

LIVIN' THE BREWS



The Newsletter of the North Texas Home Brewers Association

Volume XXXV

Issue IV - April

Quick Sips for April:

Everything cancelled or postponed for safety

Prez Sez by Mike Grover

My how things can change in a month. Congratulations to all of our Bluebonnet Brew-Off winners! NTHBA won the first “virtual” BBO club of the year award by a sizable margin. Fritz’s article goes into much more detail on our victory, but I want to acknowledge our medal winners right here on the front page:

- Daniel Boyd
- Fred David
- John Driscoll
- Steven Franks
- Richard Harris
- Bill Lawrence
- Layne McBeath
- Doug Nett
- Fritz Schanz
- Jesse Thoresen
- Don Trotter
- Dean Weaver

With the quarantine in effect we have obviously had to cancel all meetings and social activities for the month of April. We all hope that things will get back to normal in May, but this is obviously a fluid situation and there is no way to predict when restrictions on social gatherings might be lifted. That said, I have reached out and gotten some updates on upcoming events. Clearly this information I subject to change and we will provide updates during the months as things become a little clearer.

- Campout at Cedar Creek Brewery – As of now this is still scheduled for May 2nd.
- Lunar Rendezbrew – I contacted the Bay Area Mashtronauts and was told that they still intend to hold their competition, but some of the dates will be extended. They are also

working out the collection of entries from Homebrew Headquarters. An official update is expected soon, and we will share it with the membership as soon as we receive it.

- Club Only Competition – Irish and Scottish Beers – We still plan to hold this competition but will wait until the stay-at-home order is lifted before judging. Once we are able to schedule it we will send out a notice so that everyone who wishes to enter can get their beers in.

Hopefully everyone is finding ways to stay busy during the lockdown. A number of us have participated in virtual happy hours via videoconferencing, and of course homebrewing is a great way to spend a day. Please take care and be safe!

Cheers, Mike

The First Sip by Stephen Tyner

I want to open this segment and echo the sentiments of all NTHBA officers in that we hope you, your family, and your friends are all in good health. On a positive note, we were able to hold the March brew day at Fred David's house where we had six total people attend and two batches of mead were brewed. Fred was an extremely gracious host and bestowed quite a bit of knowledge on the subject of mead making. To recap some key nuggets:

- A proper yeast nutrient protocol is critical for a healthy mead fermentation
- While the brew day may be easier than making beer, mead does require daily maintenance for about one week post pitching to maintain a healthy fermentation
- Malic acid can really enhance the flavor of mead by producing a more rounded sweetness
- A properly structured mead can be exquisite
- If you drink too much mead, you will forget all of the above and then some

As we head into April we have sent notification that the brew day along with the officer and club meetings are cancelled. We have decided to postpone the spring party and will make a decision as we get further into April. Once it is safe to do so, I think we are all going to need a good party to move past this whole thing. I am also betting that quite a few of us are using this time to brew more beer so I expect we will have quite a bit to sample.

As for now we are staying the course for the May events but we will make sure all club members are notified of changes. Given the uncertainty of the situation, we are suspending plans for any new social activities at this time. Once it is safe to do so we will resume planning some of the club activities that were in the works (Green line Brew Crawl, Frisco Rough Riders, etc). Until next time, stay safe and healthy.

Prost,

Stephen

Competition Corner by Fritz Schanz

TRIUMPHANT!

The monopoly of the Houston and Austin clubs has now come to an end, and for the first time since records have been posted (2006 onward), the North Texas Homebrewers Association is the Bluebonnet Club of the Year. Although we are not the largest club in the state, we are the mightiest. We sent more members to the winners' circle, and we earned more medals and more points than did any other club:

- 38 points
- 20 medals
- 1st place – 6 medals, 2nd place – 6 medals, 3rd place – 8 medals
- 12 members won medals
- 5 members won 2 or more medals
- Most medals: John Driscoll, with 4 medals
- Most points: John Driscoll, Don Trotter, and Fritz Schanz, each with 6 points
- In the LSC Individual standings, we now have 5 members in the top 15.

This is an amazing success story. So, how did we accomplish this?

Reason 1 – Our Members

Our 2020 medal winners are presented below. An inspiring note regarding this group of **12** winners is that **83%** are repeat performers. This shows an extremely high level of expertise and dedication to the craft. Also, we have a dozen additional members who have won previously but, unfortunately, didn't make it into the winners' circle this year. All told, then, we have more than **20** members who are current and past Bluebonnet winners. Do we not have the largest assemblage of talent in the state? Can anyone imagine a better club in which to belong?

Member	Placement & Beer	Previous Bluebonnet Medals
Daniel Boyd	2 nd Tropical Stout	
Dean Weaver	2 nd Belgian Dark Strong	2019
Don Trotter	1 st Kolsch, 1 st Old Ale	2019
Doug Nett	3 rd Best Bitter	2018
Fred David	3 rd Wee Heavy, 2 nd Cyser, 3 rd Cider and Other Fruit	2019, 2018, 2017, etc.
Fritz Schanz	1 st British Strong Ale, 1 st Belgian Dark Strong	2019, 2018
Jesse Thoresen	3 rd American Light Lager	2017
John Driscoll	3 rd Doppelbock, 1 st Eisbock, 3 rd Pre-Prohibition Porter, 3 rd Fruit and Spice Mead	
Layne McBeath	2 nd Saison	2019, 2017
Richard Harris	1 st Helles Bock	2018
Steven Franks	2 nd Scottish Export, 2 nd Wheatwine	2017
Bill Lawrence	3 rd Dunkels Bock	2018

Reason 2 – A Combined Quantitative and Qualitative Achievement

The *quantitative* nature of our win is obvious. We accrued more medals and more points than did any other club. However, there is also a less-obvious *qualitative* aspect to our performance.

Team	Persons medaling	Medals	Points	Medals/Person	Points/Person	Points/Medal
Austin Zealots	4	5	10	1.3	2.5	2.0
Cane Island Alers	7	9	20	1.3	2.9	2.2
Cap and Hare	6	11	24	1.8	4.0	2.2
Ninja HB	5	15	27	3.0	5.4	1.8
NTHBA	12	20	38	1.7	3.2	1.9

For instance, in drawing a comparison with the two homebrew powerhouses in Texas, the CIA and Ninjas, we earned:

- more points per person than did the CIA ... 3.2 vs 2.9
- more points per medal than did the Ninjas ... 1.9 vs 1.8

Thus, in certain respects, the quality of our homebrewers' performance was higher than that of the homebrewers in the CIA and NINJAS. This is saying quite a bit, and this qualitative distinction will serve us well in the future.

Reason 3 – The Club Only Championship

The COC is a proving ground for excellence. In our COCs, the following wins were also recorded in the the 2020 Bluebonnet:

- John Driscoll's Pre-Prohibition Porter won 1st in the Nov COC , and won 3rd in the Bluebonnet
- Steven Franks' Wheatwine won 2nd in the Feb COC, and won 2nd in the Bluebonnet
- Stephen Tyner's Double IPA won 1st in the Feb COC, and went to the mini-BOS (43 pts) in the Bluebonnet

The value of the COCs is that:

- They provide a litmus test to the quality of our beers, and the judges' acumen provides suggestions on how to improve our entries.
- They condition us to think more rigorously about every aspect of bringing a beer to life.
- They encourage us to brew in styles we might not ordinarily brew, extending our repertoire.
- They are grand fun.

Reason 4 – Our Venues Played a Role in Our Success

Our success was driven by the richness of our venues. We offer General Brew Days, Big Rig Brew Days, Club Only Competitions, Monthly Board Meetings, Monthly Club Meetings, and Seasonal Parties. All of these are well attended, and in these meetings, different opportunities arise for sharing information. The experienced brewers in this club never tire of discussing beer and of passing on their well-earned knowledge – sometimes this passing takes the form of a velvet glove, other times a hammer. In the Brew Days, we see how different brewers manage their processes, and we learn more about the subtleties of brewing science. At the bottle sharings, we give and take opinions as to the merits of a given beer. Yes, our venues provide a dazzling array of opportunities.

The End Game – The Lone Star Circuit

So, after a brilliant start at the Bluebonnet, the competition that launches the LSC, what does the future hold for the mighty NTHBA? We can rest on our laurels, and say that we have achieved something very special, and indeed, we have.

Or we can look forward to another opportunity. We are in good position to make a run for the LSC Club of the Year. We already have a strong core of high-performance beers that will do well in other smaller competitions. Also, we had many members who did not place at the Bluebonnet but whose beers received very high scores; such beers will win at other competitions.

I'm throwing my hat into the ring, and I hope others will also join in.

Club Only Championship

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the March COC has been postponed. So, hang on to your award-winning beers until further notice. At this time, it is too early to make a decision on the May COC.

Month	Beer Style	BJCP Category
March 2020 - POSTPONED	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

National Homebrew Competition

As you know, the NHC first-round homebrew competition has been canceled. A communication was sent out to AHA members on March 20. To sum the major points:

- Cancellation was based on health and safety concerns surrounding the COVID-19 virus.
- Refunds for entry fees (but not shipping costs) will be made automatically within the next 60 days.
- A one-round competition is being considered for Homebrew Con.
- As of this time, Homebrew Con is still moving forward, but the situation is monitored daily.

The Cactus Challenge (Lubbock, TX)

This competition has been canceled, and entry fees have been refunded. The Cactus Challenge staff may reschedule this competition for later.

The Lunar Rendezvous (Clearlake, TX)

As of this writing, this competition is still scheduled. The beer drop-off point was Homebrew Headquarters.

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; now closed
- Pickup Location: Homebrew Headquarters, 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, as of this writing 445 entries have been registered
- 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

KGB Big Batch Brew Bash (Houston, TX)

The KGB Big Batch Brew Bash is a competition devoted to a single style, and is a competition in which NTHBA members have done very well. Hopefully, this tradition will continue into 2020. This year's style is Coffee Beer as defined by the 2019 Style Guidelines of the Great American Beer Festival. To review this style, go to the following link, and download the PDF style guidelines:

<https://www.greatamericanbeerfestival.com/brewers/beer-styles/>

This competition is hosted by the Kuykendahl Grain Brewers in Houston.

- **Entry registration:** May 22 – Jun. 5
- **Personal entry limit:** 2

- **Styles accepted:** Coffee Beer (GABF Category 10)
- **Competition entry limit:** no limit, but typically 100 entries
- **Awards:** Jun. 14
- **Registration site:** <https://www.thekgb.org/competition-news> (not yet active)
- **Shipping location:** Brew It Yourself, 25770 Interstate 45 North #107, Spring, TX 77386; phone: (281) 367-2739

2019 Competition Stats			
Club	Placement	Points	Individuals
NTHBA	Ken Rich Memorial Award	0	Zach Hill
Texas Carboys	1	3	
KGB	2	2	
Rogue Brewers	3	1	
2018 Competition Stats			
Club	Placement	Points	Individuals
NTHBA	1	3	Dean Weaver*, James Smith, Steven Barsalou, Wayne Jandell
Texas Carboys	2	2	
Bay Area Mashtronauts	3	1	

*In 2017, the inimitable Dean Weaver took an honorable mention for Belgian IPA.

Cheers

Fritz



Here is a bit of erotica for your viewing pleasure. If you enjoy British beers, the Pride and ESB are in a class of their own. Naturally, the Pils is world class also and I bet it's even better fresh. Frankly, I'm starting to get worked up just putting this portion of the newsletter together.

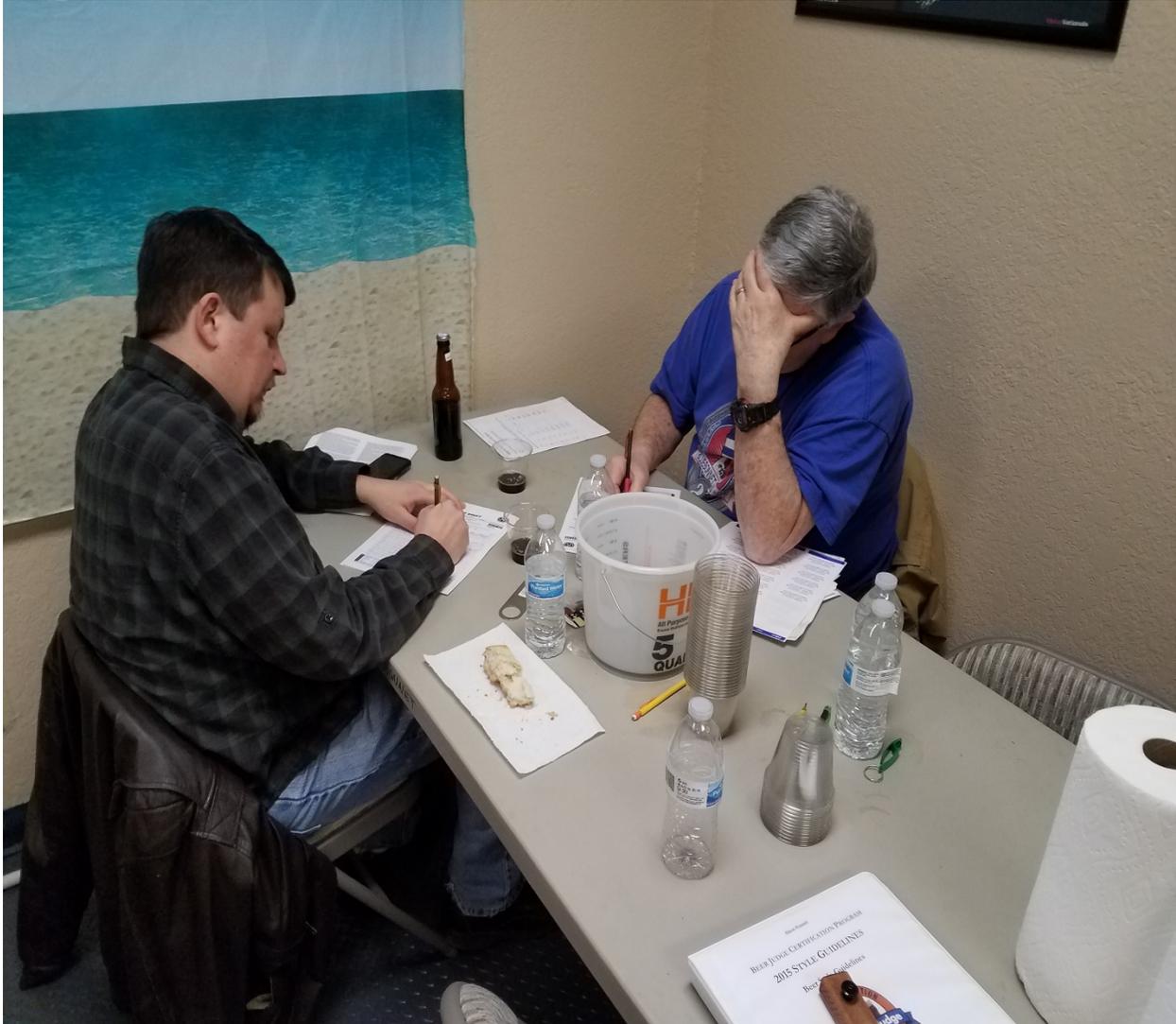
The Secretary's Missive by Bill Lawrence

Before I write anything else, let me congratulate all club members for a great showing at the Bluebonnet. It has been a long time since our club has won the event so that is truly special. Back in the day, we won every year but of course we had quite a few more members relative to the other clubs entering so this year's feat was all the more impressive. No doubt, much of our success can be attributed to the efforts of Fritz and like all good leaders, he leads from the front. On a personal note, I would also like to thank Fritz for his voluminous article preceding this humble missive. I am trying to type this out on a small laptop and I just can't type as quickly on this little POS. Anyway, I truly appreciate him filling newsletter space this month.

I know that everyone is going a little stir crazy and what better way to reduce boredom than knocking out a few batches of beer. It is my understanding that Kelly is doing drive up service and I would encourage everyone to throw some patronage his way as it is very tough out there for small business people. I did a rough calculation at the behest of my daughter when she asked me the other day how many glasses of beer are currently in my inventory. If one defines a glass of beer as being 500ml, I estimate I have on hand somewhere between 250 and 300 glasses, give or take. I'm pretty sure I can make it through the weekend but just to be safe I brewed a Belgian Blond this past weekend.

Ok so enough of this foolishness. Everyone be safe out there; virtual happy hours are the order of the day and yeah, may God bless America.

*Prost,
Willy*



Here are a couple neophytes trying to judge beer at the Bluebonnet. It rather looks like these two lads are not that enamored with the entry currently being judged.

Beer Porn



This is a Double IPA and having actually tasted this beer I can report that it is damn good. I also felt that this was a great photo to post in April as the sun adds an almost religious aura to the beer, which reminded me that spring is a time of rebirth and a very spiritual time of year. Naturally, if you consume enough of this I can pretty much guarantee you will experience an epiphany.

The Treasurers Report by Jimmy Orkin

Summary:

Equity December end \$8,969.79

Equity January end \$8,144.11

Equity February end \$7,793.51

New members in February: 1. It was a renewal.

Members at January end: 96.

Current members at the time of this article: 95 members for year 2020.

Current members at the time of this article: 1 member for year 2021.

I want to reminder 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 clubs 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. We are in the year 2021 extra period. Join now for \$30 and your membership will not expire until end of May 2021.

I got time to update the clubs financials and everything is posted to on the website. I have not been by Homebrew Headquarters to pick up membership applications so there may be some new applications I have not received.

The club's equity has been going down with yearend awards. We will also spend on the t-shirt program as I now have time to focus on it again.

The Saturday night Flying Saucer group has started "Happy Hour" net meetings with the Zoom system. I find these satisfying for getting together and enjoying everyone's company. I will be glad when the pandemic is behind us.

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

*Brew Strong,
Jimmy*



Well this looks like Fritz trying to teach a couple of the lads some of the more esoteric points of the brewing process. Given that the back of those heads look like Jimmy and Fred, one can only surmise that the conversation was lively if nothing else.

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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