

# The Monthly Mash

Volume 1.11

Member-Owned, Industry-Driven



**ACSA Mission:**  
To elevate and advocate for the community of craft spirits producers.

## From the Desk of Mark Shilling, ACSA President

August was a busy and challenging month for ACSA. We held our first regional Master Class Series in Denver, finished up data gathering for the upcoming release of our second Craft Spirits Data Project, and then were all shocked about Margie's trip to the hospital.

I am ecstatic to report that Margie is now home and resting comfortably. Although her condition remains serious and will require several weeks of rest, Margie is expected to make a full and complete recovery.

She has been enjoying the cards and flowers and the incredible outpouring of support from both our fantastic ACSA members and industry partners.



If you missed the original announcement and would like to send something along, the address is:

Margie A.S. Lehrman  
2911 Hunter Mill Road, Suite 303  
Oakton, VA 22124

Our thoughts and prayers are also going out to our industry friends in Texas, and all of those who have been affected by the devastation of Hurricane Harvey. The damage has been monumental and we continue to seek ways to aid those affected and displaced by Hurricane Harvey. One such opportunity for aid is through the United States Bartenders Guild -- see below for more information.

Although our Executive Director is irreplaceable, we have an excellent staff committed to ensuring all of our ACSA activities continue moving forward until her return. As we move into September, we are fortunate enough to have a great team that pitches in the absence of our illustrious Margie.

Cheers -

Mark Shilling  
ACSA President

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## Our Thoughts and Prayers are with Texas

The catastrophic flooding in Houston and throughout Southeast Texas has displaced tens of thousands of people. Many of you asking about how to help. Although we don't have a complete accounting, our checks with area distilleries indicate there are none who have been substantially impacted, and in fact many of them are serving as collection points and fundraisers locally.

However, there is another part of our family that has been much more directly impacted, and the USBG National Charity Foundation (United States Bartenders Guild) has created a fund specifically to assist those affected by Hurricane Harvey. You may donate directly through the [link](#) and learn more about the Foundation as well as how funds will be allocated to recipients at: <https://www.usbgfoundation.org/>

[Click Here to Support the Foundation](#)

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## ACSA Brings Distillers Back to School at the Denver Masters Class Series



ACSA and the Denver Masters Class attendees visit Tivoli Brewing Co.

August is synonymous with back-to-school, and for some ACSA members, that meant attending ACSA's inaugural Master Class Series. The 6-day series was held in downtown Denver, on the campus of Metropolitan State University of Denver. Attendees were immersed in Denver's history, as the campus is

only steps from Larimer Square (the Mile High City's most historic block), and MSU Denver's Tivoli Student Union building, home to Colorado's first brewery.

The week was split into three two-day tracks (finance, technical and marketing). All tracks were limited to 20 attendees, to ensure a hands-on, participatory experience. Highlights from these interactive seminars included the yeast, bacteria, and fermentation examples showcases by Ferm Solutions' Dr. Pat Heist and the numerous brandy and boisé samples Dan Farber brought from Osocalis Distillery to illustrate the differences that wood, water, and time can have on a product. Another highlight of the week was visiting Todd Leopold at Leopold Bros., for a comprehensive tour and tasting.



**REGISTER NOW FOR OUR JUDGING OF CRAFT SPIRITS!**



**NEW FOR 2017/18 COMPETITION:  
WE ARE ACCEPTING INTERNATIONAL SPIRITS**

**[SUBMIT YOUR SPIRITS NOW](#)**

**Members:**

Submit by Sept 30th and pay only \$200/spirit  
After Sept 30th - \$250/spirit

**Non-Members:**

Submit by Sept 30th and pay only \$300/spirit  
After Sept 30th - \$350/spirit

**DEADLINE is October 27th, 2017!**

Give your spirits the chance to stand out from the crowd, while also giving your fellow distillers the challenge they deserve. All the while you'll be supporting the industry's only non-profit craft spirits trade organization.

**Submit Here**

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## Welcome Newest Voting and Affiliate Members!

ACSA extends a warm welcome to a few of our newest members:

- [Ardent Spirits](#) (IL)
- [Fainting Goat Spirits](#) (NC)
- [Aged Whiskey Man Consulting, LLC](#) (MA)

Find out more about becoming a member [here](#) .

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## Benefits in Becoming an ACSA Member



ACSA members have opportunities to receive critical updates, learn during our webinar and convention education sessions, participate in our spirits competition, participate in our legislative efforts to reduce the burdensome federal excise tax, and more! As a member of the association, you'll gain access to a wide range of industry experts as well as industry data and analysis of the craft spirits community. Please consider joining us—there is strength in numbers.

[Learn More About Becoming a Member](#)

## A Q&A with Your ACSA Team



We asked two members of the ACSA family to answer a few questions about their experience at the ACSA Denver Masters Class and why education still matters for the industry. Read below to find responses from Jeff Odem ( *pictured left with his wife Diane* ), Master Distiller of Z Brown Distillery (GA), and Mitchell Hall, Project Manager at [Haskell](#) (FL).

### What is your role at Z Brown Distillery?

**Jeff Odem:** " I'm the Master Distiller for Z. Brown Distillery, as well as the founder and builder of the distillery."

### What is your role at Haskell?

**Mitchell Hall:** "I'm a Project Manager for our Beer, Wine, and Spirits group, with a focus and passion for the Spirits side. My role allows me to oversee and manage all aspects of our projects, from conceptual budgeting, design oversight, procurement, construction, and closeout and startup of the projects."



### What drew you to the Masters Class series?

**JO:** " I was hoping to advance in topics where I already had some advanced knowledge, so the fact that it was a "Masters Class" appealed to me."

**MH:** "My fascination with the industry, as well as the opportunity to learn more about the operations and business sides of the business. Being more knowledgeable on how the industry works on the distiller and owner's end helps me better cater facility and production needs and design to their available budgets, production forecasts, and expansion and/or initial construction and equipment investments.

I'm also intrigued by yeast, bacteria, and relaxed barrel aging practices."

### Where do you see education's ongoing role in craft spirits?

**JO:** " It allows craft distillers to get advanced knowledge that is generally only available after decades of work. It's not uncommon for master distillers to withhold knowledge, it's typically very proprietary information."

**MH:** " The primary area that I feel the education track has opportunities to grow and expand on are the more exciting areas of distillery ownership/management; financial and profitability refinement. Yes, this is not the topic that draws in the masses, but it is the topic that allows one to create a long lasting legacy and not just bleed their life savings and/or investor's money into a non-sustainable hobby. Unless one is very well off and does not need to see returns within a reasonable timeframe, the business plan of creating and selling spirits needs to be extremely well thought out and planned. Sources of financing, cost control, marketing & sales, and operational costs are all critical items that need to have as much, or more time and effort spent on them as perfecting the mash bill of whiskey flavor profile. I believe that ACSA has a crucial task in front of them to help educate and inform the members on industry statistics regarding operating costs, reasonable industry profit margins, cost per proof gallon figures, etc. All of these metrics will help the distillers, business owners, and plant managers have benchmarks to gauge themselves against."

### What is one the biggest takeaways from your experience at the Masters Class?

**JO:** " I got more information regarding barrels, different applications, different woods and flavorings. I got a lot from the wood, watering and waiting class."

**MH:** " You cannot rush Brandy aging, yeast and bacteria are exciting, and budget allocations for the sales & marketing teams should be much higher than what most distilleries are allowing for."

### When traveling, for work or just on your own, what are some of your must-dos?

**JO:** " I go to every bar that I can and introduce myself and make introductions in hopes that I'll be able to put our spirits in their bars, I just try to talk to everyone."

**MH:** " I spend about half of my time on the road traveling for work, so I have many opportunities to explore unique and different areas in the small amount of free time that work allows. I like to explore, eat, and drink local spirits, along with visiting as many distilleries as possible. I'll first research the area and reach out to any distilleries in the area to see if I can swing by and visit. If I am in a rural area, I'll try to find the must-see natural places and when in urban areas, I'll search out the unique places to eat and drink within walking distance. The hotel is only used for sleeping, and I like to explore as much as possible when on the road."

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## Regional Focus: San Francisco, CA



ACSA at [Bar Agricole](#)

ACSA recently spent some time in San Francisco for our inaugural Meet & Greet, where we had a great time at [Bar Agricole](#), an iconic cocktail bar in SOMA. To read more about our night in “Frisco,” check out the last edition of [The Monthly Mash](#). Wine country surrounds San Francisco so venturing out into nearby Napa County could make for an exciting excursion. But, if you’re looking for spirits and cocktails, you’ll find plenty in and around the Golden City.

[The Interval](#) is many things: coffee house, cocktail bar, museum, and--most importantly--a good time. Lounge at this laid back spot in Fort Mason and sip on a meticulously crafted cocktail. Many of the beverages have unique stories behind them so strike up a conversation with your bartender about the history of your drink. The Interval has a distinct library feel so enjoy the comforts of this bay side bar. Squeeze into the busy and jam-packed [Rickhouse](#) for a diverse selection of top notch whiskeys. Grab one of the house cocktails or ask the bartenders about some of the rarer whiskeys they store. [Trick Dog](#) is a must-visit for their concept drink menus. Currently, the cocktails are organized in a book What Rhymes with Trick Dog and features drinks like “Last Picked Demagogue” and “Bolshevik Blog.” Pair one of these quirky cocktails with their upscale bar eats for a fun, unique night.

Recently Anchor Brewing Co. was acquired by Sapporo, but [Anchor Distilling Co.](#) remains independent. Anchor Distilling represents part of the brewing and distilling history of the city and the San Francisco tasting room hosts detailed and intimate tastings of their award-winning spirits. Drive about an hour and a half south to visit [Osocalis Distillery](#) in Soquel. Enjoy one of their stellar brandies that possess the fruit notes reminiscent of local wine but still maintain the old world brandy characteristics. Just north of San Francisco and outside of Santa Rosa is [Sonoma County Distilling Co.](#) Try some of their whiskey produced with California grains. Lastly, due east of San Fran is [Do Good Distillery](#) in Modesto. Visit the tasting room for some quality cocktails and a tour of the Do Good facility.

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## Did You Know?

- The TTB has issued over 2420 DSPs! Find the full list [here](#).
- Giuseppe Cipriani, who created the *Bellini* cocktail, thought that the pink drink looked like a saint’s toga that was seen in a 15th-century painting by Giovanni Bellini.
- Franciscus Sylvius, a Dutch physician, created genever as medicine during the 16th century. His high-proof concoction was believed to improve circulation and other ailments. During the Dutch Independence War, it was given to soldiers and referred to as “Dutch Courage.” (via [Liquor.com](#))

- Don't miss these drink holidays for the rest of the month:

National Bourbon Month – September 1 – 30 ( [small batch bourbons](#))

September is [Virginia Spirits Month](#)

September 12: [National Chocolate Milkshake Day](#)

September 15: National Creme de Menthe Day

September 20: [National Punch Day / Rum Punch Day](#)

September 22: Autumn Equinox (time for an [Autumn Breeze](#))

September 27: German Oktoberfest Begins

September 28: [National Drink a Beer Day](#) (a good time for a beer cocktail!)

September 29: [National Coffee Day](#)

September 29: National Mocha Day

September 30: [National Mulled Cider Day](#)

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## Social Media

Do you have a new spirit release, an upcoming event, or some news to drop?

Follow our social media channels and [Tweet at us \(@craftspiritsus\)](#), connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), or post to our [Facebook Page](#) and we'll be sure to share it!

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