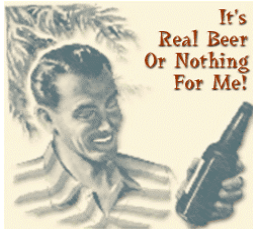


LIVIN' THE BREWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH TEXAS HOME BREWERS ASSOCIATION



Prez Sez

By Fred David

Well, here I sit writing my article for the April newsletter and it's raining again. I hope David Finfrock doesn't hear about this or I'll be writing every day for the next six months non-stop. The Bluebonnet is over and we still don't have our trophy back. Unfortunately, because of conflicting schedules this year, I was not able to attend the opening banquet, commercial tasting, pub crawl, or most of the awards ceremony. I arrived at the room crawl late but it was still in full swing and we had a great time. As it turned out, there were several GIs on their way back to Iraq that night that we asked to

come to the pub crawl. We got a chance to show them how much we appreciate them and let them forget about what the future might hold for a little while. Sue and I got back from our concert at the Meyerson Saturday night right at the tail end of the awards ceremony. When we walked in the door, James Dorman grabbed me and pulled me up front. He put a blue ribbon around my neck and

gave me a stein!! A lot of you already know this story but my point in all of this rambling is to drive home the point that I am convinced that our score sheets hold the key to our success. I wrote this in January's newsletter and now believe it more than ever. Take them out, read them, and take what they say to heart. If anyone out there needs
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Announcements

- Apr. 7 Brewday at Fred David's
- Apr. 10 Club Meeting at The Londoner
- April 16 Noon deadline for COC entries
- April 21 12:30-2pm brewing education meeting at Ken Woodson's
- April 28 Spring party at the Beyers'

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What's Brewin? By Walter Hodges

Ah, spring time! The flowers are blooming, the grass and trees are turning green and the Bluebonnet blooms. We had a great time at the 21st Bluebonnet, even though those guys from the city with the crappy water walked away with the Bluebonnet stein again. I was only



able to attend the Friday evening events, which includes in my opinion the most popular event, the Room Crawl. We set up O'Blivions Bar and had eight or so of our own homebrews on tap. The crawl started at

around 10:00 PM Friday evening and I heard reports that several intrepid souls went until 5:00 AM. A big thanks goes out to everyone who helped the setup and working the room for the evening.

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April Brewday

Our Spring party will be April 28th, at the home of Brian and Melinda Bayer. Check the website for start time and address.

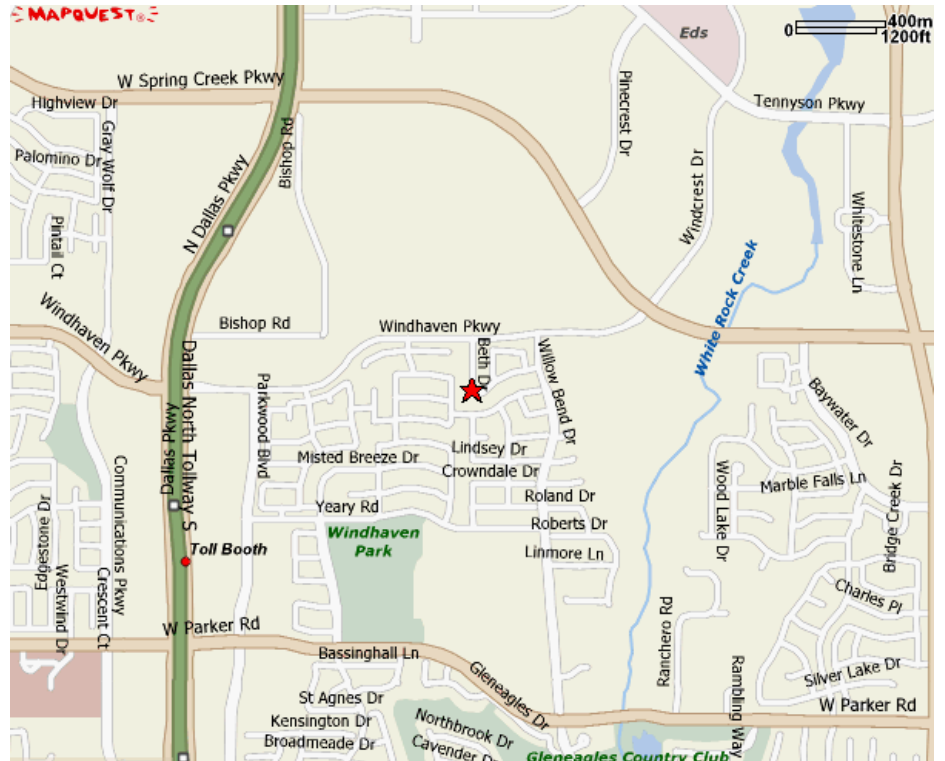
The April 7 Brewday will be at Fred David's house at 5905 Beth Dr., Plano, 75095

The next brew day is April 7th at the home of Fred and Sue David. Brewing will begin at 8:00 AM. Fred will be brewing an Oktoberfest using a double decoction mash. Come and watch or bring your brewery and brew along with Fred. Fred's address is: 5905 Beth Drive, Plano, Tx 75093.

Also upcoming on our calendar is the National Homebrew Day on May 5th. We will be brewing out at the Big Buck Brewery in Grapevine. More details will be coming later this month on the web site.

Party On,

Walter



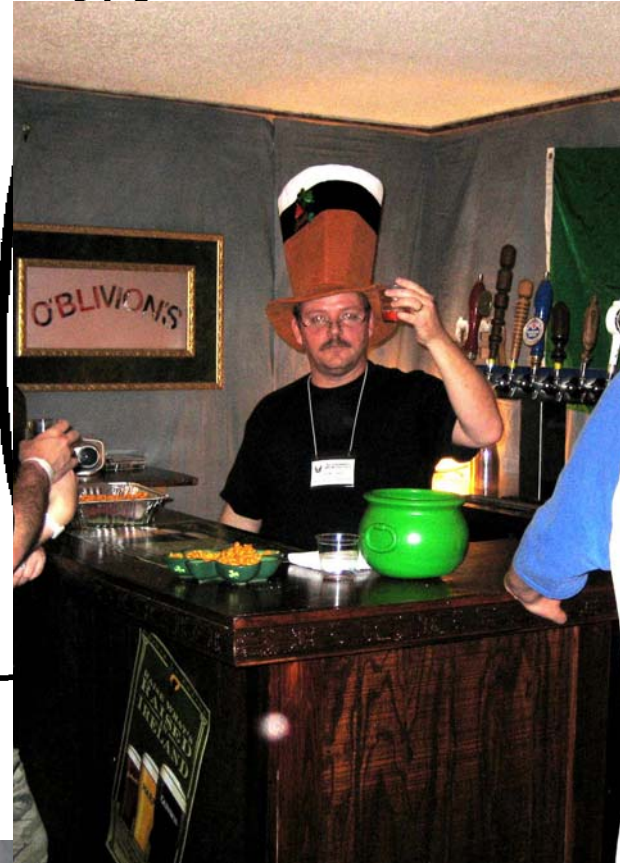
BREWER ROYALE 2007

Style of the Month

April 07	Extract Beers
July 07	Strong Ale
September 07	Bock
November 07	Pilsner
January 08	Dark Lagers
March 08	Perfect Porter Challenge
April 08	Extract Beers
July 08	Mead
September 08	Imperial Anything

Rankings

Brewer	Points
Doug Nett	4
Steve Haney	3
John McConnell	3
Duane Williams	2



California Bound

By Fred David

Every year in February Sue and I travel to Napa, California for our anniversary and this year was no different. We just go out there to get away from the daily madhouse of DFW and just relax. We tend to sleep in until about 8 AM, have breakfast and then go out to explore and do some wine tasting for the rest of the day. This year was no different in that regard but we decided, with a little arm twisting from me, to venture out of the world of wine snobbery and into to the world of beer snobbery. We arrived in Napa on Saturday at about 1:30 PM and drove immediately up to St Helena to have lunch at Silverado Brewery. This is a small brewpub we have visited before that has great burgers and a good selection of microbrew. They have a 15 barrel system with six bright tanks. When we arrived, we found a smoker running full steam outside. It turned out they were smoking ribs snow crab. Sue and I split a rack of ribs and each had a pint of their blond ale before heading to our B & B to check in.

This year we spent 8 days out there so it gave us a chance to make couple of nice day trips out of Napa Valley. On Monday we hopped in the car and drove through Sonoma and up Highway 101 to Santa Rosa to Russian River Brewing Company. Vinnie Cilurzo is the owner and brewmeister at this great brewery and pub and he met us and showed us around. Vinnie is a big hophead and consummate Belgian beer

brewer and it is evident when you walk in. On his “what’s on tap” board you will find two sides. On the left you will find a not so hoppie Blonde ale, a stout, IPA and double IPA. The later 3 are very hoppie. On the right side of the board you will find a Belgian Strong Golden ale, a Belgian Blond ale, and a Belgian Strong Dark ale along with a couple of other seasonal Belgian delights. Vinnie cask conditions most of his beers, separating out the kegs intentionally infected with Brettanomyces into their own separate room. The food at the pub is very good thin crust Italian style pizza that compliments all of his beers. This day I wasn’t driving so I tried all of his Belgians and a couple from the other side. I turned out that he and his wife were leaving the next day for their annual trip to Belgium so he didn’t have a lot of time for us. I will definitely go back at some point though.

On Thursday Sue and I drove up through Calistoga at the top of Napa Valley and across California highway 128 through the Redwood National forest to California highway 1, the coast highway. From there we drove north through Mendocino and up to Fort Bragg. This is the home of North Coast Brewing, the producers of such fine beers as Scrimshaw Pilsner, Red Seal ale, Old Stock ale, Pranzster Belgian Strong Golden Ale, and Old Rasputin Russian Imperial Stout. Unfortunately the brewery was not open for touring on this day but I was able to speak to their VP of operations, Doug Moody. Doug related the history of the brewery to us and described their equipment setup. They have only one 50 barrel mash tun that runs three shifts a day, 5 days a week. The brewery doesn’t work on the weekends!! We did

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buy some beer to bring back, most notably Old Rasputin X. This is a 10th anniversary old Rasputin that was aged in oak whisky barrels and is only available at the brewery. It turned out that this beer was more than the usual collectors beer because after all the proof-reading of the bottle's 2 labels the still misspelled Russian as 'Russan'. If you come by my place for any reason you can check it out. We ate a late lunch in their pub. Their standard fare there was seafood so Sue and I both had beer battered fish and chips. On the way back to Napa we stopped in to Bear Republic brewpub in Healdsburg for a quick beer and a bowl of chili. This place was interesting in that their grist mill, mash tun and boil kettle were physically on the floor of the pub with no separation what so ever. It was quite entertaining for the pub goers.

Our last two brewery/brewpub stops on this trip were both back in Napa valley proper on Friday. The first one is in the Calistoga Inn.

Sue and I discovered this place a couple of years ago and we always go there at least once for lunch. If you get there try their Ruben sandwich. It's dynamite! Friday night we ventured into the city of Napa and went to Down Town Joe's. We first found this brewpub years ago and were not impressed but we decided to give it a second chance and we were glad. Since the first time we were there they have put in an RO filter system and are treating their water. They are only brewing British style beers and are doing a pretty good job of it. After this trip, Sue and I will be doing a lot more exploration for breweries and brewpubs each time we go out to this area of California. I'm sure we've only scratched the surface. Using a toast I found on the inside of a Widmer Brothers beer cap; "Here's to waking up in strange places!"

P r o s i t ! !



(Prez Sez, Continued from page 1)

some guidance in how to make some of the improvements suggested there are plenty of us in the club that are willing and able to help. I believe there are a couple of other things we can do to be more competitive. One thing we don't use enough is our website. We have some great forums out there that can be used to discuss anything at all about beer and brewing. We also have a wealth of information about brewing and links to a lot of other beer related sites. For those of you who were there, NTHBA apparently did alright in the competition until we hit category 16. This is where the Belgian beers, meads and ciders start and most of us pack it in. We all will hopefully look at how many entries there were in any given category in this year's Bluebonnet and decide what to brew next year, but maybe we need to start looking at where we get our butts kicked and try to be more competitive with all beer styles. I know it takes more time and patience to brew out of our comfort zone, but this is what makes us better brewers. This may be another piece of the puzzle that will help us get our trophy back. This summer I will be, just like everyone else, brewing session beers but I think I will add a couple of Belgians to my list for next year's Bluebonnet.

Until then,

Prosit!!!

Tech Corner

By Ken Woodson

Forgive me, but I am starting with a shameless plug. I will be presenting a beer basics class at my home starting in April. The classes will be held the third Saturday of each month, unless it conflicts with a brew day, then it will be held the Saturday following that brew day. Each class will start at 12:30 p.m. and end at 2:00 p.m.

In the first class we will discuss water as it pertains to brewing. This class will be a bigger more expanded version of my March article on water treatment. My home is located at 6913 Rochelle Dr. in Plano, near Coit and Legacy. So, if you get a chance, come out and join us.

OK back to beer topics. Are hops important in brewing good beer? Absolutely, hops are important in brewing because they provide a bitterness that complements the sweet malt used to brew beer. Also, hops act as a preservative for beer. In fact, the India Pale Ale beer style owes its elevated hop bitterness to the fact that George Hodgson began exporting pale ales to East India around 1790. Aware of the preservative quality of hops, Hodgson increased the hop bitterness in pale ales to survive the long journey and the IPA style was born.

The species of hops used for brewing is *Humulus Lupulus*. The lupulin resin from the hop contains alpha acids and essential oils. The alpha acids contribute to the bitterness in beer, while the essential oils provide aroma and flavor to beer.

Around 90% of the bitterness from hops is due to alpha acids. When you purchase hops at the homebrew store, look for the alpha acid percent on the bag, which represents the percent of alpha acids by weight. The

alpha acids in hops do not dissolve very well in water or beer, however, when we boil the wort to make beer, the boiling process changes the hops that are added to the brew kettle into isomerized alpha acids, where isomerized means that the molecules are the same but rearranged. These isomerized alpha acids are more soluble in the wort.

An easy way to measure hop bitterness in beer is Homebrew Bittering Units or HBUs, which is defined as the ounces of hops used in the beer recipe multiplied by the alpha acid percent. For example, if you add 1.5 ounces of Cascade hops with a 5.5% alpha acid percent, then the number of HBUs is equal to 1.5×5.5 , or 8.25 HBUs. Unfortunately, this measure of bitterness is a little crude because it does not take into account many of the variables that influence bitterness, like the amount of time the hops are boiled in the brew kettle. The International Bittering Units or IBUs is a more accurate standard for measuring hop bitterness in beer. The IBU metric is defined as the concentration of isomerized alpha acids in the finished beer in milligrams per liter. Hops used for bittering are normally added to the brew kettle very early in the boiling process.

The essential oils that produce the hop aroma and flavor in beer are very volatile and will not survive a long boil in the brew kettle. So, aroma and flavor hops should be added very late in the boil or during fermentation. The process of adding hops during fermentation is called dry hopping. Noble hops are prized for their aroma and flavor properties. Examples of noble hops are: Hallertauer Mittelfrüh, Czech Saaz, Spalt,



and Tettnanger.

For home brewers, hops are typically purchased in one of two forms: whole hops or pellets. Pellets are more common, probably due to the fact that they take up less space and are easier to store.

If you have to store hops then ideally you should store them in a freezer in a vacuum sealed bag. Over time hops become oxidized and begin to smell like old gym socks or cheesy. Needless to say, if your hops begin to smell cheesy then you should throw them out and buy fresh hops, that is, unless you are brewing a lambic, which uses hops aged for three years.

Finally, some beer styles are strongly identified with a particular hop. For example, Bohemian Pilseners are usually brewed with the noble hop Saaz because this hop adds a very smooth bitterness and flavor profile to the style.

If you would like to read more about hops here is a good resource:

Using Hops, The Complete Guide to Hops for the Craft Brewer, by Mark Garetz

The Brewing Equipment Trading Post



HELP WANTED

Homebrew Headquarters is looking for a knowledgeable person in beer and wine making. Help is needed for full or part time. OK money, excellent employee discounts. Contact Kelly Harris @972-234-4411 or brewmaster@homebrewhq.com

FOR SALE

To list your equipment, include the following information -

- 1 - Description of items
- 2 - Whether it is "For Sale", "Will Trade For _?_" or "Free, Come & Get It"
- 3 - Your name
- 4 - How and when to contact you.

Email Sean at news@nthba.org

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Club Brewmeisters are members who are experienced brewers and have volunteered to help other brewers, new and old, with brewing problems. Give them a call with your questions! Just don't call too late, too early, or during Cow-boy games!

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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 about 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

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