



Our Next Meeting

Monday, October 2nd
7:30 pm
Sachsenheim Hall
7001 Denison Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44102

Upcoming Events

SNOBtoberfest

September 15-17th
Brooklyn Exchange
Cabin

October Meeting

Monday, **October 2nd**
6:00 pm.
Sachsenheim Hall Beer
Garden.

Christmas Party

Friday, December 1st
Sachsenheim Hall

See more details on these and other events inside this newsletter.

President's Krausening

- Erica Anton

Hi Everyone!

Thank you to everyone who brought beer to our style meeting - I am so sorry that I had to miss it! I hope to try beers from everyone at SNOBTOBERFEST!



It's going to be a great time. Please sign up (<https://forms.gle/huMcWnPM9Qm6tfKp7>) if you haven't yet. This lets us get enough food, as well as let everyone know what people are bringing so we don't have 10 pasta salads. We also could use some help (and vehicles) on Thursday to help haul firewood. Heck, we could also bring some firewood so let us know if you have that!

I also wanted to say that we will be doing officer nominations during October's meeting and elections in November. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering. We are a 100% volunteer-driven group, and we really need people who are willing to put in the time to help out to keep us going. Many of the members are past officers, and we are all willing to help new officers learn the ropes, so don't worry that you are not sure what to do.

That's all for now, hope to see you at SNOBtoberfest!

Cheers,

Erica

SNOBtoberfest

SNOBtoberfest is upon us. It's hard to believe that summer is almost over. Plan on getting into the fall season by attending this year's SNOBtoberfest. Cool nights mean campfires, outdoor cooking and malty beer styles. SNOBtoberfest is our annual camp-out at the Brooklyn Exchange Cabin in Hinkley and has all of those things. Camp or just come by and visit. The club will provide meats for cooking. Plan on bringing some side dishes, desserts and beer. There is no cost to members to attend.

Dates: September 15th-17th

Place: Brooklyn Exchange Cabin, 2400 State Rd, Hinckley, OH 44233

Please sign up using the link below so we can purchase the appropriate amount of food.

<https://forms.gle/huMcWnPM9Qm6tfKp7>

John Majetic has once again come through with a lot of wood for the campfire. If you can help move it there, please contact him directly — kingsnob@gmail.com



Upcoming Competitions

Upcoming AHA / BJCP sanctioned competitions include the following:

September 16th—King of the Mountain, Mentor, Ohio

September 17th—Cleveland Brew Shop Octoberfest Comp, Cleveland, Ohio

Son of Brewzilla —2023

This year's edition of Cleveland's premier homebrew competition will be held November 10th & 11th at Fat Heads Brewery. Registration is now open and entries must be registered and paid for by October 18th. As always volunteers are welcome and encouraged to help unbox, judge and steward. Please sign up today!

<http://beersnobs.org/cbwcomp/>



Other Beer Events

Cleveland Brew Shop 2nd Annual Oktoberfest Party & Homebrew Competition

Unfortunately last year the Cleveland Brew Shop's first Oktoberfest event was scheduled for the same date as SNOB-toberfest weekend. Good news . . . this year you can do both! Cleveland Brew Shop Has a homebrew competition on 9/17 for Fest Style beers and a tasting party with food, music, awards and prizes on 9/23. Check their website for competition details, additional information and tickets. [The Cleveland Brew Shop](#)



Cleveland Beer Week September 29—October 8th

Cleveland Beer Week couples larger flagship events with events at local bars and eateries that feature keg tappings, beer pairings, tasting dinners, brewer meet and greets, and educational

events throughout Greater Cleveland. Neighborhood bars and restaurants can showcase their creativity, culinary expertise, and, of course, their craft beer lists! There truly is something for everyone during Cleveland Beer Week. See the website for details [Cleveland Beer Week](#)



SEPT 29-OCT 8, 2023

Wizard of Id | Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



Request for Homebrew

Monthly Meetings

Please consider bringing a keg or growler of your homebrew to share at monthly meetings. Let Erica know in advance, she can add it to the meeting slides. Bringing your beer is a good way to get constructive feedback from the members and judges in attendance. Also as Mr. Rogers liked to say "It's nice to share".

Style Focus Meetings

Throughout the year we will be having style focus meetings. We wanted to let you know the themes ahead of time to give everyone a chance to get the ideas (and the wort) going! Please let us know if you plan on participating. We would like at least 4 samples at each of the planned style meetings



Collaboration Opportunities!

Would you like to be part of a SNOB collaboration team and help brew at a local craft brewery? Join a SNOB Collab. People interested should email Mike Ontolchik at vicepresident@beersnobs.org.



Newsletter

Have any ideas for the newsletter? Is there anything you'd like to see here occasionally or on a regular basis. Don't hesitate to share your ideas. Let me know! Cheers, Jay

SNOBwear T-Shirts

We still have a good selection of sizes of the SNOB T-Shirts available.

\$10 for sizes S—XL, \$15 for larger sizes

Contact Jay if you want one — secretary@beersnobs.org



Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers

SNOB is one of Ohio's oldest clubs for homebrewers. Founded in 1990 and recognized as AHA's national club of the year in 2020, the club meets the first Monday of each month a 7:30 PM at [Sachsenheim Hall](#) on Cleveland's West Side. In addition to monthly meetings, the club also hosts special evenings at local brewpubs and restaurants, homebrew competitions, a spring bus trip, a summer camping event, our annual Oktoberfest weekend festival and an extravagant Christmas party. Visitors are always welcome at our meetings, where they will find lively presentations on beer and brewing, great conversation, and answers to any brewing questions they might have. Website at:

[SNOBS | Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers Cleveland, Ohio \(beersnobs.org\)](https://www.beersnobs.org)

Membership Dues

As always, non-members are welcome at meetings, but some activities (parties, bus trip, collaboration brews) are members only. Please consider joining today! Single member dues are \$30. Couples (living in same household) are \$50. Dues can be paid to the treasurer at the meetings, by contacting treasurer@beersnobs.org or using the paypal link found on our website, <https://www.beersnobs.org/>

Your membership dues are used to pay for club activities throughout the year like the annual Christmas Party and rental at The Brooklyn Exchange Cabin where we hold the annual SNOBtoberfest. They pay for food, supplies and prizes for SNOBtoberfest, Chili Cook-off, Big Brew etc.

Plus, use your SNOB membership to gain discounts on all things brewing and beer-related at:

Cleveland Brew Shop - 10% off on all brewing supplies. Use the code SNOBs10 when filling out the online order form. <https://www.clevelandbrewshop.com>

Grape & Granery - 5% off on all brewing supplies. Use the code SAAZ1819 when filling out the online order form or show your card at checkout. <https://www.grapeandgranery.com>

2023 Officers



Erica Anton—President, president@beersnobs.org



Mike Ontolchik—Vice President, vicepresident@beersnobs.org



Jessica Ihms—Treasurer, treasurer@beersnobs.org



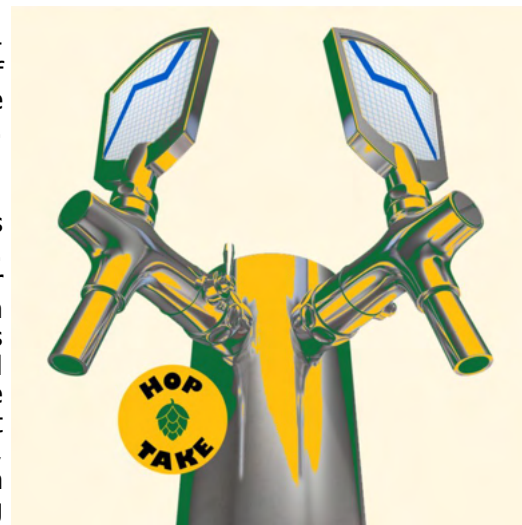
Jay O'Neill—Secretary, secretary@beersnobs.org

Extra, Extra - Draft Dodgers Are Killing Keg Beer

Borrowed from vinepair.com

My father worked in the beer industry many years ago. He always, *always* sought out his beer on draft, insisting that the stuff from the keg tasted fresher, smoother, more premium than the stuff from the bottle. And don't even *think* about canned beer. The horror!

Times have changed, as they always do. For one thing, Dad drinks Natural Light by the 30-pack these days, for reasons unknown. For another, the received wisdom that beer always tastes better on tap appears to be increasingly *unreceived* by the American drinking public. Starting in 2014, the American beer industry has been steadily losing draft volume, and the pandemic hammered the format for obvious reasons; less obviously to those outside the industry, the lockdown draft downturn had an outsized impact on the craft beer category, which over-indexes on tap. Worse yet, while packaged beer has mostly stabilized at levels that track with the pre-pandemic period, draft has not. Taking into account keg beer's slide in the Before Times, the latest data still show millions more barrels — or half-barrels, as it were — missing from draft's already rough numbers.



"Draft beer never really came back from the pandemic," Bart Watson, the Brewers Association's chief economist, said plainly during the trade group's midyear update last week, where he shared the above analysis he'd performed on keg production and import data from the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and the United States Commerce Department (DOC). His numbers are astonishing. From approximately 17,500,000 barrels (bbls) of kegged beer in 2019, the format plummeted to around 9,000,000 in 2020; if the year-to-date trend holds, 2023's total will wind up at 13,500,000 bbls or so. That's more than a 20 percent decline from just four years prior, and around 15 percent less than what the data from 2014 to present suggest it *should* be. We may have finally flattened the Covid-19 curve over the past few years, but this one seems to be steepening.

Why? I followed up with Watson earlier this week to pose that very question to him, and true to Watsonian economic fashion, he told me it was a little of Column A, a little of Column B (and C, and D...) "Some of the reasons [draft] has declined [include] different composition of shops, different strategies of those retailers that still exist, and different customer habits," he says. Three and a half years out from the start of the pandemic, those trends "aren't accelerating, which is good news. But [draft] is not coming back, which is the bad news."

The badness of said news varies depending on which data you're looking at, and how you slice it, as the vagaries of data dictate. The bar sales platform [BeerBoard](#) has tracked a 4.5 percent decline in draft sales year-to-date across its network of on-premise clients, which includes major chain restaurants like Buffalo Wild Wings and T.G.I. Friday's, chief marketing officer J.C. Whipple tells Hop Take. (Packaged products were up 25 percent in the same period.) And while [Untappd's](#) data, based on user-reported "check-ins," shows that overall consumption across all formats is slightly down from pre-pandemic levels, draft is not particularly laggard. "[D]raught check-ins as a percentage of total check-ins has recovered to pre-pandemic levels," Trace Smith, chief executive of Untappd's parent company, Next Glass, tells me via email.

Regardless of the size of the decline, it's not borne equally by every brewery. Roughly 80 percent of beer sold in the United States is sold in off-premise retail in either bottles or cans. (Or party kegs, I guess. Or bag-in-a-boxes. But always *packaged*, save for those hopelessly bougie post-gentrification supermarkets that serve draft beer in statistically negligible volumes.) Thus, the old industry wisdom that brands are built in the on-premise — the low-volume but high-touch domain of draft — while businesses are built in the off-premise, where packaged beer reigns. Craft brewers for years benefited from this dynamic, leveraging superior storytelling about their ingredients, ownership, and production methods to pitch themselves at bars and restaurants, where drinkers are primed for discourse rather than pressed for time like they tend to be picking up a 6-pack at the grocery store.

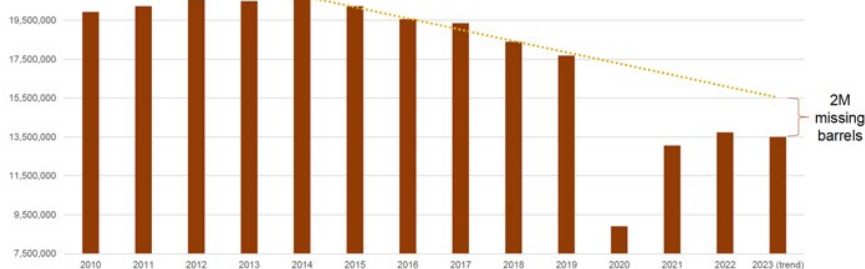
Extra, Extra - Continued

It was an industry strength that has lately become a potential weakness: Watson says roughly 30 percent of draft beer sold nationally these days falls into the BA's "craft" category, leaving the segment's producers particularly vulnerable to shifts away from the format. "For the overall beer business, draft is less than 10 percent, so certain players are just going to care less about this," he tells Hop Take. "But for craft brewers, particularly some business models, this is really a key part of their business."

Taprooms and brewpubs have been a silver lining for brewers on the draft front. Per the BA's midyear analysis of data from the software platform Arryved and the polling firm Harris, respectively, at-the-brewery sales and on-site visits are both trending slightly up year-over-year. In these venues, kegged beer is at its freshest, and staffers have opportunities to hand-sell pints with education and storytelling. But while the shift looks promising for individual brewers hoping to take more direct control of more of their revenue, it's a drop on the barmat in the aggregate. "That makes up a very small percentage of the gap" that draft is losing out on, Watson says. In his presentation, Watson highlighted a steady decline in the format's share of craft beer's overall final sales to domestic purchasers (FSDP) totals, a measure of how much craft beer is actually getting bought by rank-and-file drinkers like you and me. It's going down, no two ways about it.

Was Already Declining... But

US Keg Production + Imports, 2010-2022



Source: Brewers Association analysis of TTB and Commerce data



Source: TTB and Commerce, BA Analysis

Credit: Brewers Association Webinar

Smith finds some complementary inferences in Untappd's national figures. "We've seen brewery taprooms continue to steal share over check-in volume from bars. This is not true of restaurants, which have maintained steady share," he says. In other words, draft beer that you used to order at your neighborhood bar, you're now drinking at your local brewery — if at all. (This is an important moment to point out that Untappd's data, by virtue of being generated by users who opt into a beer app, is going to be more representative of beer enthusiasts than the drinking public at large. So even though this sounds like an affirmation of, say, [New Jersey bar owners' worst fears](#), I encourage my fellow former statesmen to take it with a grain of salt, and maybe a deep breath or two.) Suburbs also appear to have recovered faster on draft check-ins than city centers, which were hit hard by the pandemic, are home to fewer taprooms, and have mostly struggled to come up with good reasons why newly remote workers should bother returning to them. Neither Smith nor Watson had data to confirm my hypothesis that [spirits' growing share](#) of overall alcohol sales may be coming at the direct expense of draft beer — i.e., people are drinking cocktails when they would've otherwise grabbed pints — but both allowed it was plausible. That could be another factor driving the format's current swoon.

Where it's headed is hard to say. But if you place the same premium on draft beer like my father used to (before he got his latter-day, and completely inexplicable taste for canned Natty), make sure to savor the flavor, and evangelize accordingly. And if you're a brewer who sees value in the brand-building power of kegged beer, go and do likewise. After all, we've got a lot of draft dodgers out there.