

# Malted Barley Appreciation Society

September 2007 • Volume 14 • Number 9



Cheers! From the editor's desk. —AlanRice

## Next Meeting:

Wed. Sept. 12, 7:30 p.m., Mugs Ale House.

Our guest will be Jeff O'Neil,  
lead brewer, Ithaca Beer.

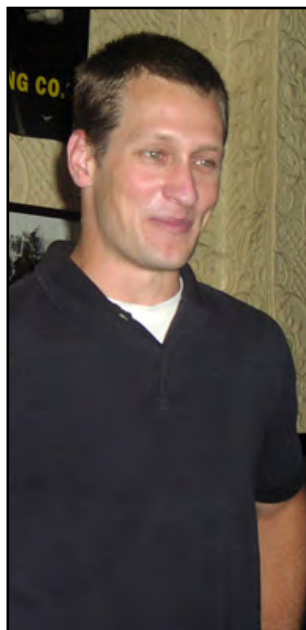
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## Union Beer Delivers

BY ALAN RICE



In August the MBAS welcomed our guest Eric McKay, Area Sales Manager for Union Beer Distributors (UBD). Eric has been a bar manager, and he was an assistant brewer at Carolina Beer Co. He is a long-time homebrewer and is BJCP qualified.

Eric is from CT, but went to school at Davidson College, north of Charlotte. He met his wife Rebecca there. Their wedding was in

NC before the state "Popped the Cap," raising the alcohol limit on beer from 6% to 15% abv. So, Eric brought down a lot of beer for the celebration.

Eric is also the Director of Communications for L. Knife & Son Companies, a holding company for 9 distributors (including UBD) in NY, NJ, MA and WI. They also own St. Killian Importers of Kingston, MA, which carries Wurzburger and Kenya Breweries, and additionally in our area, San Miguel, J. Boag,s and Amarit.

In 1898, Luigi Cortelli (Louis Knife) established a non-beer distribution business in MA. In 1934, he and his son obtained the rights to sell Anheuser-Busch products there. Over the years they expanded through acquisition, including Brooklyn,s A-B distributor, Union Beer, in 1996.

But L. Knife never signed an exclusive contract with A-B, and this would prove valuable when micro-brew sales took off. In 2002 they purchased the Craft Brewers Guild from the group that owns Brooklyn Brewery, and they've since begun handling specialty beers in NJ and WI.



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In 1997, they covered 6 A-B brands and 25 Specialty (Euro lagers) for 95% and 5% of their volume, respectively. Today, there are 14 A-B brands, and they have 30 Specialty brands and 405 Craft brands. The volume breaks out to 80%, 11%, and 9%, respectively. A-B volume is actually declining by 1.5%, while Euro lagers are growing strongly by 8% and craft brands are soaring by 12% nationally and 32% at L. Knife.

Their spectacular growth with craft beers is not just through acquisition. They are also improving sales of existing brands through education of employees, retailers and consumers.

Employees have access to an electronic library of craft beer articles. They attend lectures on brewing styles from experts, and get apprentice quality training at breweries. They receive intensive training at in-house seminars. To prove their knowledge, they must pass the Beer S.A.T., a tough set of questions co-authored by Eric McKay. To keep everyone honest, they will only see 100 out of 500 questions in the bank.

Retailers attend extensive beer tastings. They receive detailed product catalogues that even include food-pairing suggestions. They may be provided with a consultation leading to a recommended bar line-up, and even a beer list in a folder like a wine list. That is because L. Knife

distributors treat beer like wine distributors have been doing for years.

For the public there are tastings, release parties, and promotions at our favorite bars. Beer dinners and beer festivals also get the products out there.

### The Web sites

Union Beer Distributors created their first Web site in 2004. It was mostly just links to breweries that they handled. In 2005, UBD created the CraftBeerNewYork.com Web site which was an on-line catalogue. Click on a brewer and see their beer list with info on each beer including style, abv, tasting notes, food pairings, SKUs.

Since then, Eric has been busy. As the Communications Director he,s devoted half of his time to the next big rollout, GreatBrewers.com . Their ultimate goal is to take a big step up as a distributor to bridge the gap between the world's best brewers and the consumers who enjoy their products. On this completely interactive site you will be able to search 36 data points on 450 breweries and 1400 beers. Search by brand, style, or country/region/state of origin. Choose a package or draft barrel size. Pick a niche, like organic beers, strong beers, or gluten free. Find out what is available in casks. For each of 1600 products, there will be a photo of the beer poured along with every variable mentioned above. All beers will receive equal visibility and attention.

On most beer Web sites you are requested to enter

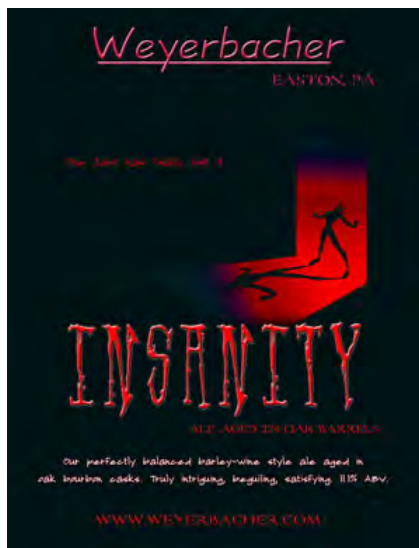
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Eric with MBAS member Mike Lovullo, who recently became a sales rep. for Union Beer.



Rebecca and Eric McKay



your birthday (I use 7/7/77 or 6/6/66, depending on my mood). On GreatBrewers.com, you will enter your zip code. That way, you can go directly to the beer finder. Click on a beer to find the nearest store, bar or restaurant where it's available. Or click on your favorite bar to see

what they have. (Of course, this may not apply to current draft lists. But we've got that covered at Beer Alert.)

This was a huge undertaking, since L. Knife covers 8,000 zip codes. There are many overlapping territories where they handle some beers but not others. And think about how many accounts they handle. In addition, they built in the capacity to form alliances with other distributors and share the technology. It simplifies so many aspects for selling, buying, and consuming a huge portfolio of beers.

Over 50 people, including IT pros, graphic designers, and web designers, as well as UBD sales managers and general managers, spent more than 6,000 hours working on the site. The site is currently under construction with a projected launch date of September 15, so check it out in a few days. The beer finder feature will be added within the next few weeks

When you click around, you'll find some fun stuff, too. Choose from over 600 food items, and find a beer to pair with it. Or peruse the expanded collection of beer education materials. And if you want to test your beer knowledge, you'll be able to take a short, 20-question version of the same BSAT that the employees take. Perfect scores will be featured on the site.

**The Beers**

Eric interrupted his presentation several times to pour us "product samples". He didn't actually use the phrase, but I'm pretty sure it crossed his mind. We tasted four beers new to UBD.

We were among the first in the area to try a new beer in the U.S., Otter Head. It's from Otter Brewery in the Blackdown Hills of East Devon, England. They draw spring water provided by the Otter River, and pre-date Otter Creek Brewery in Vermont by a couple years. (Insert your own water weasel joke here.) Brewer David McCaig learned his craft during his 17 years at Whitbread's. He's brewing 9,000 barrels/year, with a capacity of 15,000. It is the first beer from the new Tipple Time importer.

Otter Head is brewed with Golden Promise (of course) and Maris Otter (D,oh!) malts. The Maris provides an amazing toffee aroma and a strong caramel flavor. Challenger and Fuggles hops are used sparingly, as there is little but a lingering bitterness. The carbonation was low, just like you'd find it on cask. It could not have been fresher in NYC, and I did not detect distracting diacetyl. It is categorized as British "strong" ale because of its flavors, not the 5.8% abv.

Union Beer recently got the local distribution rights for Weyerbacher from American Beer. Eric brought bottles of Insanity that arrived from Easton that morning. Insanity is the oak aged version of Blithering Idiot barleywine. This is a big, sweet beer, with huge vanilla aromas and flavors from the bourbon barrels. I personally think that in this case, fresher is not better. It will improve with aging.

Great Divide is another recent UBD acquisition. The Yeti Imperial Stout is one of the best versions of this American style. It is a dark, rich and velvety 9.5% brew packed with 75 IBUs of northwest hops.

In this case, fresh was delicious. We did not try the Oak Aged version at the meeting. But pick one up and you'll find the hops subdued a bit and substituted by a touch of vanilla from the oak chips. This melds well with the chocolate maltiness.

The latest beer from Kiuchi Brewery in Japan is Hitachino Nest Espresso Stout. The base beer is a Russian Imperial stout recipe, with caramel, roasted, black and chocolate malts providing the expected flavors and 7.5% abv. Espresso beans are added to the boil. Saphir and Northern Brewer hops clock in at 45 IBUs. It was a nice beer to end the evening with, and worth a try if you like coffee stouts.



# Michael Jackson's Yen for Beer

BY WAYNE GABEL

Like a lot of beer lovers, I raised a glass last week in honor of late writer Michael Jackson. I shudder to think what the brewing scene would have been like without him. His influence is not to be underestimated. I saw first-hand how he helped shape consumer attitudes toward beer in Japan, the country I called home for most of the past 15 years and a place that had only four or five brewing companies for much of its postwar history.

For about 5 years, I was in the same game as Michael. In March 1996, I began writing a beer column for the now-defunct print edition of the *Mainichi Daily News*, an English-language paper published by the *Mainichi Shimbun*, one of Japan's three major national dailies. What started out as a monthly digest called *News on Tap* soon evolved into biweekly story-oriented column called *Foaming at the Mouth*.

Though I'd written features about beer for the paper, I could hardly believe my luck when my managing editor agreed to let me have a column. I could hardly believe my luck

again when I ran into Michael at a Tokyo brewpub. He was on a speaking tour sponsored by Konishi Brewing, a maker of sake and Belgian-inspired beers, and he graciously gave me a few quotes praising the rapid development of Japan's craft brewers for my first column. Over the years--and even after my column would come to an end with the folding of the *Mainichi Daily News*--our paths would cross numerous times. Michael, or his assistant, Owen Barstow, would invariably check in with me and other Japan-based writers ahead of impending visits to find out what was new. For me, it was one of the nicest

perks of being a big fish in a small pond.

While beer was routinely featured in the business pages, it wasn't considered a newsworthy consumer topic until April 1994, when the Japanese government partially deregulated the brewing industry. Restrictions that limited the beer business to deep-pocketed players able to produce at least 2,000 kiloliters per year were relaxed, setting the stage for what many hoped would be a revolution. Minimum production requirements were lowered to 60 kiloliters per year for beer and just 6 kiloliters per year for *happoshu*, a nebulous catch-all term for malt beverages that can't be labeled as beer, either because their barley



*Michael Jackson raises a glass at Nemo, a specialty whisky bar and "museum" in Tokyo's Asakusa district in 2002. Photo by John Mottershead.*

malt content is too low or because they're brewed with ingredients, such as spices or oatmeal, that are prohibited in what's legally defined as beer by Japanese tax authorities.

If that sounds confusing, imagine the bewilderment of the average Japanese beer drinker when confronted with the mysterious-sounding brews that the fledgling small-scale makers were beginning to roll out. Fortunately, translations of Michael's writings were beginning to appear, helping consumers make sense of new loan words like *Alt* and *Kölsch*. Kirin even began posting

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Plastic beer crates used by the Big Four brewers to ship their standard and medium bottles of beer. The crates hold 20 returnable bottles. Standard bottles are 633 ml. The medium ones shown here are half liters usually for commercial use.

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Japanese versions of his articles on its Web site.

Though retailers stocked lots of different labels in the mid-1990s, most were subtle variations on a very boring theme. Mildly hopped lagers ruled, and the Big Four--Kirin, Asahi, Sapporo and Suntory--were pouring all of their creative energies into trying to develop the next Super Dry, a smash hit that vaulted Asahi ahead of long-time market leader Kirin. The hard-to-find stouts and Schwarzbier-style "black beers" that some of the Big Four brewed were neglected stepchildren. Wild-eyed optimists like me honestly believed the new kids on the block were going to teach a thing or two to the Big Four--who might've been called the Only Four, were it not for Orion, a legacy of the U.S. occupation of Okinawa.

It was a heady time when Michael first began surveying the Japanese craft-brewing landscape. Would-be beer barons were popping up all over. Some were traditional sake makers who viewed beer as a safety net that could help them weather the cyclical downturns in the popularity of Japan's national drink, as well as a year-round product that would provide work during the warmer months when sake isn't brewed. Others were from the so-called "third sector," home to public-private partnerships forged with funds doled out by the national government for the creation of businesses aimed at reviving depressed rural and small-town economies.

Notable for their relative absence in those get-rich-

quick days were entrepreneurs who were truly passionate about beer. In part, that's because a lot of Japanese businesspeople had little experience with anything but mass-market lagers. It's also because the homebrewing of beer with more than 1% ABV remains illegal in Japan. Though the law is seldom enforced, there was until recently no sizable pool of homebrewers who were ready to make the jump into the pro ranks. I know of several former desk jockeys who were forced to become brewers back in the '90s simply because they weren't in a position to say no to their bosses. Predictably, as Michael warned upon observing that too many people were getting into the business for the wrong reasons, there would be negative consequences for craft beer.

The birth of the Japanese craft-brewing industry was like a gold rush. Companies were willing to pay top dollar for the best equipment, the best ingredients and the best advice. Foreign brewers, consultants and salespeople made a beeline to this new land of opportunity. The largest group by far were Germans. At one time, there were more than 40 German brewmasters working at Japanese craft breweries. Americans, Canadians, Belgians, Czechs and Britons arrived in smaller numbers. Some of those experts stayed on for as little as two weeks. Others stuck around for up to two years. A tiny handful have decided to devote their lives to brewing in Japan.

Their legacy is a mixed one--if it's there to be observed at all. There were five years of explosive growth that saw the number of small-scale brewers skyrocket from zero to 300+, and then the shakeout began. Today,

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Wayne Gabel and Tatsuo Aoki, proprietor of Popeye, a Tokyo tavern that has no serious rivals for the title of Japan's best beer bar.

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there are less than 100 craft brewers left. The number continues to decline, while the opening of a new brewery is an exceedingly rare occurrence.

The blame game is easy to play when discussing Japan's stalled brewing revolution, but there are two factors that probably doomed some breweries from the get-go: poor distribution and a failure to heed the wise words "location, location, location." There's also the inescapable fact that a lot of small-scale brewers were making bad beer.

The expression "once bitten, twice shy" pretty much sums up many casual drinkers' experiences with Japanese craft beer, which even beer geeks will say is often overpriced and underwhelming. It's telling that the Japanese term for craft beer--*jibiiru*--does not denote quality. It simply means "local beer." Land prices and other expenses kept breweries out of urban areas, so a large number of craft breweries made their homes in hard-to-reach rural communities. Even if their beers didn't make repeat customers out of area residents, such rural breweries could expect to make a certain amount of money from souvenir-hungry tourists eager to snap up anything local, regardless of quality.

Wherever they chose to locate, brewers generally coveted laurels in the form of medals or glowing reviews. The opinions of visiting writers and industry people, including Fred Eckhardt, Charlie Papazian and Bill Siebel, were eagerly solicited, but it was Michael's endorsement that was coveted by everyone. Well, almost everyone.

Whenever Michael weighed in on the state of brewing in Japan, it was as if he was taking sides in a war for hearts, minds and wallets. Should he dare to wonder aloud whether Japanese beer culture stood to benefit from its traditional allegiance to German styles and techniques, he was sure to be on the receiving end of some serious scorn from people who would have no truck with IPAs and other non-German styles. To some German brewmasters in Japan, Michael was the devil incarnate, especially when he was praising the virtues of Belgian beer.

The politest of his critics would acknowledge his many contributions to the brewing world, but they'd be just as quick to question whether his prodigious sampling habits really allowed him to do justice to all of the beers he tried. His most vociferous detractors in Japan called him an old drunk with no background in brewing science and claimed that he graded on a curve--a sliding scale that favored whoever his sponsor happened to be.

If Michael was hurt by such barbs, he never let on.



*In Fuchu, a suburb west of Tokyo, is an unusual liquor shop called Kashiwaya. It's rare to find a place which stocks 200 different beers. MJ was influential in popularizing Belgian beers, which are on the top shelf. Within a few years of his talk for the hospitality industry at the Belgian Embassy, Hoegaarden would come out of nowhere to rival Heineken (affiliated with Kirin) and Guinness (affiliated with Sapporo) for the title of most widely available foreign draft. Yona Yona Ale in the orange cans on the bottom shelf is highly hopped with Cascades. A very citrusy ale brewed by Toshi Ishii, who learned the trade at Stone in San Diego. To the left of it are two Kinshachi beers, brewed near Nagoya by Morita Landbier. The one with the blue label is Japan's best pils, bar none. Very Jever-like.*

Privately, I knew that Michael pulled no punches, yet he remained fair and open-minded, whether he was talking about beer or beer personalities. Publicly, he was always a gentleman. I saw his diplomacy in action when he addressed members of the Good Beer Club, a national organization with chapters all over Japan, during a gathering at Popeye, far and away the country's best beer bar. Michael politely, but firmly warned the group not to ghettoize beer by shrouding it with a mystique that none but the initiated can penetrate.

The only time I saw Michael come close to losing his

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cool was during a photo shoot for an article I was writing about whisky. It was November 2002, and he was in town for "Whisky Live in Japan," staged by Britain's Whisky Magazine. I met Michael at a bar called Nemo in Tokyo's Asakusa district. The bar's owner is a collector of the sort that's fairly common in Japan: wealthy and very, very obsessed. Part of Nemo had been transformed into a "museum" filled with rare, expensive and untouched whiskies. My photographer, who was acting as translator, struggled to explain the owner's motives.

At some point, Michael's frustration with the owner's answers became all too apparent. "Listen, John," he said to my photographer. "Ask him why he'd spend 20,000 dollars on a bottle of whisky and never bother to taste it.

Does he really derive satisfaction from just looking at it?"

He never got the response he was seeking, but the experience gave us something to chuckle over when we met for beers later that day. No sooner had we sat down than Michael was swarmed by autograph-seekers. He cheerfully posed for pictures with all who sought them and politely answered every query.

I felt like one of those fans the last time I saw Michael. I was a volunteer at Ale Street News' Ultimate Belgian Tasting II, staged last March at Heartland Brewery's 43rd Street location. Being newly arrived in the United States, I was sure that Michael wouldn't recognize me out of my usual context. But he did, and he immediately invited me to sit down. After shooing away some other folks, he got out his notebook and started peppering me with questions about the encouraging develop-



*Michael Jackson and friends at Heartland Brewery, Times Square, March 23, 2007. Photo by Mike Lovullo.*

ments in Japan--the growing popularity of real ale--and the not so encouraging ones--the emergence of "Frankenbeers" brewed with soy and pea proteins to outmaneuver the taxman.

It was shortly before Michael's passing that I resolved to send him an e-mail. When I got around to it, I found I was too late. The memories came flooding back, and I cracked open a beer. And, yes, I was soon crying in it.

## Remembering Michael Jackson

There will be a worldwide toast to Michael Jackson on September 30. Check our calendar near the date for area locations: <http://hbd.org/mbas/calendar.html>

Every beer and whisky Web site and blog has a tribute to MJ. Here are a few of the special ones. Check them out now before the links change:

All About Beer Magazine posted MJ's last, unpublished article. The foreshadowing of death is quite poignant. <http://allaboutbeer.com/>. They also posted a link for his first column for them way back in 1984. Beer has come a long way since then, with much thanks to him. <http://www.allaboutbeer2.com/michaeljackson/firstcolumn.html>

Our friend Dan Shelton interviewed MJ on August 7. This 10 minute excerpt is well worth your time. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLoHW7qjU>.

Celebrator Beer News posted a great set of photos from the '80s. <http://www.celebrator.com/>.

More at: <http://www.beerhunter.com/index-new.html> .

# Beach Beer

BY B.R. ROLYA

Photos by Bill Drago for [www.loving-long-island.com](http://www.loving-long-island.com)



One summer day trip that Bob and I enjoy taking is a visit to Fire Island. The Long Island Railroad has packages to Watch Hill (train + ferry ticket) which is part of Fire Island National Seashore (<http://www.watch-hillfi.com>). Since it is a national park, there is no development at all; the only buildings are the ranger station, a tiny store, and a bar/restaurant when you disembark from the ferry after crossing the Great South Bay. Walk a minute down the shore after crossing the dunes and you'll have the beach to yourself.

After a recent trip to the beach we decided to check out the BrickHouse Brewery (<http://www.brickhouse-brewery.com>) in Patchogue before heading back to the city. It was a short walk from the ferry terminal (and the train station) and we had time for a few beers and an early dinner. We hadn't been to the BrickHouse in a long time; it was definitely before Blue Point started helping them out. The last time we were there we were not too impressed by the beers that we had; most of those that we tried had off-flavors, some verging on infections. We hoped that we would have better luck this time.

The Hurricane Kitty (5.5%) was a pale ale dry hopped with whole-leaf Cascade hops. The spicy hop aroma wasn't huge but there was lots of hop flavor throughout, although surprisingly it lacked the usual citrus/grapefruit character of Cascade. There was some malt in the middle with bitterness throughout, including the long finish.

The Double Cream Ale (6%) was clear with a light copper color - a bit darker than what we were expecting. The flavor was very grassy, like a freshly mown lawn and the finish was very bitter. The grassy flavor wasn't unpleasant but the overall impression didn't suggest a true cream ale.

The Nut Brown Ale (5.7%) was very deep reddish brown in color, like a dark cola. The flavor was a bit tangy on the first sip and slightly nutty up front but then it turned somewhat ashy and acrid with a very thin body.

Boys Red (5.5%), tapped the day before we arrived, was billed as a "malty medium amber ale". It was medium copper colored with a faintly malty aroma. The flavor was malty but leaned heavily towards the grainy regions of maltiness. Overall, it was a basic amber with decent bitterness throughout and sweetish finish.

Our second experience at the BrickHouse was definitely better than the first; nonetheless, none of the beers really stood out. There was nothing so bad that we didn't want to finish but unfortunately nothing special that made us want to wait an hour for the next train and have a second round (although we didn't get around to trying the blonde ale or the stout). They also had Blue Point Toasted Lager and Blue Point Blueberry Ale on tap.

The food was average brewpub fare although we expected to see more seafood on the menu given the location. Overall, we were slightly disappointed with our visit; we're big fans of the Blue Point beers and had hoped that, with their assistance, their quality would carry through to the BrickHouse beers. Nonetheless, with a little work, these beers will hopefully become standouts along with other Long Islands beers.



Ann Marie and Mike





# Calendar

Click on event titles for a hot link to their website

**Fri Sept. 14**, 5-10pm **2nd Annual NY Brewfest, South Street Seaport**, \$45. All NY State breweries and brewpubs are invited.

**Sat. Sept. 15**, **Oktoberfest at Andy's Corner Bar**. Perhaps their biggest event of the year, with over two dozen German and American Fest beers in kegs and on cask, some not available in NY. Pay as you go starting at noon. The all you can eat German buffet (\$10) opens at 2pm and that is when the place gets hopping. Live music until 6pm and plenty of seating out back. 257 Queen Anne Road, a block and a half south of DeGraw Ave., Bogota, NJ. Take the #167 or #168 from the PABT, or the #182 from the GWB. [http://www.njtransit.com/sf\\_bu\\_schedules.shtml](http://www.njtransit.com/sf_bu_schedules.shtml)

**Sat. Sept 15**, Noon-4pm, NYC's **First Organic Beer Bash, Counter Bistro and Bar**, 105 First Ave. (6th&7th), \$25. Sample 35 organic beers and hard ciders

from around the world. Savor finger food made with beer.

**Sun. Sept. 16**, Noon-6pm, **Oktoberfest at the Brooklyn Brewery**, \$30. Open bar featuring their draft beers, a pretzel necklace, polka, and more.

**Wed. Sept. 19**, **Troegs at Andy's Corner**. The Troeg brothers will be on hand with some special beers as they celebrate their 10th anniversary.

**Wed. Sept. 19**, **Victory Brewing at Blind Tiger**, list TBA.

**Thu. Sept. 20**, **Dogfish Head Beer and Cheese Pairing**, Artisanal Premium Cheese Center, 500 W. 37th Street, \$60-\$75.

**Wed. Sept. 26**, 7-9pm. **Chocolate, Cheese, & Beer Tasting, Jimmy's No. 43**. NYC's Degustation Advisory Team (Mary Izett, Chris Cuzme, Anne Saxelby, and Mike Lovullo) host an evening of sweets, savories and cervezas specifically paired with one another to become delectable sums greater than their individual parts. When matched correctly, these individual trios force smile generation and

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wonderment of the palate. RSVP not required but requested to [cuzme@cuzme.com](mailto:cuzme@cuzme.com).

**Wed. Sept. 26**, 7pm, **Smuttynose at Sunswick**. Have you checked out Sunswick yet? They'll have Smutty Pumpkin, IPA, Farmhouse, and Old Brown Dog drafts for \$4. Take the N Train to 36th and walk to 35th Ave. and 35th St., Astoria, Queens, 718-752-0620.

**Sun. Sept. 30**, 2pm, **Oktoberfest Beer Tasting and Pig Roast, Killmeyer's Old Bavarian Inn**, Staten Island. Reservations suggested.

**Sat. Oct. 6**, 2-6pm, **10th Annual Kennett BrewFest**, Kennett Square, PA, \$30.

**Thu. Oct. 11**, **Barcade's 3rd Anniversary Celebration**. Featuring on tap: Allagash Red Wine Tripel, Dogfish Head Red and White, Hair of the Dog Fred 2005, Ithaca Kaffeinator Doppelbock, Thomas Hooker Oak Aged Liberator, and more, much more.

**Sat. Oct. 13**, 11am-2am, **Mugs Ale House 15th Anniversary Celebration**. Featuring 15 strong beers on tap, the

list so far: Sixpoint Mugs Anniversary Ale, Gales Millennium Ale, Okocim Porter, Stone 9th Anniversary, Brooklyn Black Chocolate Stout 2005, Avery Lucky 13, Rogue Anniversary Hop, Bluepoint Imperial Stout, Great Divide Hercules Double IPA, Sierra Nevada Anniversary Ale.

**Wed. Oct 17**, **Sixpoint Ales and Cheese Pairing**, Artisanal Premium Cheese Center, 500 W. 37th Street, \$60-\$75.

**Fri. Oct. 26-Sat. Oct. 27**, **Fifth Annual Brewtopia World Beer Fest**, Pier 92 on the Hudson at 52nd St., \$50. Three sessions, many beers.

**Fri. Nov. 2-Sun. Nov. 4**, **Thirteenth "Cask Head" Cask Ale Festival**, Brazenhead. List TBA.

**For up-to-the-minute event info, go to:**

<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>