

THE BLUE GRAY BREWSLETTER

Editor - Deb Lorenz

Feb 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th 2009

WELCOME TO THE 30th B--I--G SHOW!!

30 Years!! Do you believe it? Time sure does fly when you're having fun! Once again the Blue Gray Show Committee and hosts welcome all of you to the biggest breweriana show in the East. Our hosts this year include: the Capital City Chapter, the Richbrau Chapter, The Rusty Bunch Chapter, The BCCA, The Sports Can Chapter and NABA. We look forward to seeing all of the same faces and the addition of many new ones to this year's show. **We welcome each and every one of you to the Show!**

As always, this year we are setting up tables in the Hotel Lobby on Thursday and Friday so that the collectors in the other Hotels can participate in the room-to-room trading. The tables are for **ONLY** collectors **not** staying in the Ramada Inn and those in the **back side of the back building, all odd numbered rooms from 301-341 and from 401-441**. Collectors in the main building and on the front side of the back building will have their room open for the room-to-room trading. **So check out all of the outside rooms!** On Saturday, the tables are open to **ALL** collectors **EXCEPT** those who have Dealer Rooms (inside the Atrium of the Ramada).

On Friday night, be sure and **get in line** for the **Pizza Party!** Tom Chegash will be there to ensure the line is orderly and that you each get some great pizza. Now, be nice or the **Pizza Dude** might make you go to the end of the line and wear a "dunce" cap or something.

John Bain's "The Back Bar Display" is Back this year so be sure to stop by the Board Room and view the awesome pieces on display. Make your vote count and show your respect for some important Breweriana history pieces.

As you walk around this year, trading, buying, conversing and just plain drinking beer, be sure to introduce yourself to the many micro-brewery representatives in attendance and thank them for continuing to make the Hospitality Room one of the best in the East or the West.

Brews to you!
Rayner Johnson

*Congratulations to Rayner Johnson for
being elected into the BCCA Hall of Fame!*

Room To Room Trading all day and all night from Wednesday, February 11th until Sunday February 15th! Yippee and all that stuff!!!!!!

HOTEL AMENITIES

Each room at the Ramada comes equipped with a coffee pot, ironing board, and iron. There is a swimming pool and exercise room for those who want to work out. The Business Center is available for clerical needs. The hotel has remodeled many of their rooms this year so we think you will be pleasantly surprised.

HUNGRY?

There is a *great breakfast buffet* available on Thursday through Sunday mornings at the Garden Terrace Restaurant at the Ramada Inn at a reasonable price. The Terrace also offers Lunch and Dinner. There will be a *Hotdog Stand* available on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. When that closes up, there is good bar food available at *Muggsey's Bar* in the Ramada. Muggsey's opens at 4:00 p.m. *Hooters Restaurant* and the Pancho Villas Mexican Restaurant are just a short walking distance away.

Please remember to wear your Badge at all times as this is a private party and people that do not have their Badge on will be asked to leave. This has to do with the State Liquor Law and remember, You are responsible for your own behavior and that of your guests.

The Hospitality Room is open 24 hours a day, beginning on Wednesday at 12:00 noon and ending at noon on Sunday!

Cheers!

BACK BAR DISPLAY

The Back Bar Display is returning to the Blue Gray show this year for its 10th semi-annual appearance. A striking arrangement of twenty-four spectacular, early, lighted breweriana items will be presented by John Bain and numerous other participants. As always, the display will be accompanied by hundreds of popular Swing, Jazz and Dixieland tunes from the Big Band era of the 30s and 40s. In addition, there will be a Best of Show Contest with awards for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. So grab a beer or two (or three) at the hospitality room, and then come on over to the Back Bar for an eye-popping event. Join us on Thursday, February 12th at 8:00 p.m. for *the lighting ceremony*. The Back Bar will be *displayed* on Thursday from 8:15 p.m. to midnight; on Friday from 9:00 a.m. to midnight; on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If you are going to *vote*, the deadline is Saturday at 9:00 a.m. At 11:00 a.m. there will be a *group photo* and then at 11:30 a.m. (drum roll please), the contest winners will be announced.

NO BREWERY TOUR . . . BUT!

Due to problems with communication with the Bus Company this year, there will be no official Brewery Tour, but we are happy to announce that a new *Capitol Ale House* has opened in Historic downtown Fredericksburg at 917 Caroline Street. It is housed in a 200 year old building. Highlights include an 80' long concrete bar, fireplace, a lounge with leather couches and dart boards, and a display beer cellar which is controlled to the perfect cellaring temp of 55 degrees! It is an upscale-casual dinner house that features 62 craft and import beers on draught and over 300 selections of bottled beer. If you're a beer enthusiast, you won't want to miss a stop at the Capitol Ale House. It is a 10 minute drive (5.12 miles) from the Ramada.

The Blue Gray Brewery is located 9 minutes from the hotel (4.83 miles away). The Blue Gray offers free tastings and retail sales on Saturdays from 10 am - 1 pm, Wednesdays from 2 pm-6 pm and Fridays from 3 pm-8 pm. Tours are available on Saturdays from 10 am - 1 pm. If you haven't been, you simply must! Dahhhhh! The Blue Gray Show. The Blue Gray Brewery.

MARGARITA MADNESS!

Margarita Madness will be held on Friday afternoon at 1:00 p.m. at Pancho Villas Mexican Restaurant which is within walking distance. I keep trying this every year and every year, I'm almost all alone crying into my Margarita. You don't have to be a lady to enjoy a Margarita or two with some chips.

So plan on it *Margarita Lovers!* We'll see ya there! Meet me, Deb Lorenz, in the lobby at 12:45 and we can all walk down together or just meet us there!

SAT MORNING - FULL BOTTLE TRADE

For those of you who enjoy tasting and trading new "brews" in the bottle, don't miss out on the Full Bottle Trade on Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Banquet Room. Bring your fresh micro-brewery beer from your area to trade. Minimum required is a six-pack and the maximum is a whole case

WINE GODDESS WINE TASTING

This is for the LADIES only! Sorry, guys, but really, there has to be something for the ladies! The Wine Goddess Chapter will hold their annual Saturday Afternoon Wine Tasting on Valentine's day at 1:00 p.m. in the Garden Terrace Restaurant. All ladies are invited to attend and wear red for the occasion if you have any with you! Just bring a bottle of wine and an hors d'oevre to share. Any questions, see the Wine Goddess President, Debbie Eib! Debbie has been hosting this tasting for 7 or 8 years now. She loves wine and felt that there should be something for the ladies. Lightning struck and she found a way to combine the two. Debbie is married to Chris. She is a pet-sitter and shows her dogs, four golden retrievers, at Dog Shows where she enjoys drinking, what else, wine! Thanks Deb for hosting all of us and I am truly looking forward to this one!!!!

BANQUET INFORMATION

Be sure and stop by at the Blue Gray Registration Desk if you have not signed up for the 30th annual Banquet on Saturday night yet. The food will be guaranteed delicious, the conversations will be great and the drinks will be cold. Take your honey out for a Valentine's day dinner without having to drive somewhere! There's a "surprise" planned, so don't miss out on this great opportunity to show the guys and gals who do the work, how much the show meant to you!

A THANK YOU IS NEEDED

At this time I would personally like to thank Rayner Johnson, the Blue Gray Committee, our hosts, and everyone who donates beer, sets it up, registers guests, in fact, everyone who gives something of themselves to set up this show. A thanks to all of the hotel staff who go out of their way to ensure that we have a great time before, during and after the show.

I think sometimes it is too easy for us to find fault with the little things that occur during a show. Anyway, what I am trying to say is *please don't take everything for granted*.

Thank someone who helps you or does something for you this week at the show. You might just make their day. Thanks Everyone!

- Deb Lorenz

RAYNER'S 2008 - A Challenging Year

A "not so funny" thing happened to Ray Johnson when he got home from last year's Blue Gray Show. He got a sore throat. After seeing his doctor, he was advised to see an ENT specialist who informed him that they needed to take his tonsils out and set the surgery up for 10 days away. Biopsies were taken of his tonsils and side of his throat and it was determined from the neck specimen that he had cancer. Not just of the neck though. The tumor was located directly on his Carotid artery. Surgery was performed on his neck two weeks later and it was felt that the tumor had all been removed. Ray then began a grueling 7 days of 24/7 steady infusion of chemotherapy. He had no appetite at that time, understandably and even though he had had a feeding tube inserted, he was not told to begin using it immediately, especially the first week in the hospital and he started to lose a LOT of weight. After a two week break, he began another bout of 7 days of 24/7 steady infusion of chemotherapy. He then graduated to 7 weeks of Radiation with every Thursday also including a chemo treatment. Even with 2100 calories of liquid food per day for months, he lost so far 70 pounds, including 5 pounds in the last two months, but is now able to eat cream soups, Ensure and Milkshakes. Unfortunately, he is not able to enjoy cold beer. It will come back in time but for now it is just not enjoyable.

But during all of this, the incredible thing is that except for a short period of time, Ray continued to sell on Ebay and except for rainy weather, he never missed a Sunday flea market or antique mall show. He's got a couple of awesome pieces to show you so be sure and stop by. He wasn't up to attending the BCCA Convention this past year as he was still going through his radiation/chemo treatments and the most incredible thing happened. He was elected to the *BCCA Hall of Fame*. Although the victory was wonderful, it was bittersweet as he was not able to accept his award in person. Ray is getting better every day and thanks everyone for their prayers, cards and positive thoughts. He's been working hard on this year's show! The Great News is that his last PET scan showed that he was *cancer free*, and will be around for many more shows. So drink a toast to Rayner this year and to a Happy 30th year to the Blue Gray Show!

GOT QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the show, ask the people who know: Anyone at the registration desk will be glad to head you in the right direction. Ray Johnson, John Fisher, Robert Fondren, and Chris Eib can answer any questions regarding the show and its activities. Charlie Bacon can answer any of your questions regarding registration. Mark Benbow can answer any of your questions regarding the website.

75th Anniversary of the Beer Can

As you know, 2010 is the 75th Anniversary of the Beer Can and we will be planning on celebrating the event at next year's Blue Gray Show in conjunction with the BCCA. Ray is a member of the BCCA Beer Can Anniversary Committee and will keep us informed of next year's events!

BLUE GRAY WEBSITE

The BG Website has proven to be a great asset for the Blue Gray show. Websites, however, don't just happen. They are not "Magic". There is always someone *behind* the magic. *Mark Benbow* is behind the "Magic" of the BG Site. Mark started collecting in 1975 or 1976 when he collected his first Foster's Lager can. The Bicentennial cans came out about then and then a family trip to Hawaii cemented his interest in collecting cans. Though his mom was not thrilled, his dad did his part by drinking a lot of bad beers to give his son the cans. Though he kept his collection, he lost interest during Grad school and marriage. Then in 2000, he found an Esslinger Quart at a flea market and his interest was rekindled once again. He teaches History at Merrymount University, is a member of the BCCA, ABA & NABA and is a member of the Rusty Bunch, Capitol City and Merry Bockster Chapters. His first Blue Gray Show was in 2001 and he has never looked back since. In addition to maintaining the Blue Gray Website, he has his own website *Rustycans.com* and is responsible for the Capitol City Website. Mark resides with his wife, Annette and his psychotic Rat Terrier, Radar. Mark *is requesting pictures* of the Old Blue Gray Shows for the website. If you have any, please let him know.

SATURDAY IS IMPORTANT

Rayner thought it was important to remind everyone that the reason we get such good rates for the hotel is because we promise them so many booked rooms every night. Therefore, *it is imperative that you stay over Saturday night*. If we can't deliver on Saturday nights, we may lose the rights to having just our people at the hotel. The more outside registered guests there are, the more chance that complaints will be made regarding the open drinking that goes on. It is against VA laws to drink openly but the police look the other way because no one complains. The Registration rules state that you *must stay over Saturday night* to stay at the *Ramada Inn*. Times are changing and enforcements need to be done. So plan on staying and attending the banquet this year and *definitely plan on it in the years to come!*

30th BLUE GRAY "HOPPY" HAPPENINGS!

Wednesday - February 11th

12:00 p.m. until 12:00 a.m. - 24 Hour Hospitality Room - Room to Room All Day and All Night!

Thursday - February 12th

24 hour Room To Room and Hospitality Room!

1:00 p.m. Table Set up (Hosted by Richbrau Chapter) but ALL are invited and encouraged to help!

Tables are ONLY for registered participants staying in other hotels as well as those staying in the ODD numbered rooms in the back section of the Ramada Inn (301-341, 401-441) NO EXCEPTIONS!

8:00 p.m. - Back Bar Display Opens!

Friday - February 13th

24 hour Room To Room and Hospitality Room! Complimentary Donuts and coffee are available in the morning from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m..

Trade Tables are available ONLY FOR "eligible" participants - NO EXCEPTIONS!

9:00 a.m. - Back Bar Display until midnight

9:30 a.m. - NABA Board Meeting

1:00 p.m.: Margarita Madness - For you guys and gals who are Margarita Lovers, meet Deb Lorenz in the lobby at 12:45. We'll walk or ride to Pancho Villas Mexican Restaurant for 1 or 2 margaritas and chips!

8:00 p.m. - PIZZA Night with the Pizza Dude! Bring your Appetite!

Saturday - February 14th

Don't forget to wish your honey a Happy Valentines Day!

24 hour Room To Room and Hospitality Room! Complimentary Donuts and coffee are available in the morning from 8 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Trade Floor Open to All - EXCEPT - Dealer Inside Room Occupants

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Back Bar Display

9:00 a.m. - Full Bottle Trade in the Banquet Room. Please bring some fresh microbrewery beer from your area to trade. Minimum-one six pack, maximum-one case. (must be 21 or older)

9:00 a.m. - Deadline for submitting Back Bar Display Best of Show Contest Votes.

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Back Bar Display Participant Photos and Awards

1:00 p.m. - Wine Goddess Chapter Wine Tasting - This is for the Ladies! Meet at the hotel's Garden Terrace Restaurant. Bring one bottle of wine and an appetizer to share. This awesome event is hosted by Debbie Eib. It's Valentines Day so wear red, too!

7:00 p.m. - Banquet

9:30 p.m. - Rusty Bunch Chapter Meeting and table tear-down immediately thereafter!

Sunday - February 17th

Complimentary Donuts and coffee are available in the morning from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.!

Have a Safe trip home and see you next year!