

# Dingo Dog Brewing Company Celebrates 10 Years of Great Beer



Dingo Dog Staff (and pups) pose for a photo at their 10 year celebration. Photo: Dingo Dog Brewing Company.

By Michael Melton

On Saturday, November 22, Dingo Dog Brewing Company held a celebration to commemorate 70 years (10 in human years) of brewing great beer, and serving it in Carrboro for the last five of those years. The celebration featured jazz, games, friends from all over, a rollout of the Winter tap list, and of course, ample dogs and beer. The Dingo Dog taproom is located at 410 North Greensboro Street and the brewery operation is on PlowGirl Farms in Chapel Hill.

## Non-Profit Roots, and some History

Dingo Dog was technically incorporated in 2015 when current owner Tim Schwarzauer and friend Billy Gagon began brewing beer together. They were pouring at Brewgaloo, a festival in Raleigh, and ran into a real estate agent who led them in the direction of a farm looking to lease a beautiful old horse barn. Soon, they were connected with Sally Jo Slusher of Plowgirl Farms, and began turning the space into a setup for small batch brewing.

"The bar here [in the taproom] is actually made from the wood from the barn", Mr. Schwarzauer said.

For the first five years, Dingo Dog was production



An array of Dingo Dog's new winter beers on display during Trivia Night on Monday, November 24. Photo: Michael Melton.

and distribution only. Eventually, in 2020, they got the keys to a storefront and were able to begin building out the space on North Greensboro Street, and opened the taproom in November of 2020.

Dingo Dog is the only non-profit brewery in North Carolina. After covering operating costs, all Dingo

Dog profits go into the Dingo Dog Charitable Trust, which gives grants and donations to "no-kill" animal rescue and animal related non-governmental organizations in North Carolina. Some examples include Paws Forever, Independent Animal Rescue, and Beyond Fences.

The love for animals and non-profit mindset started back in Mr. Schwarzauer's early days in his home state of Mississippi. After Hurricane Katrina, his family opened an animal shelter and eventually started a non-profit aimed at housing and taking care of the animals. He eventually attended business school and focused on understanding how to run a non-profit business with traditional for-profit methods to generate revenue for charities. At the nexus of life experiences, the idea for Dingo Dog was born.

"There's really no reason why you can't make any business model non-profit," he said.

## Bark Bark Brewing

One of the beauties of Dingo Dog is its commitment and ability to use fresh ingredients from Plowgirl Farms and the surrounding areas. For instance, on tap right now they have the Buster Brown Butternut Squash Ale that uses squash from PlowGirl Farms, and the Cupid's Figaro Fig Winter Warmer, which uses figs from a friend's farm, located in Durham.

Dingo Dog considers itself a nanobrewery, producing small but fresh batches—about one and a half barrels, or roughly 45 gallons, at a time. Its size also gives the brewers freedom and room to experiment.

"Because we are on the farm we get to play around", Mr. Schwarzauer said, "For instance, we had a bumper crop of tomatoes that they could not sell to market, so we just mashed them up and fermented them to create a tomato wine."

Dingo Dog generally has 15 taps open, ranging the beer spectrum and including multiple ciders. All of their taps have an animal related name, some of them named after important animals for staff or friends, such as Buster, a dog Mr. Schwarzauer rescued, or animal puns. When the taproom first opened, Dingo Dog gave customers a chance to memorialize their pet by buying the name of a beer. Now, a slide show on the TV features loyal canine customers.

## A Safe Space

Over the years, Dingo Dog has supported a wide range of causes and created a space where people—and animals—can come together. Mr. Schwarzauer recalled moments such as partnering with Paws Forever on fundraisers, offering the taproom as a safe place for rescue dogs like "loyal customers" Bella and Luna to get comfortable around people, and hosting animal adoption days.

"Having a space where you can see the community come together under the auspices of not only beer but also a greater purpose is wonderful," Isabella DeSantis, Dingo Dog taproom manager, said.

Editor's note: Sadly, Dingo Dog Taproom's patio furniture was stolen recently. To support the building of heavier furniture, you can contribute to their GoFundMe.

