

# Malted Barley Appreciation Society

October 2006 • Volume 13 • Number 10

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Cheers! Here's Oct.'s newsletter...

— Alan Rice —

Next Meeting:

Wednesday October 11, 2006

Our guest speaker is Manny Calderon, Jr.,  
of Niche Brands.

## MUGS ALE HOUSE



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## September Meeting: John Giannopoulos

BY ALAN RICE

PHOTOS BY WARREN BECKER

Our guest was John Giannopoulos of Sly Fox Brewery. Sly Fox is a family business, and he is co-owner with his two brothers and father. Brother Pete G. also took the trip up to Mugs. In 1994, Pete lost his job in corporate sales. They were both homebrewers, and



the brewpub business was booming. They got hooked on the idea after attending a craft brew conference in Austin, TX.

Pete wanted to open the brewpub in Phoenixville, PA. When the original backers dropped out, the family stepped in. Their mother found the perfect place on Rt. 113, just outside Phoenixville. Pete designed the pub, and he and John became professional brewers. Older brother Harry does the books.

Phoenixville is in Chester County, which is still slightly rural. It had a tradition of fox hunting. At one of their many family meetings, they tried several variations on the theme, like Country Fox, Red Fox, etc. Mom picked Sly Fox, and that worked out nicely. Pete designed the original logo.

John told us that they have always been looking for

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slow and steady growth. First, the pub became a popular, affordable dining destination. After John received some local recognition for his beers, he started selling to the Philadelphia area beer bars. Eventually, he hired others to do the brewing. One key hire was bringing in Bill Moore, who had won GABF awards at Stoudt's and Independence. (John left for Ortlieb's - he's now at Lancaster).

This opened the door for Brian O'Reilly. Brian trained under Phil Markowski (before Southampton). He brewed for John Harvard's in Cleveland, then a short-lived brewpub in Pennsylvania. But things really took off for Brian and Sly Fox when he came on board in March, 2002. Brian's popular beers and knack for promotion soon pushed the 10 bbl brewhouse to its limit.

Over a round of golf, the Giannopoulos family decided to expand. While still searching for a second location, they purchased and moved a 20 bbl system from Hoster's Brewery of Columbus, Ohio. But it took a year and a half until they found the perfect location for it in Royersford. The 12,500 square foot site opened in November, 2004. Now, there are already plans to bring in two new 40 bbl bright tanks and an 80 bbl fermenter.

The expanded capacity allowed them to distribute to Pittsburgh and

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throughout western Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and now New York. Assistant brewer Tim Ohst helps Brian with the workload. In addition to kegging and bottling 750s, they are also canning in Royersford.

John liked the idea of canning his product. He saw the success that Oskar Blues of Colorado was having selling high quality beer. The new space allowed them to store the 187,000 printed cans that come in each container load. Pikeland Pilsner and Phoenix Pale Ale were the obvious choices for canning. They are now on their third container.

The cans come from Ball Corp. in Calgary, Canada. Ball usually deals with large-scale customers, but is working with smaller accounts. Sly Fox is doing so well, that they may soon be able to purchase on consignment. Also, they've been able to can a third brand. But instead of canning one more, they're doing two seasonals: Kulmbacher dunkel lager will be available in fall and winter; Royal Weisse, an un-filtered Bavarian wheat beer, will be the spring and summer offering.

Our guests brought us cans to taste and take home.

Kulmbacher was not yet available. But the GABF award winning Pikeland Pils hit the spot. It is a Northern German-style Pilsner brewed with imported German Pils malt and hopped with German and Czech hops. It's light in body, light straw in color and dry. Its clear golden body is topped by a foamy, bright-



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white head that holds quite well and leaves some very nice lace before settling to a creamy collar and wispy surface covering. The nose displays a bouquet of boldly floral and spicy Saaz hops. The bitterness hits swift and hard up-front and then the malt kicks in. It finishes dry with a mild residual bitterness. This is not your typical can of American Pils at 44 IBUs, but the 4.9% ABV should be what most people expect.

Phoenix Pale Ale is brewed with British Pale and Crystal malts and hopped with Centennial and Cascade hops from the Pacific Northwest. Copper in color, medium-bodied and spicy. It pours clear orange/amber with a fine, off-white head that showed some lacing and good retention. There's a toasty malt aroma with floral and citrus hops, as you would expect. Also a little earthiness and caramel as it warms. Medium to strong bitterness with solid sweetness and biscuity malt. There's lots of hop flavour - floral, citrus, and a hint of resin - and a little orange sweetness as well. Medium/light body with a

dry finish and some creaminess. This one comes in at 40 IBUs and 5.1% ABV.

In addition, Mugs had O'Reilly's Stout on a nitro tap. It's brewed with imported Pale and British Roasted Barley and hopped with Cascade and East Kent Goldings. It's black, light bodied and roasty dry. This 3.2% ABV session beer has a surprising 42



IBUs. The brand really took off for Sly Fox when the Philly watering holes were boycotting Guinness (long story). Many switched to Murphy's or Beamish, but O'Reilly's was blowing them away in side-by-side comparisons, so they won over many accounts. The Sly Fox boys would love to be the first in North America to can a stout with a widget, but the technology is not cost efficient for their production. But, perhaps, someday...

## An Exercise in Chocolate and Beer Pairing

**ARTICLE AND PHOTOS  
BY MARY IZETELNY**

The New York City Beer & Food Pairing Study Group recently held their first beer and chocolate pairing. I chose four beer styles known to pair well with chocolate and selected a beer representative of each style. Fuller's London Porter, Avery's Czar Imperial Stout, Karmeliet Tripel, and Ommegang Abbey Ale were the beers served. Three chocolates of different cocoa contents were selected, all by Valrhona: 40% (milk chocolate), 56% (semi-sweet chocolate), and 71% (dark bittersweet chocolate), as well as Lindt Intense Orange (dark chocolate), Raspberry (milk chocolate), Dolfin Chocolat Au Lait A La Cannelle de Ceylan (milk with cinnamon). Another member of our group brought a Vosges Creole (espresso +

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cocoa nibs + New Orleans style chicory + and bittersweet chocolate) and a Vosges Red Fire (Mexican ancho and chipotle chili peppers + Ceylon cinnamon + dark chocolate) as well. Here are some of our impressions:

The London Porter worked best with the 56% chocolate. The chocolate brought out the roasty-ness of the porter and was overall a synergistic coupling. Both the milk and the 71% chocolate tended to blunt the beer. Both the orange and the raspberry completely overwhelmed the porter.

The Imperial Stout worked well with the 71% chocolate, bringing out the dried fruitiness in the stout and creating a pleasing gustatory effect. The Raspberry worked to some degree,



making it into, as one member commented, a beer cocktail. It was overall a very sweet experience, although the chocolate did bring out the roasted flavors of the stout. The orange choco-

late was a decent pairing as well, although the intensity of the citrus tended to overwhelm the stout, emphasizing the alcoholic heat of the beer. The stout also paired beautifully with

the Creole bar, the coffee flavors of the stout and chocolate melding beautifully.

The Tripel was excellent with the Creole bar, creating a sweet and spicy effect that most members found delightful. The sweetness of the tripel was an excellent contrast to the piquancy of the chocolate bar. The tripel also worked well with the orange chocolate, the fruitiness of the beer joining nicely with the citrus of the chocolate. I had paired the tripel with the cinnamon milk chocolate

in the past, enjoying the matching immensely.

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## Great American Beer Fest: A record breaker

This was the 25th annual festival of the nation's largest celebration of craft beers and brewers. It drew a record 41,000 visitors to the Colorado Convention Center to four sessions over its three-day run.

We congratulate New York's four medals winners: Silvers for Blue Point Brewing (Toasted Lager - American-Style Amber Lager) and Great Adirondack Brewing Company (Adirondack Abbey Ale - Belgian-Style Abbey Ale) and Bronzes for Brewery Ommegang (Hennepin Farmhouse Saison - French-Belgian-Style Saison) and Southampton Publick House (Belgian Double White Ale - Belgian and French-Style Ale).

For the complete list of winners, go to the Brewer's Association website at <http://www.beertown.org/>

Celebrating 25 Years!

BREWERS ASSOCIATION

Great AMERICAN BEER Festival<sup>SM</sup>

3 Days, 380 Breweries, 1600 Beers

SEPTEMBER 28-30, 2006

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER, DENVER, COLORADO

[www.GreatAmericanBeerFestival.com](http://www.GreatAmericanBeerFestival.com)

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Tonight, our bottles were not as sweet as usual and did not work as well with these bars.

Although our palates were wearing out a bit at this point, we found the Abbey Ale to pair best with the 56% bar, bring out a little creaminess in the chocolate and balancing nicely with the rich beer. The 71% bar was deemed to bitter with the beer.

This was a fun and tasty evening. I was surprised how differently the 56% and 71% chocolate paired with the beers. Want to set up your own tasting? Here are some tips:

- Choose high quality chocolate. The Valrhona and Vosges paired best overall with our chocolates. The Lindt Raspberry was too sweet and the Orange a bit too intense, although they worked to a degree. Obviously, less expensive chocolate will work, but I think you'll find better satisfaction with the good stuff.

- Darker chocolates worked best. The plain milk didn't work well with any of them, although flavored milk chocolates will work with certain beers.

- Limit your beer selection. Your palate does tire. Three to four beers will work well for an evening tasting. Choose more only if you're doing a longer event.

- Provide plenty of water. Crackers would also be nice to help clear the palate between samples.

- Don't be afraid to experiment. Some of the pairings that I thought would work didn't, but some that I didn't did. Seek out some of the more unusual chocolates, like the Vosges exotic series, for some interesting and palate-pleasing flavors.

- Have fun!

The New York City Beer & Food Pairing Study Group can be found online at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYCBFP/>

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## Calendar

### HOME BREW COMPETITIONS

**Sun. Oct. 29, 2006, Southern New England Homebrew Competition**, Edmund Town Hall, Newtown, CT. Homebrew, judges, and stewards wanted. <http://www.ya-hoos-snerhc.com>.

**November 11, 2006, 11th Knickerbocker Battle of the Brews**, C.H. Evans Brewing Co. at Albany Pump Station, NY. Organisers: The Saratoga Thoroughbrews. <http://www.moonbrew.com/kbotb/index.php>

**February 10, 2007, Homebrew Alley**, Chelsea Brewing Co., Pier 59, New York City. Organisers: The New York City Homebrewers Guild. <http://hbd.org/nychg/>

### BEER EVENTS

**Wed. Oct. 11, 7:30pm, Malted Barley Appreciation Society Meeting**, Mugs Ale House. Our guests will be Phil Richman & Manny Calderon, representing Sly Fox Brewery of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, coming by with lots & lots of Sly Fox to share! Homebrew is also likely to be passed around as usual, and Mugs usual great selection of beers.

**Wed. Oct. 11, 6pm, The German Beer Event at Collins**. With Smuttinator (aged in a Jack Daniel's barrel), Aecht Schlenkerla Rauchbier Urbock, Victory Kolsch, Victory Dunkel Weizen, Mahr's Pils, and Louise's Old School Bratwurst and Potato-salad, for all to enjoy.

**Wed. Oct. 11, 6pm, First Annual Sierra Nevada Green Hop Festival**, Essex Ale House. Featuring Sierra's always amazing Harvest Ale which uses fresh, Yakima hops

that are less than 36 hours off the vine when added to the kettle and tun. And then of course Sierra's brewers take it one step beyond with the very exclusive 20th Street Ale, which uses hops grown on the same street as the brewery just a few blocks down the road - these hops are wet. Only four kegs were sent to the east coast and we got one!

**Thu. Oct. 12, opening at noon, Barcade's 2nd Anniversary Party**. A crazy selection of draft beers, including: Allagash Curieux, Dogfish Head World Wide Stout, Hair of the Dog Fred, Heavyweight Doug's Colonial Ale, Heavyweight Old Salty (Bourbon Barrel Aged) 2005, Heavyweight Old Salty 2004, North Coast Old Stock 2004, Sixpoint Gemini, Sly Fox Grisette, Victory St. Victorious Doppelbock, Wagner Valley Trippel Bock.

**Fri. Oct. 13, Friday the Firkenteenth**, 1:00 p.m. until about 8:00 p.m., The Grey Lodge Pub. We don't worry about black cats crossing our paths or broken mirrors because we have 13 or more firkins of cask conditioned ale sitting on bar. So walk under a ladder or whatever you have to do to get here. <http://greylodge.com/>

**Mon. Oct. 16, Fuller's of London at Essex Ale House**. We'll be tapping a keg of Fuller's ESB and having specials on Fuller's Porter, Fuller's London Pride, and we'll be kicking off 1845 as a special selection on our ever growing beer menu.

**Mon. Oct. 16, dba's 12th Anniversary Celebration**. Get your first drink free. Very special stuff, like 3 CASKS of Fuller's Ales including ESB, and Dogfish Head Golden Shower.

**Wed. Oct. 18, 7pm, \$35, Graze Catering's Legends Ltd.**

## Calendar, *continued*

Celtic Autumn Beer & Food Pairing at Downtown Bar & Grill. Featuring beers from Moorhouses, Orkney, and Williams Brothers. <http://www.grazecatering.com>.

**Fri. Oct. 20 Sat. Oct 21, 5th Annual Brewtopia World Beer Festival**, Jacob Javitz Center, \$60. The East Coasts largest festival allows you to sample over 500 beers from 100 breweries from all over the world. More info. and tickets at: <http://www.worldbeerfest.com/>

**Sat. Oct. 28, The Return of the Belgian Beer Fest**, 1:00-4:30 p.m. or 6:00-9:30 p.m., \$30, The Cyclorama @ The Boston Center For The Arts. Beer Advocate is excited to announce the return of our most popular beer festival, and one of the largest of its kind outside of Belgium. Over 150 beers, guest speakers, food available. Connoisseur tasting on Friday, 6-9:30pm, \$40. <http://beeradvocate.com/fests/index?view=sat>

**Thu. Nov. 2, 2nd Annual Dogfish Head Novemberfest at Standings**. Featuring the Dogfish Punkin Ale, Indian Brown Ale, Chicory Stout & 90 Minute IPA plus free pizza

**Fri. Nov. 3, 6pm, Fisherman's Night at Barcade**. Join us in welcoming Cape Ann Brewing for their first ever NYC event. On tap will be IPA, Navigator Doppel Bock 2005 (spiced version, aged 1 year), Navigator Doppel Bock 2006 (un-spiced version), the brand new Pumpkin Stout and, of course, the Fisherman's Brew.

**Fri. Nov. 3 – Sun Nov. 5, 10th Tri-Annual 'Cask Head' Real Ale Festival**, The Brazen Head. Featuring over 20 casks through the weekend, at least 10 at a time, and many are rarely seen in NYC. Free entrance & very reasonable prices.

**Wed. Nov. 8, 7:30pm, Malted Barley Appreciation Society Meeting**. Mugs Ale House. Guest TBD. Homebrew is also likely to be passed around as usual, and Mugs usual great selection of beers.

**Wed. Nov. 15, Graze Catering's Legends Ltd.** Organic Beer & Food Harvest Celebration at Downtown Bar & Grill. Featuring beer from Wolaver's, Samuel Smith's, Foret, Pinkus and Cidre Du Pont. <http://www.grazecatering.com>.

**Fri. Nov. 17, Allagash at Barcade with brewer Rob Tod.**

Several of Rob's unique beers will be on draft including Interlude, Curieux, FOUR, Grand Cru (2004 keg!!!) and 11th Anniversary. We will also have Dubbel on cask.

**Thu. Nov 30, 6:30pm, Artisinal Cheese & Triumph Brewing Tasting**, \$60-\$75, Artisinal Premium Cheese Center. Join Artisinal's Jon Lunbom and brewmaster Patrick Jones on a tour of Triumph's Fall and Winter lineup paired with the very best cheeses the season has to offer. Featured beers will include their English IPA, Winter Bock, and Imperial Stout. <http://www.artisinalcheese.com/prodinfo.asp?number=17BC>



## LOCAL BEER EVENT VENUES

- Barcade**, 388 Union Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 302-6464. <http://www.barcadebrooklyn.com/> .
- Brazen Head**, 228 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn 11201. (718) 488-0430. <http://www.brazenheadbrooklyn.com/> .
- Collins Bar**, 735 8th Avenue, Manhattan 10036. (212) 541-4206. <http://collinsbar.com/> .
- David Copperfield's**, 1394 York Avenue, Manhattan 10021. (212) 734-6152. <http://www.davidcopperfields.com/> .
- Downtown Bar & Grill**, 160 Court Street, Brooklyn 11201. (718) 625-2835.
- Essex Ale House**, 179 Essex Street, Manhattan 10002. (212) 505-6027.
- Hop Devil Grill**, 129 St. Marks Place, Manhattan 10009. (212) 533-4467. <http://www.hopdevil.com/> .
- Mugs Ale House**, 125 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 384-8494. <http://www.mugsalehouse.com/> .
- Spuyten Duyvil**, 359 Metropolitan Avenue, Brooklyn 11211. (718) 963-4140. <http://www.spuytenduyvilnyc.com/> .
- Liberty Heights Tap Room**, 36 Van Dyke Street, Brooklyn 11231. (718) 246-1793. <http://www.libertyheightstaproom.com/> .
- Standings**, 43 East 7th Street, Manhattan 10003. (212) 420-0671. <http://www.standingsbar.com/> .
- Zum Schneider**, 107 Avenue C (at 7th St.), Manhattan 10009. Tel. 212 598 1098. <http://www.zumschneider.com/>.