

# LIVIN' THE BREWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH TEXAS HOME BREWERS ASSOCIATION



## Prez Sez

By Mike Grover

March is now upon us, and that can only mean one thing: bring on tornado season! Oh yeah, and it is also time for the Bluebonnet Brewoff. Hopefully all of you got your entries turned in and the club will be well-represented this year. By the time you read this, the deadline for the guaranteed room rate at the hotel will have passed. If you need a room and have not yet reserved one, stop reading and log on to [www.bluebonnetbrewoff.com](http://www.bluebonnetbrewoff.com) right away! The longer you wait, the less likely you are to get a favorable room rate. While we are on the topic of the Bluebonnet, please set aside a keg – or brew something up quickly – that we can have on tap for the room crawl. As you have heard, the room crawl format will be different this year. We have to shut it down – and clear our equipment out of the conference room – at midnight. Some arrangements (both unofficial and semi-



official) are being made for those that would like to congregate and share beer after midnight. For this reason we need everyone to bring picnic taps along with their kegs. We will of course use the large kegerator for the official room crawl, but after that we will likely be spread out amongst several hotel rooms.

This month we will be meeting at Humperdink's Northwest Highway location in Dallas. Humperdink's always treats us well and they brew some great beer, so let's show up in force. As many of you have noticed, there seem to be fewer true brewpubs in Dallas each year. We will not be having a brew day this month due to all of the Bluebonnet Brewoff events.

## Bluebonnet By Mike Grover

Login was completed on March 1<sup>st</sup> at "Hog Heaven," Richard Dobson's ranch near the Red River just north of Gainesville. Approximately 150 case boxes of entries – almost 3,600 bottles of beer – were unpacked, categorized, numbered, and repacked. Many volunteers showed up, including an impressive contingent from our club. Richard Dobson was once again gracious enough to host the event (sixth year in a row!), and he has a perfect setup. If you have never been, try to make it up next year if for no other reason to see Richard's impressive taproom and home  
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brewery. Oh yeah, he also has a homebrew trophy or two on display.

Next up is first round judging, and this is quite an undertaking. Nearly 1,200 entries must be judged over the next two weekends. We need as much help as possible to make first round judging go smoothly. First and foremost we need as many judges as possible. All of our BJCP and other experienced judges should make at least one judging session, but preferably all of them. If you are new to judging or have limited experience, this is a good opportunity to pair up with a veteran judge and learn how it is done. If you are not interested in judging, we also need stewards. Stewards pull flights of beer for the judges, make sure that adequate supplies are provided, and generally help keep things moving along. When time permits, stewards can also sit in with a pair of judges and learn about the beer judging process. Judging takes place at Coors in Fort Worth and begins at 09:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The goal is to complete all judging on the second Saturday, so that we do not need to judge on Sunday of the second weekend. This can only happen if we have a great turnout. As the host club for 2008, we really need to make an impressive showing.



## Homebrew Social

By Mike Grover

Thanks to Terri and Orlando Guerra for hosting the first Homebrew Social. We had a very good turnout and the weather was great. It was nice to see so many club members sharing their latest creations. Quite a few folks brought in beers that they were seeking input on. Several were those “tweener” beers that don’t exactly nail one of the BJCP style categories but are nevertheless tasty. Many of our experienced competition brewers were on-hand to offer their insights. Everyone seemed to have a good time, and the consensus was that we should do this more often. Stay tuned!

## Belgium by the Numbers: Day 5

By Fred David

For half of our group day 5 started out very early in the morning with a high speed train ride to Paris. Ken Woodson, Dave Stiff, Sue and I had no desire to go to Paris so we went exploring elsewhere. After sleeping in a little later than the others, we four had breakfast and headed off by car to Ghent. Ghent is located about halfway between Brugge and Brussels and like Brugge, Ghent is also a canal city but is much less tourist oriented. Our main interest this day was to find, and hopefully tour, the Huyghe Brewery. Huyghe is better known as the home of the Delirium beers, Tremens, Nocturnum, and Noel. Along with Delirium they also brew a series of fruit beers named Floris. Because we popped in unannounced, we were not able to get a tour but

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managed to wander around a little without getting in the way. While we were there we were unfortunate enough to witness one of the greatest tragedies man could ever imagine. Most cargo trucks in Europe are soft sided and one only has to roll up a side to load cargo. A forklift driver was in the process of loading cases of Delirium Nocturnum into the beer truck when he misjudged the height of the side truck. As a consequence he shoved the top 2 cases (48 bottles) of the lift and down they went. Broken glass and beer was everywhere. There were some bottles still intact and I had to stop my wife from spiriting way three or four of them. After this incident we quickly disappeared so as not to be blamed for the mishap. After our brief stay in Ghent we were off

After our first encounter with Brussels traffic we felt that walking rather than driving would be a better idea in this city. After all, I knew where I was going in Brussels on foot. After I convinced everyone to get off at what turned out to be the wrong stop, I was able to guide everyone (with their help) to Brussels city centre. Our first stop was for a Belgian waffle. They were at least 10 times as decadent as any copy I had encountered stateside so that made the stop really worthwhile. It's worth going to Brussels just for one of these. After the waffle and coffee we headed out to La Grand-Place. La Grand-Place is a square that contains a beautiful collection of public and private buildings, dating mainly from the late 17th

century. Just off the square is a small brewpub called Le Brasseurs De Brouwers. It was kind of like Humperdinks with a Belgian twist so we gave it a try. We ordered a taster set and shared amongst the four of us. The beer was ok but I have had much better. After a brief walk around the square, we headed off to find The Mannequin Pis (the statue of the little boy whizzing) and to buy some chocolate. The statue turned out to be only a couple of block away and close to a chocolate shop that had been recommended to us by my sister-in-law. Supposedly the "little boy" statue is dressed up in different attire throughout the year but he was but naked this day. We took a couple of pictures and were off to the chocolate shop. There we found

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## Tech Corner

By Ken Woodson

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The Bluebonnet Brew-off is almost here. Due to all the fun festivities associated the Bluebonnet, the beer basics class will not be held in March. The beer basics class will return at the April brew day.

With the recent shortage of hops, I have received a few requests to discuss growing hops locally. Personally, I have not tried to grow my own hops, but I do know a few home brewers that have successfully grown Cascade hops here in the DFW area.

Hops should be planted in the early spring, around February or March. So, if you are planning to grow hops this season, you need to purchase and plant the hop rhizome very soon. The rhizome is the plant stem that grows underground and supplies food for new growth. See your local homebrew shop to buy hop rhizomes.

Before planting the rhizome you should prepare your hop garden. Here are a few considerations:

- Hops require sunshine and water; however, wind can damage hop plants. So, find a place in your backyard that is accessible to sunshine and water, and can also act as a wind break for your hop plants.
- Hops require nutrients, so fertilize the soil with the proper amount of nutrients

- Remove weeds or other unwanted vegetation that may compete with your hops

- Hops grow vertically, so you need to train them by tying the hop vine in a clockwise fashion around a wire or trellis.

Once your hop plant is growing be wary of pests like aphids and spider mites. Aphids are a translucent pale green bug that favors cool weather. You can control aphids naturally with ladybugs. The ladybugs will not harm your hop plant; however, they do eat aphids. Another way to control aphids is by spraying

the hop vine with anti-bacterial soap.

Spider mites enjoy hot weather and are difficult to see. They leave a visible web on the underside of leaves. If you have a problem with spider mites, they can be controlled with insecticides.

Be watchful for diseases on your hop plants too. The three diseases to watch for are mildew, wilt, and virus infections. If the leaves begin to curl under and have a whitish-gray film then

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# Club Only Competition

By Orlando Guerra

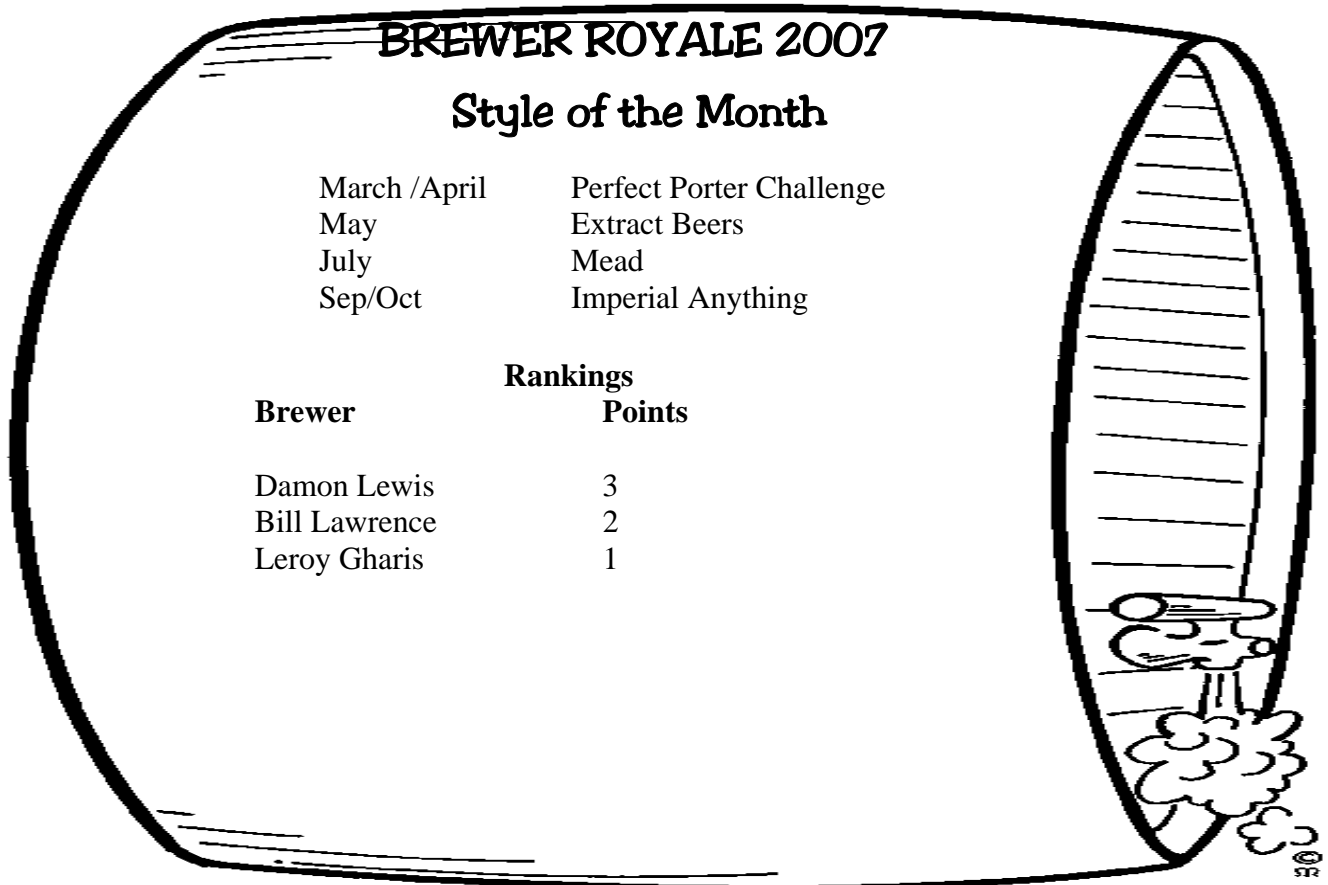
The Mar/Apr competition is coming up soon and the style is “Perfect Porter”. The Porter subcategories include: 12A. Brown Porter, 12B. Robust Porter, and 12C. Baltic Porter.

Please turn in your entries to "The Home Brew HQ" by Sunday March 9th, before closing. Late entries will be accepted at the Club meeting Tuesday March 11th. The 1st place winner of the competition will have the winning beer entered into the AHA Club-Only Competitions for free. AHA entry deadline is March 21, 2008. We will also feature the winner in the NTHBA Newsletter the next month

Only one (1) 10-14 oz. green or brown bottles are required for each entry. If you are the winner (2-3) additional bottles will be required for the AHA Club-Only Competition. No swing tops allowed. Printed crown caps must be blacked-out with a permanent marker to assure anonymity of all entries. Each entry should use a AHA/BJCP Bottle ID form:

[http://www.bjcp.org/BJCP\\_BottleID.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/BJCP_BottleID.pdf)

The next COC will be in May “Extract Beers”. This competition covers all BJCP 2004 beer styles (Categories 1-23). Extract must make up more than 50% of the fermentables.



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an extraordinary collection of the most wonderful insulin producing food on the planet. Sue and I bought 5 pounds that we brought back a distributed amongst our chocoholic friends and family. Later in the afternoon we headed over to Café Delirium and to Café Mort Subit for a couple of beers. Charlie Gottenkieny had recommended these two places in particular as 'must stops' while in Brussels and I am glad we went. Café Delirium boasted of having 2000 beers available and was very interesting. I sort of reminded me of the Flying Saucer but instead of plates on the walls and ceiling it was beer serving trays. It was packed and smoky so we stayed for only two beers but the selection was fantastic and the people were fun to watch. Mort Subit was more of an upscale café had some of the best lambics anywhere in Belgium. We stayed there for a short while before heading back to the train for our trip back to Ghent. It was a long day and everyone was tired. In retrospect, I believe that Ghent deserves a full day and Brussels two but that will be for another time. Next up, the North Sea.

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your hop plant probably has mildew.

If your hop leaves turn yellow and begin to dye your hop plant probably has developed wilt. In either case, remove the infected portion of your hop plant from the hop garden to prevent further outbreaks. Fungicides can be used against mildew and wilt. Hops require a lot of water; however, water should not be allowed to stay on the hop vines after sundown due to the increased risk of mildew and other diseases.

Hops can be harvested during summer and autumn, depending on hop variety. You know the hop is ready for harvest when you see yellow dust at the base of each scale of the cone. Also, a hop cone that is ripe and ready to be picked has a drier, more papery feel.

Hops are a perennial plant. After harvest, the hop leaves will fall from the vine and turn brown. At this point, it is time to trim back the old growth to allow the plant to survive the winter months and be ready for new growth in the spring.

Finally, we should mention that some German hops like Hallertauer don't grow as well here in the U.S. as they do in Germany. However, Tettnanger appears to grow well here in the U.S.

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

Homegrown Hops, An Illustrated How-To-Do-It Manual, by David R. Beach



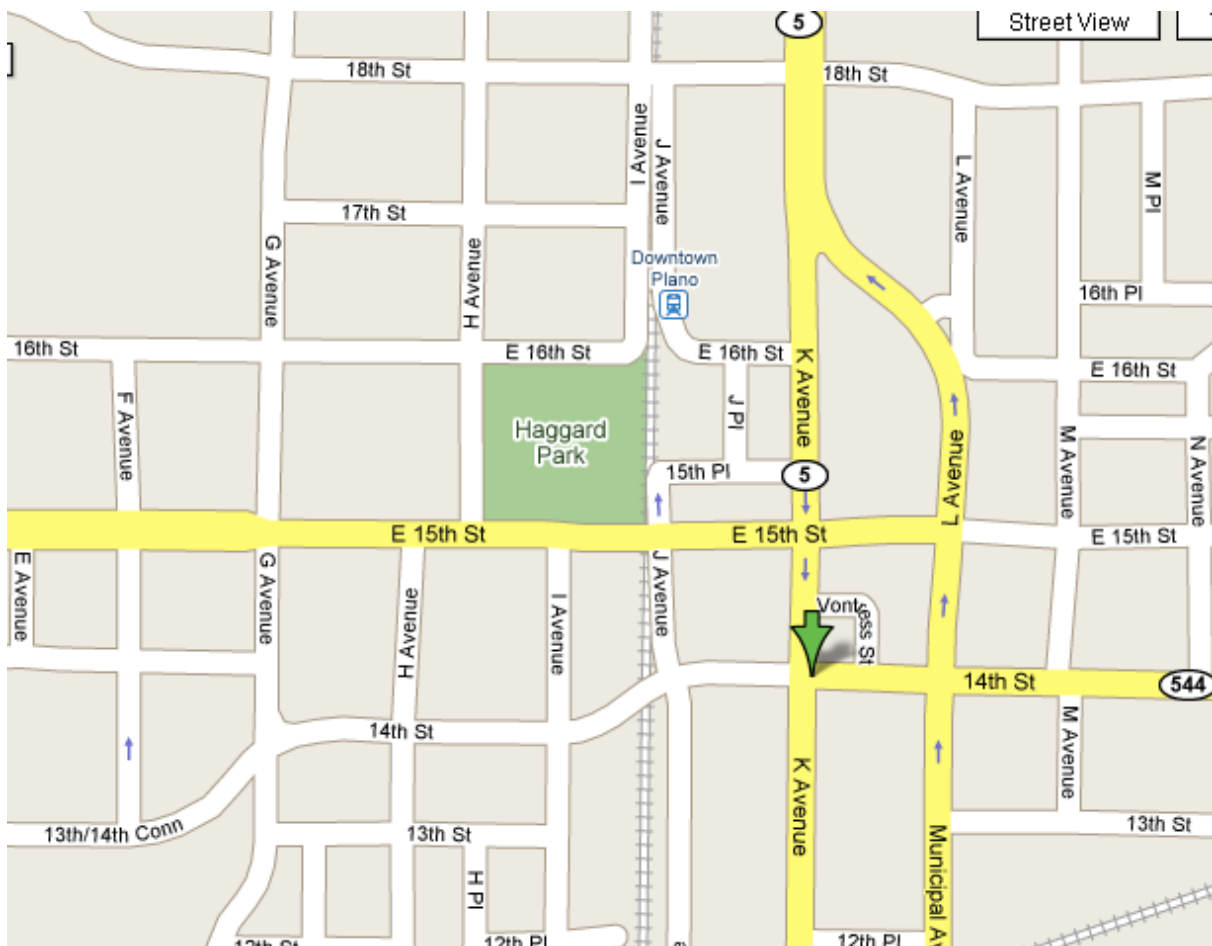
# Club News Odds & Ends

## Cigar & Homebrew Event

Two Brothers Cigar Shop will be hosting another Cigar & Homebrew event which is scheduled for some time in April. For the new members that have not experienced one of these get-togethers it is a lot of fun and a great change to introduce several people at one time to well made beer and to the hobby we all hold dear. Two Brothers has a large lot which can accommodate many people. They have food, a live band, outdoor seating as well as indoor seating, and usually a commercial beer and spirit vender. I like to set up outside and serve. I am asking all who can to donate some home brew preferably in a keg. I have plenty of CO2 so all I'll need from you is the keg of beer, hose with picnic tap rig, and a bag of ice. I'll try to construct a larger manifold but may not have enough gray gas fittings (we can work this out). Anyone that donates beer gets free cigars to enjoy. If you don't smoke cigars the rest of us will be glad to enjoy them for you. Please email me at [brewbuzzard@msn.com](mailto:brewbuzzard@msn.com) with the beer type and what equipment you can bring. Also, make sure the beer you donate is a good effort; we want to impress. Two Brothers Cigar is located in downtown Plano at the southeast corner of 15th and Ave K.

Prosit!  
Rich

<http://www.twobrotherscigar.com/>



Livin' the Brews Newsletter  
Damon Lewis, editor  
C/O Homebrew Headquarters  
300 N. Coit Rd., Ste 134  
Richardson, TX 75080



# 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](mailto: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 Damon at [news@nthba.org](mailto:news@nthba.org)

## **NTHBA Officers**

### **President**

Mike Grover  
[MikeGGrover@aol.com](mailto:MikeGGrover@aol.com)  
 972-417-3057

### **1st vice president**

Orlando Guerra  
[Orlando7409@aol.com](mailto:Orlando7409@aol.com)  
 972-618-5144

### **2nd vice president**

Brian Beyer  
[BMbeyer@SBCGlobal.net](mailto:BMbeyer@SBCGlobal.net)  
 214-705-0515

### **Treasurer**

Curtis Martin  
[curtis@2cpm.com](mailto:curtis@2cpm.com)  
 972-867-2689

### **Minister of education**

Ken Woodson  
[Dr.woodson@verizon.net](mailto:Dr.woodson@verizon.net)  
 972-208-8606

### **Secretary**

Damon Lewis  
[damon@brotherhoodbrew.com](mailto:damon@brotherhoodbrew.com)  
 214-493-1199

### **Past President**

Fred David  
[i\\_brewfer\\_2@verizon.net](mailto:i_brewfer_2@verizon.net)  
 972-378-5198

## **Club Brewmeisters**

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!

Russ Bee  
[Russmbee@aol.com](mailto:Russmbee@aol.com)  
 (972) 771-9489

Darrell Simon  
 (972) 675-5562

McKee Smith  
 (972) 393-3569

Jim Layton  
[Blutick@juno.com](mailto:Blutick@juno.com)  
 (903) 546-6989

Homebrew Headquarters  
 (972) 234-4411  
[brewmaster@homebrewhq.com](mailto:brewmaster@homebrewhq.com)

## **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](http://www.nthba.org)