



TheBrewsLeader

The official newsletter of the James River Homebrewers

Richmond, Virginia

October 2008

Vol. 25 No. 10

UPCOMING JRHB EVENTS

Wednesday October 8th
Regular Club Meeting at Legends
Yeast Tech

Saturday October 25th
Hallowfest Party – 6 p.m. till – Graham Cecil's

Wednesday November 12th
Regular Club Meeting at Legends
Gadget Night

Wednesday November 19th
Board of Directors Meeting – Legends - 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday December 10th
Regular Club Meeting at Legends
Club Elections
Big Holiday Raffle !

For updated information and the club forum visit

<http://www.jrhb.org/>



Will this strange apparition
materialize again this year?

HALLOFEST PARTY – OCTOBER 25

Mark your calendars, get your costume together, and plan to attend the club Hallowfest Party to celebrate Oktoberfest and Halloween on October 25 at Graham Cecil's house from 6 p.m. until it's over. Costumes are optional but encouraged. (There will be a mystery prize awarded for the best costume of the evening)

The club will be providing a main dish (probably BBQ) so please bring along a homemade dish or dessert to share. We will have a specially selected beer on tap for the occasion (DUH), but if you have a homebrewed creation you would like to share please bring it along also.

Graham's house is located in the rustic and beautiful Varina area at xxx. If you are planning to be there please let Graham know so he will have some idea of anticipated head count, and if you need travel directions drop him a line at secretary@jrhb.org or give him a call at xxx-xxx-xxxx.

UPCOMING CLUB OFFICER ELECTIONS

It is the time of year again! The Club will be holding officer elections at the December club meeting. Nominations for offices will be open at the November regular club meeting and prior to the elections at the December club meeting. The offices to be filled this year are as follows:

Vice President - Two year term beginning January 1, 2009 – The Vice President Assists the President as needed and performs the duties of the President in his/her absence. The Vice President solicits items for and conducts the monthly raffle at club meetings.

Secretary – Two year term beginning January 1, 2009 – The Secretary records the minutes of regular club and Board of Directors meetings, composes and publishes the monthly club newsletter, maintains a list of active club members and their contact information, and periodically notifies the general membership of special upcoming activities and events.

Member at Large - Two year term beginning January 1, 2009 – The Member at Large maintains the club history and memorabilia, and coordinates special club projects and activities that are approved by the Board of Directors.

Assistant Competition Coordinator - One year term beginning January 1, 2009 – The Assistant Competition Coordinator assists the Competition Coordinator with all beer competitions held by the club including the Dominion Cup. At the completion of his/her term, the Assistant Competition Coordinator assumes the office of Competition Coordinator for the following year.

Director – three to six positions as determined by the Board of Directors - One year term beginning January 1, 2009 – Directors are voting members of the Board, and serve to guide the selection of club activities and provide direction over other club business.

AND A CLUSTER IT WAS !

Eight teams converged on the WeekEnd Brewer Saturday September 13th, 2008 for the 5th Annual Ted Warren Cluster Brew Competition.

This year Competition Coordinator William Spiesberger decreed that all beers brewed at the competition were required violate the terms of German Purity Law of 1516 otherwise known as the Reinheitsgebot. Accordingly, a variety of non-barley brewing ingredients could be seen at the competition including candy bars, blueberrys, raspberrys, ginger root, honey, and lots of sugar and spices. Reports of explosive fermentations circulated for a least a week.

It has also been rumored that a radical sect of JRHB brewers have staged a Counter-Cluster Brew and are producing beers with unorthodox ingredients such as corn (yawn).

This all points to a very beery club Christmas Party which will be hosted by Mike and Bobbi Lang in December where the winning team will be determined through consumption (and a popularity vote).

The name of the winning team will engraved on the Cluster Brew Mash Paddle which hangs at the WeekEnd Brewer for all to see, and the team will have exclusive bragging rights for a full year.

SEPTEMBER MEETING RECAP

President Mike Lang opened the meeting at the appointed time. Mike thanked Tom Martin and Legend staff for their continued hospitality. Approximately forty members and guests were in attendance. Welcome to all our new members: Jarrett Rodriguez, Mike Whetstone, Bob Scholtz, Steve and Pat Sebastian,

Loyd O'Hara, Todd LaValley, and Keith and Karen Brown.

William Spiesberger gave a recap of this years 15th Annual Dominion Cup competition, which was held on August 30th at Capital Ale House. This years competition included 153 entries, at least one entry in all 23 BJCP categories, entries in 63 different subcategories, and entries from 62 different brewers from 12 states. William thanked Capital Ale House for all their help, and the judges and stewards who participated. William reminded the club of the CASK sponsored competition scheduled for November 15th in Portsmouth and urged members to enter beers and to volunteer as judges and stewards.

The 5th Annual Cluster Brew, after some discussion was confirmed as scheduled for September 13th at the WeekEnd Brewer.

Steve Severtson then gave an excellent and thorough presentation on how to brew Oktoberfest/Marzen beers which was followed by Ted Smith who presented several Oktoberfest beers for the attendees to sample and comment on which included Paulaner, Hacker Pschorr, Spaten, Hofbrau, and Sam Adams. Thanks to both Steve and Ted for a great presentation.

Robert Doucet then conducted yet another great club raffle.

SHORT ON HOPS

Because the beer-making ingredient is hard to come by, these home brewers are adding a new hobby to their list: gardening.

By Lindsey Nair; The Roanoke Times
Tuesday, September 02, 2008

Chris Arthur keeps a blue binder beside his cash register. It holds a four-page laminated list of hops. Arthur used to be able to order dozens of different kinds of hops for his Roanoke store, Blue Ridge Hydroponics and Home Brewing. Recently, he ordered 12 varieties and just three were actually available.

Arthur and his wife, Fran, had hoped to sell 80 pounds of the beer-making ingredient in their tiny Williamson Road store this year. But a combination of factors, including bad weather and a struggling economy, has driven prices so high in the past year that the Arthurs aren't sure they could afford the inventory anyway.

"It is a shortage situation as well as a cost increase situation," said Julia Herz, spokeswoman for the Brewers Association in Boulder, Colo. "Many factors all came into play in the global market to affect hops all at once." As a result, retail stores and online suppliers like the Arthurs have imposed restrictions on the amount of hops a customer can buy at one time. It is a move that has driven home brewers in Roanoke and beyond to add a new hobby -- gardening -- to their list.

Already known as an adventurous bunch, these brewers are planting hop vines thousands of miles from the Pacific Northwest, where all commercial hops in the United States are grown. That's not to say that hops cannot be grown in Virginia. But with the amount of attention they require, some wonder if it's worth it.

In the decade or so before 2007, there was such a surplus in hops that farmers were partitioning off their acreage for other uses, Herz said. Global beer production was up 3.5 percent. Then, in October 2006, a huge warehouse fire in Yakima, Wash., destroyed \$3.5 million to \$4 million worth of hops, or four percent of the nation's total yield. Overseas, a combination of droughts, flooding and hailstorms were wreaking havoc on crops, but the European dollar was soaring, allowing Europeans to "snatch up U.S. hops at a cost advantage," Herz said.

Ethanol production increased demand for corn, luring some American farmers away from hops and driving up the price of grain, another important ingredient in beer. Though industrial brewers, who buy hops on the futures exchange, were somewhat protected from the shortage, microbreweries and home brewers were left in short supply.

Hop vines produce cone-shaped flowers, which are used during the brewing process to impart bitterness and aroma into the beer. Different hops produce different results in the beer, so home brewers who like to experiment prefer to use a variety of hops.

Bryan Summerson, president of the Star City Brewers Guild in Roanoke, said hops he once bought for 99 cents per ounce have tripled in price. Some are even up to \$7 or \$8 per ounce, he said, while others are not available at all.

The Arthurs have chosen to limit hops sales to five ounces per customer per visit. Five ounces, however, is not enough for some of the hoppier beers, which have been growing in popularity over the years. Also at the Arthurs' store, customers must buy other beer-making ingredients to prove they are not buying hops so they can hoard them. Chris Arthur said it doesn't feel good to restrict their customers, but they have no choice.

"We can't replace what we have quick enough and we really want our regular customers to be able to come in," Arthur said. Online beer-making supply sites have taken similar measures. For instance, The **WeekEnd Brewer** has a restriction of five ounces per week, and customers must buy malt as well. "We may have to stretch our stock for 12 or more months," the Web site states. "This will affect every brewer in the world so please don't feel like we are picking on you."

This spring, Summerson retreated to his Southwest Roanoke back yard with five scraggly, paper towel-wrapped hop roots called rhizomes. He buried the Fuggles rhizome beside the shed. The other varieties - - Crystal, Chinook, Centennial and Cascade -- were planted in a square formation in the grass. To his wife Jenny's dismay, he then constructed what she calls "football goals" made out of white PVC pipe, which stick out of the ground beside the shed. Each post is strung with twine from top to bottom so the vines can climb. Fuggles took off, clawing its way to the roof of the shed and providing Summerson with a bag full of cones, the hops flowers. Chinook struggled to produce one handful. The rest are growing, albeit slowly, and haven't produced any flowers.

It commonly takes two to three years to get cones off a hops plant. Patrick Kennerly, who preceded Summerson as the brewers guild president, has a 5-year-old vine that produced well only one year. "Unless you are able to get out there and water them every day, they get curled leaves and brown flowers," Kennerly said. "The only way to beat it is if you can just be right on top of it." Virginia hops are susceptible to mildew and pests such as Japanese beetles.

Home brewers who get the hang of caring for their hops may eventually be able to produce enough to make a couple of batches of beer. Realistically, though, the home brewer who likes to experiment with different recipes and brews more than a dozen or so times per year will never be self-sufficient in the hops department. "I brew too much," Kennerly said. "And there are probably 25 or 30 varieties that home brewers use routinely." At best, these hobbyists can hope to supplement their hops needs with the cones they are able to produce in the back yard. But that hasn't stopped them from trying.

"Across the entire country, the demand for hop rhizomes is up," said Janis Gross of the American Home Brewers Association, a division of the Brewers Association in Boulder. "When they are available, they have been snapped up almost immediately."

Gross, a home brewer herself, has recently had to spend more time creating recipes for the association's journal, Zymurgy. She knows she can't invite readers to make a beer with unattainable ingredients. So, until the hop supply makes its slow climb out of the basement, which some experts believe is starting to happen, home brewers will have to start experimenting even more. They can do that by subbing in different hop varieties in place of those that are not available.

Web sites such as MoreBeer and Austin Home Brew Supply have added substitution pages for customers who want to make a beer but can't find the specific hops. Another option, Gross said, is trying out other herbs, spices or additives that provide a bittering effect in the beer. Historically, spruce tips were used when hops were not available. But hops also act as a preservative, so hops-free beers can be less stable.

The Star City Brewers Guild is embracing the challenge, Summerson said. For their quarterly competition in September, members are required to use some newer varieties of hops that are easier to obtain, such as Palisades or Glacier. And even during this shortage, Summerson said, the guild has suffered no lack of interest. In fact, the 44-member club has actually grown over the past year. "We've had a lot of new members in the past few months," he said. "Compared to buying beer in the store, even with hops the way they are, it still comes to like 39 cents per bottle."

AHA – CLUB ONLY COMPETITION

From time to time, the American Homebrewers Association (AHA) sponsors competitions based on a particular style. These competitions are open only to AHA-affiliated homebrew clubs. Each club holds a competition on the particular style. The winner's brew is then sent off to be judged with the winners from other homebrew clubs from around the country. Bring in five bottles – two for the local competition and three to send off if you win. Note that all competitions will use the 2008 BJCP Guidelines.

As the entry dates are set for national events, we will include the date that our local competition will be held in the Upcoming JRHB Events listing. Beers winning national competitions help earn Homebrew Club of the Year points for the JRHB.

<http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/schedule.html>

2008 -2009 Competition Schedule:

November/December 2008
Celebration of the Hop (IPA)
Scioto Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists (SODZ) club of Delaware, OH
This competition covers BJCP Category 14 styles.
Entries are due TBD

January/February 2009
Belgian & French Ales
Silverado Homebrew Club of St. Charles, IL
This competition covers BJCP Category 16 styles.
Entries are due TBD

March/April 2009
Beers with OG > 1.080
Prairie Homebrewing Companions of Fargo, ND
This competition covers the following beer styles 5C, 5D, 9E, 12C, 13F, 14C, 15C, 16C, 16D, 16E, 18C, 18D, 18E , 20 Fruit Beer over 1.080 OG, 21 Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer over 1.080 OG, 22B Other Smoked Beer over 1.080 OG, 22C Wood-Aged Beer over 1.080 OG, 23 Specialty Beer over 1.080 OG
Entries are due TBD

May 2009
Extract Beers
Knights of the Brown Bottle club of Arlington, TX
Competition covers all BJCP beer categories (1-23)
Entries are due TBD

BJCP – BEER STYLE OF THE MONTH

Note: The 2008 BJCP Guidelines are available for download at <http://www.bjcp.org/stylecenter.html>

7B. California Common Beer

Aroma: Typically showcases the signature Northern Brewer hops (with woody, rustic or minty qualities) in moderate to high strength. Light fruitiness acceptable. Low to moderate caramel and/or toasty malt aromatics support the hops. No diacetyl.

Appearance: Medium amber to light copper color. Generally clear. Moderate off-white head with good retention.

Flavor: Moderately malty with a pronounced hop bitterness. The malt character is usually toasty (not roasted) and caramelly. Low to moderately high hop flavor, usually showing Northern Brewer qualities (woody, rustic, minty). Finish fairly dry and crisp, with a lingering hop bitterness and a firm, grainy malt flavor. Light fruity esters are acceptable, but otherwise clean. No diacetyl.

Mouthfeel: Medium-bodied. Medium to medium-high carbonation.

Overall Impression: A lightly fruity beer with firm, grainy maltiness, interesting toasty and caramel flavors, and showcasing the signature Northern Brewer varietal hop character.

History: American West Coast original. Large shallow open fermenters (coolships) were traditionally used to compensate for the absence of refrigeration and to take advantage of the cool ambient temperatures in the San Francisco Bay area. Fermented with a lager yeast, but one that was selected to thrive at the cool end of normal ale fermentation temperatures.

Comments: This style is narrowly defined around the prototypical Anchor Steam example. Superficially similar to an American pale or amber ale, yet differs in that the hop flavor/aroma is woody/minty rather than citrusy, malt flavors are toasty and caramelly, the hopping is always assertive, and a warm-fermented lager yeast is used.

Ingredients: Pale ale malt, American hops (usually Northern Brewer, rather than citrusy varieties), small amounts of toasted malt and/or crystal malts. Lager yeast, however some strains (often with the mention of "California" in the name) work better than others at the warmer fermentation temperatures (55 to 60°F) used. Note that some German yeast strains produce inappropriate sulfury character. Water should have relatively low sulfate and low to moderate carbonate levels.

Vital Statistics:

OG: 1.048 – 1.054

IBUs: 30 – 45

FG: 1.011 – 1.014

SRM: 10 – 14

ABV: 4.5 – 5.5%

Commercial Examples: Anchor Steam, Southampton Steam Beer, Flying Dog Old Scratch Amber Lager

California Common or "Steam Beer" History:

California Common or "Steam Beer" was originally produced in California (San Francisco) from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s using a brewing method that utilized lager yeasts at ale fermentation temperatures. Mechanical refrigeration was not available at the time, and cold water supplies or ice were not readily available to that area, which originated an alternative brewing process out of necessity, likely just on the heels of the Gold Rush. It was considered an inexpensive and low-quality beer, as shown by references to it in literature of the 1890s and 1900s. By 1891 a mug of steam beer generally cost five cents in San Francisco, and bottled lager beer was three times as expensive. An 1893 article in *Western Brewer* magazine dryly noted that steam beer was "not a connoisseur's drink." Most readers of that period understood that steam beer drinkers were creatures

utterly without taste and refinement (and you thought a clear bottle 40oz Hurricane was a new phenomenon).

All that said, Ray Daniels in his book [Designing Great Beers](#) notes that many of the period brewers used all malt formulations and that the beer was likely highly variable in quality. "Given the young age of the beer when delivered to the saloon, as well as the sometimes sizable increment in kraeusen, the flavor of these beers probably changed from day to day even before they were tapped."

Wahl & Heinus' *American Handy Book of Brewing and Malting* (1902) describes California Steam Beer as "a very clear, refreshing drink, much consumed by the laboring classes." "Malt alone, malt and grits, or raw cereals of any kind, and sugars, especially glucose, employed in the kettle to the extent of 33 1/3 percent.... Roasted malt or sugar coloring is used to give the favorite amber color of Munich beer." Possibly to help make it more drinkable, many brewers seem to have hopped it very heavily. Heavy hopping may also have helped maintain stability for a beer stored in a warm climate without refrigeration. There are no records of the type of hops used, but it's reasonable to conclude that the bulk of the hops would have been grown within California, and the primary variety grown in that period was Cluster. The hopping rate was approximately equivalent to two ounces of hops for a five-gallon batch, although what the alpha-acid content of the hops at that time was is questionable.

Period brewing texts describe the steam beer as generally an amber beer, often compared to Munich beer. The color was due to caramel malt, roast malt, caramelized sugar, or any combination of these. Specific gravity was in the range of 1.044 to 1.050. The grist was sometimes all malt but often contained corn. Sugars were frequently added in the kettle, sometimes comprising as much as 33 percent of the total fermentables. Many different mashing schedules and methods were used, but it was very common for the final conversion temperature to be near 176 F. The boil was generally from one to two hours. About one pound per barrel of a bottom-fermenting yeast was pitched. High kraeusen was usually established within 14 hours. The beer was then run into the shallow wooden fermentation tuns or "coolships", to ferment for two to four more days at temperatures generally in the low 60s. The shallow vessels helped to reduce the temperature rise from fermentation and the production of off-flavors in the beer. From there it was generally racked into wooden barrels. Surviving steam-beer barrels are impressively strong vessels, made with very thick staves and lined with pitch. Some 30 to 40 percent of the volume racked into the kegs was fresh beer at high kraeusen, depending on the desired degree of carbonation. The unfermented sugars in this kraeusen beer would condition the beer in the keg

during five to ten days of aging at the brewery. Finings would be added along with the kraeusen.

Explanations of the word "steam" are all speculative. The carbon dioxide pressure produced by the krausening process was very high, some suggest on the order of 40 to 70 pounds per square inch, and one possibility is that it was necessary to let off "steam" before attempting to dispense the beer, which would look and sound like steam being released from a boiler. According to Anchor Brewing, the name "steam" came from the fact that the brewery had no way to effectively chill boiling wort using traditional means, so they pumped the hot wort up to large, shallow, open-top bins on the roof of the brewery. Thus during brewing, the brewery had a cloud of steam around the roof let off by the wort as it cooled. It is also possible that the name derives from "Dampfbier" (literally "steam beer"), a traditional German ale that was also fermented at unusually high temperatures and that may have been known to nineteenth-century American brewers, especially those of German descent.

The modern "Steam Beer" was originated by Anchor Brewing Company, which trademarked the name Anchor Steam Beer in 1981. Although the modern company has corporate continuity with a small brewery which was still making traditional steam beer in the 1950s, Anchor Steam beer is a craft-brewed lager. The company does not claim any close similarity between it and turn-of-the-century steam beer.

Those attempting to clone today's commercial variety may wish to include approximately one to two percent of rye malt in the grist to add the touch of sharpness that's so pleasing in the commercial example. Amber colored wort similar to a bitter or an IPA is a good starting point, and hop with Northern Brewer. All grain brewers will find that if they have very soft water a little gypsum can be quite helpful.

Safety note: If you try to krausen the beer at the historical rates noted above in a Cornelius keg, make for darn sure that the safety pressure-release valve is functioning correctly, and don't even think about trying it in bottles. They WILL explode.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Here is an untested but researched (all american) recipe that may be a good one to try in the cool fall months:

07-B Amber Hybrid Beer, California Common Ale

Batch Size (Gal): 5.00
Total Grain (Lbs): 10.00
Anticipated OG: 1.053 Plato: 13.12
Anticipated SRM: 11.2
Anticipated IBU: 43.2
Wort Boil Time: 60 Minutes

Grain	%	Amount	Name	Origin	Potential	SRM
80.0	8.00 lbs.	Pale Malt(2-row)	USA	1.036	2	
5.0	0.50 lbs.	Caramel 80L	USA	1.034	80	
5.0	0.50 lbs.	Crystal 75L	USA	1.034	75	
5.0	0.50 lbs.	Rye Malt	USA	1.030	4	
5.0	0.50 lbs.	Flaked Wheat	USA	1.034	2	

Hops

Amount	Name	Form	Alpha	IBU	BoilTime
0.75 oz.	Northern Brewer	Whole	9.00	29.8	60 min.
0.50 oz.	Northern Brewer	Whole	9.00	10.1	30 min.
0.50 oz.	Northern Brewer	Whole	9.00	3.3	5 min.

Yeast

White Labs WLP810 San Fransisco Lager
(Alternative Wyeast 2112)

Mash Schedule

Single Infusion @ 154F for 60 mins.

OUR COMPLIMENTS TO....

**The WeekEnd Brewer
Homebrew & Wine Supplies**

4205 West Hundred Road
Chester, VA 23831
(804) 796-9760
<http://www.weekendbrewer.com/>

**River City Cellars
Beer, Wine and Gourmet Foods**

2931 West Cary Street
Richmond, VA 23221
(804) 355-1375
www.rivercitycellars.com
(10% Discount for JRHB Members with JRHB Membership Card Only)

The *BrewsLeader* is the official e-publication of the James River Homebrewers

Monthly Meetings

All regular club meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at The Legend Brewery, 321 West 7th Street, Richmond, Virginia. Homebrew tasting at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. We are grateful to Tom Martin and the rest of the Legend staff for their gracious hospitality.

Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

President: Mike Lang - president@jrhb.org

Vice President: Robert Doucet

Treasurer: Mike Hinkle

Secretary: Graham Cecil – secretary@jrhb.org

Member at Large: Denise Pierce -

Competition Coordinator: William Speisberger – competitioncoordinator@jrhb.org

Assistant Competition Coordinator: John VanItallie

Web Master: Joe Moore - webmaster@jrhb.org

Directors

Tim Moran

Bob Henderson

Keith Shelton

Steve Severtson

Web Site

<http://www.jrhb.org/>

Submit Articles

Articles or other items of interest from the membership are welcome (encouraged) and should be submitted to the Secretary. Email to secretary@jrhb.org.

Dues

Membership dues are \$20 per calendar year. Dues will be prorated on a quarterly basis.

Inclement Weather Policy

If the Richmond city Schools are closed due to inclement weather on the day of a regularly scheduled Club meeting, the meeting will be cancelled, and re-scheduled for the following Wednesday – this will be confirmed by e-mail.

Remember

Drink Responsibly -

Don't Drink and Drive!

Members and guests at James River Homebrewers meetings and events are individually and solely liable for any and all actions attendant to or resulting from their participation.