

Durham residents gather for day of charity and beer in celebration of home brewing

By Taylor Coil

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Hundreds of Durham residents gathered at The Scrap Exchange in Northeast Central Durham on Saturday, March 31, for Brew Durham, a sold-out charity event celebrating home brewing and sustainable living.

Keil Jansen started Brew Durham after attending a similar event in Raleigh. He believed the Durham community to be strong enough to hold its own home brewing event, and said that few brewers attended both events.

Of the more than 30 brewers that attended Brew Durham, only three also went to the Raleigh event. Four attended a similar event in Chapel Hill.

"I don't think it's a bad thing. I think it just speaks to the strength of those communities that we're all doing this on our own without having to really pull from so far away to fill it up," Jansen said.

Ruth Warren of The Scrap Exchange said this was the second time the event had been held. The first Brew Durham happened in Fall 2011 and raised more than \$5,000 for The Scrap Exchange.

Jansen said The Scrap Exchange was the perfect space for Brew Durham, even though some essentials were missing.

"You know, we've had to make compromises, like there's no running water," Jansen said. "But it's cool, I mean nobody cares. And I think that's Durham, too."

Jansen said The Scrap Exchange was a natural partner for Brew Durham, and he respects the work they do in the community.

"I think what they do is really useful and helpful in the community, and I think it's kind of radical, too. If you really think about it, how they handle things: we should never buy things, we should just reuse them. That's hardcore. And they do it in a really unassuming, nonthreatening kind of way," Jansen said.

Jeffrey Katrencik, a Northeast Central Durham resident who exhibited his 'Nuttty Professor' beer at Brew Durham, also attended the Raleigh event as a judge. He said that got into home brewing after judging a few home brewing competitions about four years ago.

"I bought a Mr. Beer kit, which is like this Fisher-Price way of learning how to brew. It's funny in the beer world how many people criticize Mr. Beer. I think half the people who start home brewing begin with this little, like,



Areli Barrera de Grodski, co-owner of Cocoa Cinnamon, grinds coffee beans using a hand-crank grinder. (Staff photo by Taylor Coil)

Lincoln Log toy kit," Katrencik said.

But beer wasn't the only refreshment available. Pie Pushers and Chirba Chirba Dumplings, two local food trucks, and Monuts Donuts and Cocoa Cinnamon, two food businesses that sell goods off of bicycles, served food to patrons at Brew Durham. Lindsay Moriarty, founder of Monuts Donuts, said that Brew Durham helped her business grow.

"We had a few dry runs before that, but our first sale was at the first Brew Durham. So, today, we're kind of calling it our half birthday," Moriarty said.

Areli Barrera de Grodski, co-owner of Cocoa Cinnamon, also uses The Scrap Exchange's ideal of knowing where things come from in her business. Barrera de

Grodski and her husband, Leon Grodski de Barrera, use ingredients with a rich history in beverages offered by Cocoa Cinnamon.

"You go to the grocery store, you use spices every day, but you kind of forget where that came from and what happened because of that spice that you're using in your cooking," Barrera de Grodski said. "It's a way of reminding us that these everyday things also have a history."

Durham residents interested in trying home brewing can contact Bull City Homebrew in Southwest Durham. Scott Hackett of Bull City Homebrew said they offer free classes to those interested in learning the craft.

"Instead of buying a \$9 six pack at the grocery store, we want people to brew what they love," Hackett said.