

LIVIN' THE BREWS



The Newsletter of the North Texas Home Brewers Association

Volume XXXV

Issue II - February

Quick Sips for February:

02/04 – Officer's Meeting – Union Bear Brewery - Plano

02/11 – Club Meeting – Rugby House Pub - Plano

Important Bluebonnet Brewoff Dates

02/01 – Login – Peace Lutheran Church, [941 Bedford Euless Road, Hurst](#): 9:00 AM

Friday Judging Sessions: 02/07, 02/21 (if needed): 6:30 PM

Saturday Judging Sessions: 02/08, 02/15, 02/22 (if needed): 9:00 AM

Sunday Judging Session (moved from Friday due to Valentine's Day): 02/16 9:00 AM
(tentative)

East side judging will be at Brewery Direct/Johnson Brothers Bakery Supply, [1225 East Crosby Road, Suite B-24, Carrollton](#)

West side judging will be at Texas Brewing Inc., [5204 Airport Freeway, Haltom City](#)

Prez Sez by Mike Grover

It's Bluebonnet season (the Brewoff – not the flowers)! I hope everyone entered the competition with at least one beer to represent NTHBA. The drop off deadline for the competition has likely passed by the time you are reading this, but if you come out and help with login on Saturday, February 1st you can deliver your entries in person. Location and details are above. Once login is done, we will need lots of help judging over the next couple of weeks. Judging locations are the same as last year. Even if you are only able to judge a single flight on a given day, please come out and help support the club. If you are an inexperienced beer judge you will be paired with a more experienced judge for each flight. If you prefer not to judge, we will need stewards at each location as well. Finally, don't forget to [register](#) and make your hotel arrangements for the event itself.

Our Winter Party was a great success! Thank you to everyone who came out and brought food, beer, or just your charming personality to share. We wound up with a lot of different homebrews to try and many commercial bottle shares as well. The food was excellent. Huge thanks to Fred and Sue David for providing the meat and once again hosting the event.

The first brew day of the year is also in the books. We had a nice turnout and the weather was chilly but not brutal. We even had heavy snowfall for a while, though thankfully it was not cold enough to stick around and make the driving treacherous. Four separate batches of beer were brewed, which was great to see. Hopefully at least some of them finished in time for entry into the Bluebonnet Brewoff.

Note that we will not have a February brew day due to all of the Bluebonnet-related weekend activities.

Cheers, Mike



Yeah I know, these two look like they both passed a kidney stone but yes, they are having fun. This was taken at Grover's brewday in January and several beers were in production that day.

The First Sip by Stephen Tyner

Thank you to all who came out to the winter party. We had over 30 people attend and a great time was had by all with many taking part in the great beers, tasty food (brisket and pork loin roast were a hit), and excellent company. A HUGE thank you goes out to Fred and Sue David for opening their home and hosting the club again this year. Now that the Winter Party is behind us, let's talk about what's on deck:

The **Monthly Officers Meeting** will be held at **Union Bear Brewing Co** at 121 and DNT (5899 TX-121, Plano) on Tuesday, **February 4th**. We usually meet around 6:30pm with business starting at 7pm. All club members are welcome to attend.

The **Monthly Club Meeting** will be at **Rugby House** in Plano near Preston and 121 (8604 Preston Rd #100) on Tuesday, **February 11th** at 6:30pm.

There will be no February Brew Day due to all of the Bluebonnet judging. The next Brew Day will be Saturday, **March 14th** at Fred David's.

As far as upcoming Brew Days go, we have had many members come forward and offer to host but we still have a couple of months open. If any member would like to host the April or November Brew Days then please let me know as those dates are still open.

Our next major social event is the Spring Party which will be held in late April or early May. Plans are in the works and details will be shared once all plans are finalized.

Prost,

Stephen

Competition Corner by Fritz Schanz

The Club Only Championship (COC) Results

The January COC judging was held this past week; this competition was for Category 22 Strong American Ale. We had 5 entries: 1 Double IPA, 1 American Barleywine, and 3 Wheatwines. Our knowledgeable judges were Bill Lawrence and Jimmy Orkin, and it was a real treat listening to them. I especially liked the discussions on how a brewer might have achieved certain effects. I walked away with firm ideas on how to improve my own brewing, and I look forward to more of their judging sessions. Hopefully, other members will attend, whether as judges or spectators; the sessions are very much worthwhile and fun.

Drum roll please . . . and the winners of the January COC are:

- 1st Place Stephen Tyner, Double IPA
- 2nd Place Steven Franks, Wheatwine
- 3rd Place Dean Weaver, Wheatwine

As a reminder, here are the upcoming COCs. The red-highlighted beers, of course, will require lengthened conditioning, so you might get started on these right away.

Month	Beer Style	BJCP Category
March 2020	Irish & Scottish	14 & 15
May 2020	British	11 - 13
July 2020	Lagers	1 - 3
September 2020	Extract American	18 & 19
November 2020	Spiced	30
January 2021	Trappist	26

Upcoming Competitions – Through March

The Bluebonnet

By the time this newsletter reaches you, the Bluebonnet entry period will have passed, and at the time of this writing, 1350 of 1500 entries have been registered. Surely some of you have an old-and-very-fine beer or two hidden away. Blow off the dust, and enter 'em – you still have time, and they very well might win. After the last-minute entries, what remains of the Bluebonnet is as follows:

- **Login of beers:** Saturday, Feb. 1, 9:00 am, at Peace Lutheran Church - La Paz Iglesia Luterana, 2929 S 1st St, Garland, TX 75041
- **Judging:** Feb. 7 to Feb. 22
- **Events & Awards:** Mar. 21 - 22
- **Bluebonnet website:** <http://bbbrewoff.com/bluebonnetbrewoff/>

The Bluebonnet can use your help with both the login and the judging. Both are great opportunities to meet other brewers, to learn, to sample good beers, and to have fun.

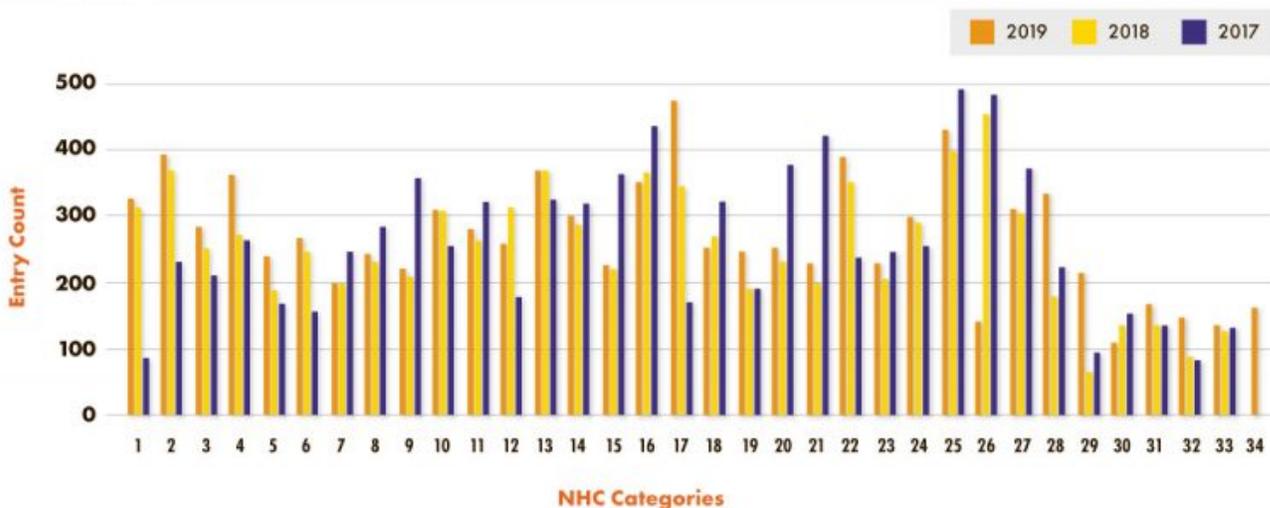
The National Homebrew Competition

- If you had applied to enter this competition, you will receive an acceptance email by Feb. 14.
- This email will identify the number of beers you may enter and your shipping location.
- Upon receiving this email, you have 7 days to enter your beers online and to pay your entry fees.
- Beers must be received at the shipping location between Feb. 20 and Mar. 5.

Which beers will you enter? Of course, putting your best beers forward is always a great strategy. However, you may also want to consider the probability of medaling. The NHC is the largest amateur brewing competition in the world, with more than 9,000 entries and with an average of 270 entries per category! The NHC created the chart below, which identifies the number of entries per BCJCP category. This information is useful in determining which categories offer you the best chances for winning. For instance, in 2019, Strong British Ales (Cat 17) had nearly 500 entries; on the other hand, Irish Beers (Cat 15) had a little over 200. There are plenty of categories in the low-200 range, and some well below 200. These could be productive grounds for you. It is also interesting to look at trends, at which entries are increasing and decreasing and then to make guesstimates on what this year will hold.



Total Entry Count by NHC Category (2017-2019)



The Lunar Rendezvous (Clear Lake, TX)

The Lunar Rendezvous is the first Lone Star Circuit qualifier after the Bluebonnet. It is hosted by the Bay Area Mastronauts.

- Entry registration: Feb. 24 – Mar. 22
- Pickup Location: Sheraton DFW Airport Hotel, 10:00 am, Mar. 21 (bottles need to be packed as if for shipping)
- Personal entry limit: none, but only 2 beers per category may be entered
- Competition entry limit: none, but about 350 are typically entered
- Awards: May 9
- Registration site: <https://rendezbrew.brewcomp.com/>

2019 Competition Stats			
Club	Placement	Points	Individuals
NTHBA	9th	4	Walter Hodges (2 points), Kuumba Smith (2 points)
Ninja Homebrewers	1st	69	Gang of 10

The Cactus Challenge (Lubbock, TX)

The Cactus Challenge also follows quickly on the heels of the Bluebonnet. It is hosted by the Lubbock Homebrew Club.

- Entry registration: Feb. 24 – Mar. 27
- Pickup Location: Sheraton DFW Airport Hotel, time TBD (usually early in the morning), Mar. 21 (bottles need to be packed as if for shipping)
- Personal entry limit: 20
- Competition entry limit: 350
- Awards: May 16
- Registration site: <http://www.lubbockhomebrew.com/cactus/bcoe/#>

2019 Competition Stats			
Club	Placement	Points	Individuals
NTHBA	5th	4	Layne McBeath (3 points), Walter Hodges (1 point)
Ninja Homebrewers	1st	43	Gang of 7

Cheers

Fritz



Here are a bunch of soldiers lined up and ready for battle. If you really want to find out if you made a decent beer you really need to subject it to the crucible of competition. At least in my case, the beating you may endure isn't the best but you do learn more from a loser than a winner. Of course, when you win it's always nice to have folks blow sunshine up your ass.

The Secretary's Missive by Bill Lawrence

We are now in the clutches of the depth of winter and there were even brief snow flurries on the morning of our first brew day of the year as if called up by the Almighty him/herself. I was reliably informed that our generous host got emotional as he lives for those freezing brewing sessions. I for one plan to attempt to take advantage of this bounty from nature and brew up a couple more lagers while the ground water is still relatively cool (makes chilling the wort much easier). I heard a rumor that there may be something going on with spring beers at our next party so I thought I would perhaps try a Maibock (but first I'll do a Helles just to build up a nice big yeast cake before I try for the bigger beer).

Naturally, a young man's fancy turns to the Bluebonnet in the spring. Hopefully, everyone "girded their loins" as Scott used to say and turned in several entries this year. Everyone knows our club practically holds a monopoly on virtue and morality but it would be nice if we could also make a good showing this year in the contest. Speaking of virtue, we really need to show the rest of these schmucks in the Metroplex how judging should be done. There is quite a bit of work that needs doing to go through roughly 1,500 entries so your help is sorely needed. For any neophytes included in our group, don't think that you are not wanted. Even if you have never judged before, now is the time to take the plunge and cast off the shame of virginity. You will be paired with an experienced judge who will gently take you by the hand and lead you to a..... well, let's just say it's a sublime experience you will never forget. Besides rendering an all-important service, you will also learn what the good stuff tastes like and guess what? If you don't know a winner when you taste one, how can you be expected to produce one yourself? Finally, if you get a chance to attend the event I would recommend it highly. Perhaps it is not as moving as the pilgrimage to Mecca but for a homebrewer, it's almost spiritual (plus there is beer, how can you lose?).

Well, I think this missive has run its course as your faithful scribe is spent. Remember, we will need beer for the homebrew portion of the contest so keep brewing my friends and take advantage of the cooler weather. As always in closing, may God bless America and may your beers come out tasting great.

*Prost,
Willy*

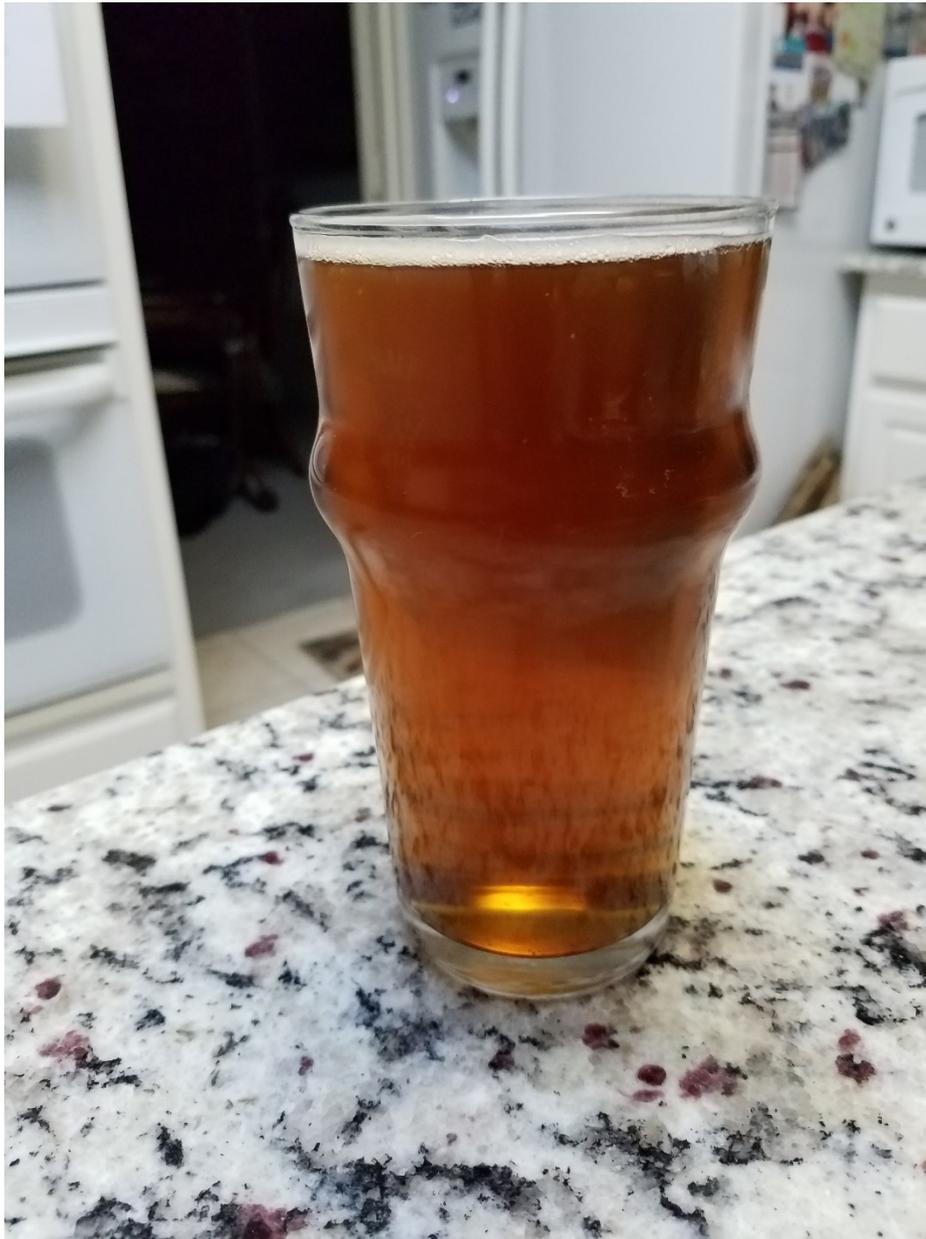


I'm not really sure where I got this picture nor do I know anything about the beer however this would qualify as amateur beer porn (note what I call "beer buggers" in the bottom of the glass). I think it fair to say that this offering is unfiltered and there is no charge for the added protein. I'm wondering if this stuff got too close to my fermenting frig. Then of course, there is that opaque concoction in the flask in the background of the picture but that is a story for another day.



I really have no clue as to what these guys were discussing but it must have been important as everyone seems to be concentrating.

Beer Porn



Here we have a homebrewed best bitter, one of my favorite styles. Note the lower carbonation and this is what I believe our British friends call a “proper pint”, a real quaffer.

The Treasurers Report by Jimmy Orkin

Summary:
Equity November end \$9,056.02

Equity December end \$8,969.79

New members in December: 6.

Members at December end: 95.

Current members at the time of this article: 96 members for year 2020.

I want to remind you that the financials trail the newsletter because I write this article before the end of the month.

The final monthly reports are available on the club website at the following link:

<http://nthba.org/?q=groups/financials-corner/financial-statement-archive>

Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the club's financial information. Also, please let me know if you would like additional or different information in this article.

Our membership year runs June until May. If your membership is not current, please renew at Homebrew Headquarters or any club event. I'll be at most events and you can pay with a credit card. Starting January 1st, the membership fee is \$15 and will expire at the end of May 2020.

I or the officers always have membership forms and cards at all the club events.

I am working on a t-shirt procurement for the club. Here is the current thinking. Each current membership will get 1 t-shirt at no cost to the member. Additional t-shirts can be purchased for about \$10. I am also getting prices for work shirts. The work shirts will be for purchase also but I don't have the price yet. You will be seeing a google form requesting sizing information in the next couple of weeks. Please complete the form when you see the request.

Brew Strong,

Jimmy

The Minister of Education Report by Smitty

Admittedly, January has gotten a bit away from me and I am a little behind in getting this article completed. So, it might be a little shorter than what I am normally going for. Next month, I plan to have a detailed but easily translated and digestible article on brewing water.

Quick Hits

Off-Flavors – Oxidation...Should you purge your keg? I was listening to a podcast the other day where the topic of keg purging was discussed, particularly in hoppier beers. The topic seemed to have an obvious and singular conclusion, but believe it or not, there was actual debate over whether there is flavor and aroma loss from keg purging. In the end...and this includes my opinion as well as those who keg and know what they are doing...you want to do all you can to avoid oxygen ingress into your finished beer. This includes purging your keg with CO₂ before and after transfer from your fermentation vessel. Some go so far as to fill the keg with sanitizer and push it out via CO₂, then fill. After your beer is carbonated and under pressure, I can see where purging too frequently for whatever reason might cause some concern about degradation.

Oxygen exposure, while in small amounts can add additional character to a very small subset of styles like Barleywines and Old Ales, will literally suck the life out of your delicious creation faster than just about anything else.

Sources: <https://beerandbrewing.com/off-flavor-oxidized/>

The Relationship Between Beer Judging and Understanding Beer Styles

It is officially Bluebonnet Brew Off season and you will undoubtedly receive several requests in your inbox and at the club meeting to come out and help judge. Please do not hit delete or tune out before pondering what I hope you will read below. This is an excellent time to cover this very important topic.

Competition beer judging would seem to many as an activity mostly beneficial to the competition as opposed to the individual judge. I would argue based on my experience that the exact opposite is true. Where else in literally the entire world can one...ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE...sample beer styles and compare them to specific guidelines(even if some are terrible)? Pause for a moment and think about that.

As a beer judge, analyzing beer styles puts you in a unique position and mindset to truly think about the examples you are sampling by comparing very specific traits to what they should be.

There is no doubt that if you use this experience to then design, brew, package, and ultimately critique your own product, you WILL see positive results that make you a much better brewer.

So, as you are considering your schedule over the next few weeks, please consider at least once...but if possible, more than once...showing up and judging for Bluebonnet. Likewise, later this year NTHBA will be having its own competition, the Limbo Challenge. I and many others who have judged multiple competitions cannot emphasize enough how judging has improved their own brewing.

That's it for this month. Happy brewing and we will see you at this month's events.

Cheers,

Smitty



I believe this is another photo from Mike's brewday in January. If I am not mistaken, this is Rob's gear and as you can see, he is old school (like me). Anyhow, I remember him saying that he had not brewed in a year so it was great to see him plying his craft yet again.

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North Texas Home Brewers Association

The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer and homebrewing. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at various locations around the DFW area. Visitors are welcome!

"Livin' the Brews" is our monthly newsletter. We do accept advertising, although the NTHBA, its officers, assignees, and editors are not liable for losses or damages resulting from mistakes or misprints, or any other consequences of advertising in this or any other publication. Ads are \$30 for a 1/3 page and \$50 for a full page, subject to change without notice.

Readers are encouraged to submit articles. The deadline for ads and articles each month is 14 days prior to the club meeting.



www.NTHBA.org