inch head, which faded to a small lingering white film. It's golden yellow, slightly darker than many of the style. I detected biscuit and sweet honey aroma. It was sweet for a Pilsener, but the Saaz hop bitterness lingered in the finish. This pils is German, not Czech. At only 4.7%, enjoy it with a meal.

Bernstein is a 4.8% Vienna Lager. The off-white head

dissipates quickly. It has low carbonation. Bernstein is German for amber, and that is the color of this clear beer.

It tastes of roasted malt, with a sweet finish. This is another beer that is not made for pondering but for lubricating food. Try it at lunch.

If you travel to Düsseldorf, you'll be drinking Alt. It means



"old", perhaps because of the longer conditioning. It is a hybrid of top fermenting ale with cold, lager aging. **Schelmer Alt** had the best head of the three so far - it was light brown and lingering. They call it a "Unique Hoppy Altbier", but that is by German standards, not American. Flavor hops were most noticable in the finish.

Schwelm is located between Düsseldorf with their Alt, Cologne (Köln) with their Kölsh, and Dortmunder with their Export Lager. But the people of Schwelm enjoy many different styles, as long as they conform to the Reinheitsgebot.

Hefeweizen is a Bavarian style that is not usually found in northern Germany. Stefan Hammermeister used an old recipe an a house yeast culture that dates back to their founding. **Schwelmer Weizen** opens with a loud pop. A murky hazed yellow golden body supports a massive off-white frothing head on the pour. It quickly settled to an inch-thick layer of cream with minimal lacing. It was effervescent, almost like champagne. There are lots of cloves and bananas in the aroma, a bit of fresh lemon and a hint of toasted malts. I tasted similar esters. The cloves are at their highest in the rich finish when they mix with a creamy rich banana toffee. It's only about \$3 for a half

liter - check it out.

In Germany they sell a Radler, which is a 2.6% mix of lager and lemonade. That is unlikely to be exported. But their Bernstein Bock should be found here in about a year.

Exports are flash-pasteurized to survive the journey and extend the shelf life to eight or nine months, more if kept cool and dark. But ideally, they are best when fresh. When the shipping is arranged and everything goes right,





they can be here within three to four weeks from the fill date. West coast and Florida accounts get direct shipments.

Schwelmer Imports is using its network to bring in about 15 more beers from Germany. So far they've signed up Frankenthaler's Germania Pilsner, Eichbaum's Apostel Bräu, several brands from Lammsbräu, Mekatzer Lager, Zötler Korbinian Dunkel, and Miltenberger Helles Hefe Weizen. Like Schwelmer, these will all be distributed in NYC by Oak Beverages.

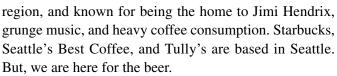
Besides the potential for profits, this has the added benefit of allowing them to fill each container with more brands. They can send less of their own product in each shipping container, ensuring more frequent shipments and therefore fresher beer. And their beers are quite tasty when fresh.

Hardly Hopless in Seattle

BY WARREN BECKER

In late September, I took my Dad on a beer-inspired Seattle weekend trip for his birthday.

This was our first visit to Seattle, WA, land of (airplane) flights, beer flights, and seafood bites! This coastal port city is the largest city in the Pacific Northwest



Upon arrival of our long weekend trip, we made a non-beer visit to the renown Boeing Museum of Flight, escorted by our Seattle-based business associate Mike, of nearby Gig Harbor. This museum has everything one needs to see and know about the history and technology related to aircraft industry and the complete Boeing story. It was educational and fascinating as to how it all began.

Our first beer stop on Friday was Pyramid Alehouse. Located across the street from Safeco Field, home of the Seattle Mariners has the full lineup of Pyramid Ales and Lagers on tap, including seasonals and other special beers. With a wide range of styles, and friendly environment, they are a good staring point to imbibe.

Then it was off to Elysian Fields also located near the both sports stadiums. This Elysian restaurant bar offers the vast array of fantastic Elysian beers made at their main Capitol Area location. They will be brewing their own specialty beers independently at Elysian Fields soon.

Next stop was FX McRory's with America's largest bourbon collection. This old time, elaborately decorated restaurant bar, has plenty to drink, with many local Washington wines, and 30 draft beers. They offer a vast seafood menu as well.

On Saturday, my Dad & I visited the famous Pike Brewing and had the great fortune to meet craft brewing legends Charlie and Rose Ann Finkel. We sampled 8 beers, including Amber Weisse, Bitter (FSB), Golden Ale, IPA, Kilt Lifter Scotch Ale, Monks Uncle Tripel Ale, Naughty Nellies Ale, Oatmeal Stout, and XXXXX



Stout, plus their "re-born" 2006 Old Bawdy barley wine. Great beers, terrific hosts, and fantastic space, complete with a beer history museum, make this a "can't be missed" Seattle Beer Landmark!

As our friend, Mike's suggestion, wee did an outstanding Sunday Brunch visit to the fancyl located on Elliott Bay. Their award winning Six Seven Restaurant voted The Best in

Seattle Seafood Restaurants, with amazing waterfront dining overlooking Puget Sound.

Afterwards, we visited Hales Ales. Designed by Mike Hale, this remodeled 17,000 square foot building, formerly an industrial hose manufacturing plant, is located mid-way between the Fremont & Ballard districts of Seattle, and includes a 125 seat pub. Their 30 barrel, stainless steel, gravity fed, all steam-heated brewing system was on display. Hale's uses an English brewing method that features an ale yeast that has been adapted for the open fermenters of the traditional English brewery.

My Dad & I sampled 12 well-made beers at Hales, including a Stout, Brewer's IPA, Vienna, Red Harvest Ale, HSB, Cream, Kolsch, Pale Ale, Weiss, IPA, Cask-conditioned Kolsch, and Barleywine. My favorites were their malty Rudyard's Rare Barleywine, smooth HSB, and balanced, hoppy IPA.

We walked to Brouwers to meet up with Kolbe, a Seattle Beer Advocate, and local homebrewer. With over 50 taps and 100 bottles, and located in a renovated warehouse space in the Fremont section, Brouwers is a destination in and of itself, created by the folks of our next stop, the Bottleworks Beer Store.

Bottleworks Beer Store located in the Wallingford district, has over 300 beers in stock, about half of them Belgian, plus British ales and bottles of Northwest favorites. A colorful mural of a street in Belgium is behind the counter. The owners are former brewers at Maritime Pacific and Lost Coast, Matt Bonney and Matt VandenBerghe.

The fantastic Uber! Located in rare industrial, nonpicturesque section in Seattle, Uber is amazing. From the

outside, this small bar, located next to a gun shop, and advertising sales of MGD kegs on an old time beer distributor sign, offers no insight as to the world class selection offered inside. With over 20+ taps and a seamlessly unending bottle menu, I could spend a long weekend at Uber!

Thanks to Kolbe, a Beer Advocate, and local homebrewer for showing us around on Sunday to some Seattle's best!

On Monday morning, my Dad and I visited the wild 140,000 square foot Frank O. Gehry-designed building that houses the Experience Music Project (EMP) and the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame (SFM) museums. This is a must for any Seattle visitor. Paul Allen (of Microsoft fame) collected the items that make up The EMP, which has an enormous collection of guitars, and historical musical memorabilia, as well as the Sci-Fi



geeky SFM with costumes, whole sets, and historical date all placed in a truly "out of this world" setting. You would needs hours and hours of non-beer drinking time to do this place justice.

Later that day, we checked out the 3.5 month old, 160 draft, cellar restaurant bar, The Taphouse. They are located downtown at Pike & 6th Streets. We were amazed at various Beer Samplers offered including the Northwest Sampler (four of local favorites), Seasonal Rotator (new seasonal brews), World Tour (four brews from around the globe), and the Bartenders Pick. You also have my favorite option the "Create a Sampler". Their beer list is broken down by styles. With a uniquely curved bar, and wall of double hung tap handles, The Taphouse offers a comfortable environment to sit at the bar with your sampler. We tried Leavenworth Dunkel, Pike IPA, Boundry Bay Scotch Ale, Hale's Blond, Alaskan Oatmeal Stout, Fish Porter, Baron Uberdunkelweiss, and Deschutes Porter. All were is fine shape.

The funky brewpub McMenamin's Six Arms has a logo that shows a Hindu idol with her six, sinuous arms. The bar's enormous windows and an impressive three-dimensional sculpture help to blend right in with the artsy Capitol Hill neighborhood. This large pub features daily specials, a tasty menu and well made ales brewed on premise. We sampled their delicious Terminator Stout,





hoppy Hammerhead pale ale, sweet Ruby Raspberry Ale, chocolate/coffee-like Black Rabbit Porter, subtle ESB and dry hopped IPA. McMenamin's Six Arms also had their Wheat and Kolsch available.

Stumbling Monk was next. Opened in 1998, this is an aloof, hipster local bar, with about 12 taps, mostly Belgian with a couple of local micros mixed in, and about 50 bottles, 34 Belgians and 16 others. They specialize in Eu-

ropean imports and West coast bottled beers. We tried 2 drafts Dick's Silk Lady 5.5% ABV Belgian Pale Ale, and Monkfish Tripel 8.2% ABV, plus a bottle of the Ice Harbor Barleywine 10% ABV.

Tuesday was final Seattle day, and I wanted to our trip some of Seattle's best local beers. After walking the University of Washington campus, my Dad & I checked out the terrific Big Time Brewpub. Since 1988, Big Time has been located in Seattle's University of Washington "U-District". Located in an old, early 1900's yellow brick building, the wood decor pub has an antique bar, and lots of local beer memorabilia. The pub usually has at least 10 ales on tap, plus on Thursdays and Fridays they feature a cask conditioned ale on the

handpump. They had 9 beers available to sample. Prime Time Pale Ale 1048 OG, Atlas Amber Ale 1056 OG, Coal Creek Porter 1060 OG, Scarletfire IPA, Kolsch 45, Firewater NW Pale Ale, Powder Finger Rye, Buster/s Brown Ale, and Bhagwan's Best IPA are on tap. The other three taps and the cask conditioned pump rotate from week to week with some of the seasonals. They serve a variety of pub food in their open view, diner-style kitchen.

Then down to meet with David Buhler, owner/partner of the famous Elysian Brewery & Brewpubs, at their Capitol Hill area location. Elysian (means Greek Paradise reserved for heroes to whom the gods granted immortality) was founded in 1996 by Dave, Joe Bisacca, and Dick Cantwell. The Capitol Hill location houses a 20-barrel brewing system, bottling line, and a full service



restaurant and bar. Elysian has brewed over 60 different beers, in large batches and small, including 6 standards. While there, we sampled Wise Extra Special Bitter 5.9% ABV, Immortal India Pale Ale 6.7% ABV, Dragonstooth Stout, Perseus Porter 5.4% ABV, Zephyrus Pilsner 3.9% ABV, Elysian Fields Pale Ale 4.8% ABV, Cask-conditioned IPA, and Bête Blanche Tripel 6.9% ABV. Dave shared an amazingly smooth, spicy and delicious 2005 bottle of the Saison Elysée Belgian-style Farmhouse Ale 7% ABV with us. All of their beers are balanced, to style, and linger long on the palate. Elysian offers a delicious food menu to pair with their tasty beers.

Seattle offers many fantastic ways to enjoy exceptional regional beers, with tasty seafood delicacies, all hosted in their many very friendly establishments.

BIZARRE BREW #1:

The Beer That Time Forgot

BY ALEX HALL

The first installment of a semi-regular series of light-hearted or strange reports from the wacky world of craft beer, by Alex Hall

Tom Baker named his brewery Heavyweight because he is famous for big beers. But in the summer of 2005 he brewed a series of four, onetime mild ales, primarily at the insistence of Jim Mahar of Mahar's Public Bar in Albany, NY. "They've committed to five or six firkins of each one," Baker told Jack Curtin of Celebrator Beer News at the time, "and what I'm doing is cask-condition each one using a different sugar-Belgian candi, regular sugar, demerara, some syrups-each firkin will be some-



what different, some significantly different, from all the others."

When Tom and guest brewer Nick Hankin (of NYC's short-lived Highlander Brewery) brewed an English-style mild ale, I'm pretty sure they would have expected to see the last of it in two, or perhaps three months. "Unlike most of the beers I do, which improve with age, a Mild is meant to be drunk fresh," Baker said.

Now let's fast forward to an afternoon in January 2008, and move our focus from Tom's defunct (2006) brewery in Ocean Township, NJ, to the cellar of The Lazy Boy Saloon, in White Plains, NY. On inspecting and sizing up the Lazy Boy's cellar for new cask handpumps and cooling to

be installed, a couple of very dusty firkins caught my eye - semi-buried under kegs and various fittings. The manager shrugged, "I don't know what those are." A fairly easy extraction and dusting off revealed the labels: Southampton Left Coast IPA and, yes, Heavyweight Nay Trouse Mild! I was somewhat surprised that full casks that were not designed for deliberate ageing were languishing down there - nobody sane would keep a 3.8% dark mild ale for any length of time.





Lazy Boy Saloon used to have cask ale up until 2005 when that was replaced by two fake "hand-pump simulators," above, that look like real cask engines but simply serve keg beer on low gas pressure. We're glad to see they have since re-installed two cask engines.

A few weeks later, I returned on the day that the cask engines were being installed. I was about to advise that the Twilight Zone-style time-warp firkins would probably both be undrinkable and shouldn't go on sale, but discovered they had already been tapped (but not yet connected to the freshly-installed pumps). Obviously I was curious, so in the company of Lazy Boy manager Alex and owner J.R., they were duly sampled. The Southampton had largely lost its hop bite and tasted unusual. Not vinegar or anything bad, but just muted and with a touch of roughness. Meh.

Turning to what was almost certainly the last ever



cask of Heavyweight beer on this planet, a dark brown, headless liquid filled my sample glass. The aroma was malty and a little vinous, and I then entrusted my palate to this 2 1/2 year old, previously thought extinct beast. Notes of red wine, even a little sherry, combined with chocolate and vine fruits and, to detract, there were some

tannins and a little hint of cardboard in there. It was carbonated, but only just, so it made for a "quaffable" beer - as a dark mild ale should be anyway. The tannins and flatness were the downsides, but not bad enough to condemn the brew - which was surprisingly drinkable. This cask was a remarkable survivor, and good enough to christen one of the new beer engines that evening. That said though, I do recommend drinking cask mild when fresh for the best experience!

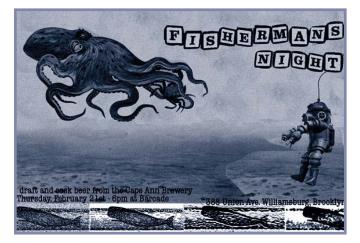
My quest is now to find a full keg of 1978 New Albion somewhere...

Calendar... Click on event titles for a hot link to their website.

Wed. Feb. 13, 7pm, Lagunitas & Zappa at the Gate.

We welcome Lagunitas' third Frank Zappa inspired beer, Lumpy Gravy, and to join it we're pulling Freak Out and Kill Ugly Radio from the cellar. A DJ will be spinning tunes from his 40 album Zappa collection, and a few from Captain Beefheart, too. Also on tap: Cappuccino Stout '06, Censored, IPA, Imperial Red, Czech Pils. Bottles: Hairy Eyeball, Brown Shugga.

Thu. Feb. 14, Kuhnhenn at Hop Devil. List TBA.



Fri. Feb. 15 – Sun. Feb. 17, Max's 4th Annual Belgian Beer Fest. In Baltimore, you will find over 100 Belgian beers on draft and over 130 in bottles, plus a full Belgianstyle menu.

Thu. Feb. 21, Sly Fox at Hop Devil. List TBA.

Thu. Feb 21, Fisherman's Night at Barcade. Cape Ann Brewing's Fisherman's brand: Greenhorn Double IPA, Tea Party Barleywine, Navigator 2005, Navigator (cask), Pumpkin Stout, Fisherman's Brew, Fisherman's (Kölsch) Ale, Fisherman's IPA.

Fri. Feb. 22 – Sun. Feb. 24, Noon-Midnight, 14th Tri-Annual Cask Head Fest at Brazen Head. Expect 25 casks to be pouring over the weekend, at least 10 at a time. Beers: Allagash Black, Arcadia Hop Rocket Double IPA, Brooklyn Winter Ale, Cape Ann Fisherman's Navigator, Captain Lawrence Liquid Gold - dry hopped, Captain Lawrence Smoke From The Oak - Rum Barrel, Chelsea Nut Brown Ale, Chelsea Blizzard IPA, Chelsea Tzar's Revenge Imperial Stout, Chelsea Frosty's Winter Wheat Wine (last firkin!), Geary's Pale Ale, Geary's Winter Ale, Green Flash West Coast IPA, Heartland Old Red Nose

CALENDAR continues on next page

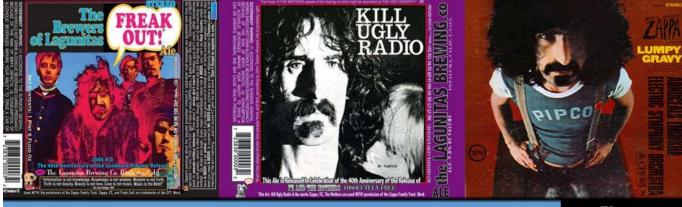


SECOND ANNUAL

-LAGUNITAS DRAUGHT BEER FESTIVAL

321 5th Avenue (corner of 3rd Street) BROOKLYN

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 13th, 2008 7:00pm



FEATURED DRAUGHTS: FREAK OUT! 2006 + KILL UGLY RADIO/ABSOLUTELY FREE! LUMPY GRAVY + CAPPUCINO STOUT 2006 + CENSORED COPPER ALE + IPA IMPERIAL RED ALE + CZECH PILSNER + MORE TBA

FEATURED BOTTLES: BROWN SHUGGA + HAIRY EYEBALL BARLEYWINE

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"WORK IS THE CURSE OF THE DRINKING CLASS" O. WILDE



Continued from first CALENDAR page

Special Reserve, Heartland Not Tonight Honey Porter, Kelso Pilsner, Mercury Stone Cat IPA, Middle Ages Kilt Tilter, Otter Creek Sea Otter Baltic Porter, Sixpoint Diesel, Sixpoint Licorice Pale Ale, Sly Fox Seamus Irish Red, Sly Fox Gang Aft Agley, Sly Fox Ichor, Southern Tier IPA, Stoudt's Scarlet Lady, Thomas Hooker Blonde.

Mon. Feb. 25, 6-9pm, New England Brewing NYC Debut at Diamond. Meet Owner/Brewer Rob Leonard and try the rare Storm Trooper Imperial Stout and Sea Hag IPA on tap; Atlantic Amber and Elm City Lager in cans.

Tue. Feb. 26, Sixpoint at CB Six. List TBA. Wed. Feb. 27, Night of the Imperial at Blind Tiger. List TBA.

Thu. Feb. 28, 2nd Beertopia at Village Pour-



house. Over 50 beers, \$1 per taste, \$10 a dozen.

Sat. Mar. 1, Philly Craft

Beer Fest at the

Cruise Terminal. Noon4pm or 6-10pm, buy tickets on-line \$40. Over 50

Thu. Mar. 6, Allagash at Barcade. Brewer Rob Todd will be on hand. List TBA.

Thu. Mar. 6, North Coast at Downtown. Old Rasputin, Le Merle, Old Stock, Scrimshaw, Bluestar, Red Seal, Old No.38, Prangster and more in bottles.

breweries.

Fri. Mar. 7-Sun. Mar. 16, Philly Beer Week. 27 events in 10 days. Check their website for details.

Sat. Mar. 8-Sun. Mar. 9, Noon until late, Split Thy Skull at Mugs Ale House. List TBA.

Sat. Mar. 8-Sun. Mar. 9, Atlantic City Beer Fest at the Convention Center. Three sessions, buy tickets on-line \$35. Over 60 breweries.

Fri. Mar. 28-Sun. Mar. 30, Noon until late, The 1st Manhattan Cask Ale Festival at Chelsea Brewing Co. Expect about 25 casks to be pouring over the week-

Homebrew Competitions

Please participate • All entries welcome Judges and stewards wanted

MARCH 1, 2008

Boston Homebrew Competition

At Holland & Knight in the Back Bay

Presented by the Boston Wort Processors Entries due by Feb. 13 Details at http://www.wort.org/bhc

MARCH 8, 2008

30th Annual UNYHA / 19th Empire State Open Homebrew Competition

At Rohrbach Brewing in Rochester

Presented by the Upstate New York Homebrewers Assoc. Entries collected Feb. 13 – Mar. 1 Details at: http://www.unyha.com/

MARCH 15, 2008

HVHB 18th Annual Homebrew Competition

At the Gilded Otter Brewing Co. in New Paltz

Presented by the Hudson Valley Home Brewers
Entries collected Feb. 16 – Mar. 8
Details at: http://hbd.org/hvhb/compete/2008/index.html

end, five or six brewed in-house with the rest from other craft brewers (hopefully including some UK real ales). The beer range is courtesy of Alex Hall in conjunction with Pat Green of Chelsea Brewing Co. Pay as you go, 10oz and 16oz pours. List TBA.

Sat. Mar. 29, Spring Craft Beer Fest at Nassau Coliseum. Noon-4pm or 5:30pm-9:30pm, buy tickets on-line \$47. Over 30 breweries.

Up-to-the-minute event info:

http://hbd.org/mbas/calendar.html

For the latest draft lists, go to:

http://hbd.org/mbas/new.html

For area beer bars, go to: http://hbd.org/mbas/beer.html