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Alexandria Brewing Company helped co-founder get through tough times

By Kenton Hornbeck July 11, 2022 Kenton is a reporter for LINK NKY. Email him at khornbeck@linknky.com



Alexandria Brewing Co. Photo by Meghan Goth.

Alexandria Brewing Company, better known as ABC, is more than a realization of a business idea. It is the physical manifestation of a man's internal battle with difficult experiences. ABC is located in a former Jeff Wyler auto dealership off of Alexandria Pike. The brewery is one of the most visible businesses in Alexandria, serving as a local watering hole for craft beer enthusiasts. "I was fortunate enough to be able to spend a small amount of time in Germany while I was in the service," said Andy Reynolds, co-founder of ABC. "It led to a passion for German lager and eventually Belgian Quads and Tripels." Reynolds is a veteran of the United States Army who has twice deployed to Iraq.

On his second deployment, a friend's wife sent Reynolds some cider yeast. Reynolds used the yeast to brew hard cider. The brewing process became therapeutic for Reynolds, who used it to relieve stress in order to take his mind off the grueling pace of the mission. "What little down time we had, being able to let loose a little was critical," Reynolds said. Upon returning to the U.S., Reynolds continued to learn the ins-and-outs of brewing. "I was hooked," Reynolds said. After consulting with his wife, Ann, Reynolds decided to file for an LLC in 2011 to open a brewery. But shortly after, Reynolds began to suffer from serious health issues stemming from his time in the Army. Reynolds described this period in his life as "rock bottom" and said he rarely left his house. In hopes of getting Andy back on the saddle, Ann signed Andy up for Project Odyssey — a 12-week mental health retreat that aims to help veterans overcome their trauma. The retreat is put on by the Wounded Warrior Project.

Reynolds came away from the program with two specific goals in mind: Update and finish his business plan and talk with the Veterans Association about going to school for brewing. Reynolds attended Siebel Institute of Technology in Chicago, where he earned a degree in Advanced Brewing Theory. This primed him with the knowledge to get ABC off the ground. With the help of his business partner, Brad Martin, Reynolds found interested investors and secured a loan. 2020 was a historically hard year for businesses in the service industry, with locally owned restaurants being hit severely hard. For ABC, 2020 was tough, but not fatal. The Alexandria community rallied around ABC, using it as a de facto community center. "A big, unintended, but positive consequence about deciding on Alexandria is that we have become somewhat of a community center here," Reynolds said. "We constantly see friends that haven't spoken in years bump into each other here." ABC features a sound stage, in-house brewery, and arcade games for customers. No other social hub in Alexandria provides customers with the convergence of all those different experiences. "The staff is inviting and great when it comes to recommending other drinks based on your preferences and flavor profiles," craft beer enthusiast and ABC patron Josh Richardson told LINK NKY. "If you're looking for a fun and inviting environment to grab drinks on the weekend in the area, ABC will keep you coming back for more. "Richardson said that ABC is his preferred brewery to frequent because it's one of the only establishments in central and southern Campbell County that serves the diverse array of foreign craft brews, he enjoys. "It's hard to find good domestic hefeweizens, and yet ABC manages to not only impress but give some of the popular imports an American competitor," Richardson said. Hefeweizen is a type of German wheat beer. Hefe translates to yeast, and Weizen to wheat in German. One of ABC's most popular brews is their hefeweizen, Das Henker, which translates to The Hangman in German. Das Henker and other canned ABC beers can be purchased at retailers such as Party Source in Bellevue, or at their physical location in Alexandria. In 2021, Reynolds approached Wooden Cask Brewing in Newport to brew and can a small amount of ABC beers. In the long term, Reynolds is looking to bring the canning operation in-house. "We have taken the first steps by purchasing another fermentation tank, which should be up and running by fall," Reynolds said. ABC's presence has allowed Reynolds to introduce his love of brewing and craft beer to his community. Before ABC, the vast majority of the craft breweries in Northern Kentucky were located in the river cities such as Covington. ABC has helped expand the craft beer experience to a different audience. "This causes some people that may have never set foot in here to venture in and try new things," Reynolds said. "I feel that there are more people drinking craft beer in Alexandria than before we opened our doors."

10 Cincinnati Breweries Participating in 'Ales For Trails' to Raise Funds for CROWN Urban Trail

The CROWN is a proposed 34-mile urban trail loop around the city. By Maggy McDonel on Tue, Jul 12, 2022 CityBeat



Photo: provided by Ales for Trails On Your Left IPA by Fifty West Brewing

This July, beer buffs can purchase brews from around the Queen City for a good cause. Through the Ales for Trails program, beer buffs and hiking fans will be able to collect stamps from participating breweries by purchasing brews all month long.

The stamps will be collected on a Trail Hop Card (found at any participating breweries or online) which can be turned in for prizes. The first 100 people to turn in a completed Trail Hop Card by July 31 will be entered into a raffle for a grand prize plus receive an Ales for Trails Buff.

Participating in Ales for Trails benefits the CROWN, a proposed 34-mile urban trail loop around the city. Led by Tri-State Trail, this project hopes to use \$44 million in public funding, plus \$10 million in private donations, to complete Cincinnati's first urban trail loop.

The loop will connect a series of local trails that include Wasson Way, Ohio River Trail, Little Miami Scenic Trail, and Mill Creek Greenway.

"We're so excited to partner with breweries along the existing and planned trail route to build support for completing the CROWN 34-mile urban trail loop," director of Tri-State Trails Wade Johnston said in a release. "Just like our neighborhood breweries, the CROWN is a welcoming public space that connects people in our community."

The participating breweries are located along the CROWN trail. Participating breweries include: Streetside Brewery, Listermann Brewing Trail House, MadTree Brewing Company, Fifty West Brewing Company, Wooden Cask Brewing Company, Sam Adams Cincinnati Taproom, Urban Artifact, Taft's Ale House, Taft's Brewpourium and Woodburn Brewing.

Download the Trail Hop Card and find more information at crowncincinnati.org.



RECORD FAIR

PRESENTED BY COLEMINE RECORDS AND RHINEGEIST BREWERY

SATURDAY | JULY 23RD 2022 12:00-5:00 PM

AT RHINEGEIST

Colemine/Karma Chief Records Partners with Rhinegeist for Taproom Record Fair!

CINCINNATI, OH—Vinyl aficionados get ready, because Cincinnati-based Rhinegeist Brewery is joining forces with Colemine/Karma Chief Records for the inaugural Taproom Record Fair! The Record Fair will take place on Saturday, **July 23rd from noon to 5pm,** and will feature vendors from all over the tri-state area.

What To Expect:

- 10+ record vendors from all over the area, from larger vendors and shops to smaller, private collections.
- Niche record selections
- Old School Vinyl DJ
- A Vintage Pop-Up Shop with Jet Black Vintage
- Mazunte Tacos
- A curated draft beer selection

"With there being such a deep and rich history of soul music in Cincinnati, it seems like a no-brainer for us to partner up with Rhinegeist. I really admire the way they've become one with the community, and we're hoping to do the same.

I'm also so excited for everyone to come down and get to interact with all the other amazing local record stores. We're so lucky to have such a wealth of amazing shops to choose from, so having them all together is really gonna be something else.

Overall, I'm just so excited to bring people together over great soul music, great digs, and just a great time. We're really ready to bring Coal Mine out of Loveland and down into the thick of Cincinnati and doing so with Rhinegeist is just going to be the best experience" adds Terry Cole, Owner of Colemine/Karma Chief Records.

"In getting to know the team at Colemine Records, we realized that there are many parallels between how they do things and how we do things here at Rhinegeist. We share a scrappy, hardworking attitude and distinctive ethos around our brand and what we create- and that connection has made collaborating with them feel authentic and easy. Our hope is that co-hosting the upcoming Record Fair is just the first of many opportunities for us to team up and share our respective passions with the community in Cincinnati and beyond" says Aislinn Brown, Director of Taproom Experience at Rhinegeist.