

LIVIN' THE BREWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH TEXAS HOME BREWERS
ASSOCIATION VOLUME XXX ISSUE II



February Quick Glance:



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Prez Sez By Mike Grover

Greetings Homebrewers! With the arrival of February we are in the home stretch of preparation for the upcoming Bluebonnet Brew-Off. As the host club, we are expected to provide the lion's share of support for this year's event. In addition, I hope that all of you have a homebrew or two (or three...or twenty) to enter into the competition. The Bluebonnet website is up and running (www.bluebonnetbrewoff.org) and **entries are being accepted right now through February 19th**. If you had saved the old Bluebonnet website address in your browser favorites, make sure that you update it as the old address is no longer valid. Once the entry window has closed, the next two events where we will need lots of support from our member ship are check in and judging. Check in will take place on Saturday, February 21st. This activities requires a lot of folks to open up packages, check paperwork, and process entries. First round judging will take place the two weekends after that (February 28-March 1 and March 7-8). We need all of our experienced beer judges to show up and contribute and we will need to see a lot of new faces as well. Details on the location will be released soon.

Thank you to everyone who showed up to the January brew day that I hosted. We had a terrific turnout and the weather was perfect for it. I counted around 30 people at the peak. Four batches of beer were brewed. Thank you to David Lee for his presentation on hops which drew a lot of interest. Thanks also to James Smith for arranging a barbeque lunch for everyone. It was great to see a lot of newer club members at the brew day. If you are a new club member and have not attended a brew day I strongly encourage you to. I believe that, of all the club events, the brew days are the best opportunity to share your homebrew, meet other club members, and observe different brewers' processes.

The February club meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 10th at 6:30 p.m. at Rugby House Pub located at 8604 Preston Road, Ste. 100 (east side of Preston Road at McDermott and just south of the Sam Rayburn Tollway). I hope to see all of you there. Rugby House has been good to us, and they have great food and a nice draught beer selection. The officers meeting will be held at 6:30 at the Drunken Donkey at 4897 Highway 121 in The Colony. They have a good sized covered outdoor patio area that we are considering for a future club meeting site once warmer weather returns. Oh, and they have 130 taps. As always, club members are welcome to join us at the officers meetings.

Pros't!

The First Sip By James Smith

Here we are one month in to the 2015 and things are humming along. The January brew day was a great event with an equally great member turnout and brewers churning out great beers. David Lee also gave an excellent presentation on hops. Thank you, David!! We also had four brewers going...from Walter's advanced brew rig to a couple of more basic systems. I want to extend my thanks to you as well.

My takeaway from January's brew day is to continue to push attendance at events. Please keep coming!! It is your participation that helps make club events successful. Participation includes volunteering, whether it is education, hosting, and yes even brewing at a brew day. You "opening the Kimono" on your processes can be a learning experience for beginner or even experienced members.

Notable Club Events Coming Up (Please mark your calendars!!):

- There is no official **February Brew Day** as there was not a volunteer host that stepped forward.
- There is no **March Brew Day** due to Bluebonnet.
- The **April Brew Day** will occur on April 11 from 9am to 4pm. It will be held at the home of yours truly, James Smith. The address is 4100 Camino Dr. Plano 75074. [CLICK HERE FOR MAP](#)
- **SPECIAL EVENT:** The weekend of April 18-19 will be the Annual Cedar Creek Campout. You cannot miss this event, so mark your calendars to spend the day enjoying a people's choice contest and some great Cedar Creek beers. Then, bring your best camping gear and spend the night at the brewery under the stars. [CLICK HERE FOR MAP](#) MORE INFO SOON!!!

You can always find out about the latest events coming up on the NTHBA Club Calendar here: <http://nthba.org/content/club-calendar>

As always, if ever you have a question or comments, or if you would like to provide suggestions or feedback about a specific event, please do not hesitate to e-mail me at socials@nthba.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

Cheers!

James, aka "Smitty"



Competition Corner By Walter Hodges

Our first COC of 2015 is in the books. We had eight entries in the high gravity beer categories. Our intrepid judges staggered their way through the flight to find our winners. They are:

1st Place – Mike Grover – “Vicious Chicken of Bristol” 19b English Barleywine

2nd Place – Don VanSlyke – 18b Belgian Dubbel

3rd Place – Barrett Tillman – 18d Belgian Golden Strong

Thanks to Einar, Dave and Matt from coming out and judging the beers. With the first COC in the books, our Brewer Royale standings are:

Mike Grover – 3 points

Don VanSlyke – 2 points

Barrett Tillman – 1 point

Our next COC is anything brewed with at least 50% of the fermentable sugars coming from extract (liquid or DME). The entry deadline is Tuesday, February 10th. I will likely need some help judging, as we usually get quite a few entries for this category.

Competition Schedule			
Lone Star Circuit		Club Only	
Competition	Entry Deadline	Theme/Styles	Entry Deadline
Bluebonnet Brew-Off	2/19	Extract Beers Any BJCP style beer with at least 50% of the fermentables derived from dry or liquid extract	2/10
Alamo City Cerveza Fest	3/6	Lagers BJCP Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 20, 21, 22, 23 fermented with lager yeast	April
Cactus Challenge	3/37	Session Beers All Limbo Categories	July
Big Batch Brew Bash American Barleywine	5/1	Sour Beers BJCP Category 17 and sour beers in categories 20, 21, 22, 23	September
Lunar Redezbrew	June	Belgian and French Styles BJCP Categories 17 and 18	November
Limbo Challenge	July		
O'zapft Is	August		
Dixie Cup	September		

We are at the threshold of another Bluebonnet Brew-off. To borrow a phrase, “we’ll need to gird our loins” and enter our best beers to have a chance of retaining the coveted Bluebonnet Stein. Keep a couple of things in mind when you are entering your beers.

First, make sure that you are entering them in the correct category. Just because you planned to brew a certain style, doesn't always mean that the beer matches that style. Sit down with a bottle of each brew you plan to enter and a BJCP style guide. Read the style guide and taste your beer. Find the category that it most closely matches your beer and enter it there.

Second, if you have a beer that spans two categories, double enter it. You'll increase your chances of finding a judge who thinks it's a good match.

Third, make sure all the label remains have been removed from the bottle. Also, if your caps have any lettering or design on them, be sure to black it out with a Sharpie.

Fourth, pack your beers up well. They are not getting shipped through UPS, but they may get bumped around at the homebrew shop where you dropped them off or during their trip to the login location. Don't drop them off in a six-pack carrier! A sturdy box with some packing between the bottles will suffice for a local competition.

Finally, remember that your Bluebonnet entries are due on February 19th. Don't wait to enter! There is a limit of 1525 entries.

Good luck to everyone who enters. Maybe you'll end up with one of those awesome Bluebonnet steins.

Prosit!

Walter

The Treasure's Report

By Jimmy Orkin

Summary:

Equity November end \$4,764.11.

Equity December end \$3,816.74

New members in December: 4.

Current members December end: 174.

Current members at the time of this article: 176.

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

<http://nthba.org/content/club-documents>

Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the clubs financial information. Let me know if you would like additional or different information in this article.

I'll have a complete year of financial data sometime in January after I get the December statement from the bank. I will pull some information together to show where the club's money comes from and goes and report at a club meeting and newsletter.

We have a complete year of financial data. Here are some highlights:

Our income comes from:

Membership Dues:	68%
Raffle:	17%
Limbo:	13%

Our expenses go to:

Club Parties:	27%
Raffle Items:	14%
Limbo:	14%
Operation:	14%
Brewdays:	7%
Keggerator Maintenance	6%

We had some big or unplanned expenses last year like unpaid Limbo expenses from 2013, keggerator maintenance, liability insurance and Christmas Party venue rent.

Our income structure is fairly fixed at this point. If you have an opinion on where the club spends our money, please talk to me or any of the officers.

Bluebonnet Brewoff

The Bluebonnet is almost here. The online entry site is open for registration. We might have a place to judge. Judging is just around the corner.

Please come out and help us judge this year. If you are an experienced judge, we need your help. If you are inexperienced in judging, please come out and learn how to judge beer. Judging beer will improve your beer by sharpening your understanding of beer styles and your senses used to taste beer.

You can make your discounted hotel reservations now. The closing date to reserve your rooms is March 4th. This link to make your hotel reservation is on the Bluebonnet Brewoff website: <http://bluebonnetbrewoff.org>

Here are some importance dates:

Entries and Event Registration	Now through February 19.
Last day to drop off entries	February 19.
Login	February 21.
First round Judging	February 28, March 1, 7, 9.
Second Round Judging	March 14, 15.
Event Weekend	March 20, 21.

Brewing Topics

It seem to work on automation in bursts. I have not made much headway since last month. I am trying to use the Digi Xbee modules with Zigbee code. These are wireless modules that allow you to send serial data over the air. I am have problems with them dropping characters. I have not had time to figure out how to fix them. Hopefully I will find more time before the Bluebonnet Brewoff consumes all my time.

The BrewPi project is now shipping a new offering based on the Spark embedded process platform. You can take a look at what Elco is up to here: <http://www.brewpi.com/blog/>

I am also glad to say that the BrewBit guys are working on their code again. I don't know if they can make the BrewBit a stable trustworthy system but at least they are back from their four month neglect of the project.

Brew Strong!

Jimmy



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North Texas Home Brewers Association

The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer in general and home brewing in particular. We meet once a month on the second Tuesday at various locations in the area. Visitors are welcome! "Livin' the Brews" is our newsletter and is published once a month. 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.



Visit the NTHBA Website at
www.nthba.org