



The Brewsletter Urquell

January 2001

Volume 20
Number 1

The Brewsletter of Houston's Foam Rangers

Out of the Wazoo

Bev Blackwood, Grand Wazoo

“THE most powerful man in homebrewing.” Man, I *like* the sound of that! It just rolls off the tongue, dripping with pretension and conceit. But am I *really* “The most powerful man in homebrewing?” I think not. After all, I’m only as good as the club I (allegedly) command, and something tells me I’m not really about to “command” any of you to do anything! Command is pretty much a foreign concept to the Foam Rangers, who have a hard enough time wrapping their alcohol soaked brains around the concept of organization! Now, before you start getting all huffy, let me say that this is not a *bad thing*, after all, our healthy sense of irreverence is one of the few things that distinguish us from every other homebrew club in the country. Still, it would be nice to actually *have* a sense of control over what happens. I do have that to some degree in that I get to authorize some of the club’s expenditures, shout down dissent at meetings if need be and generally be the iron fist within the velvet glove when it comes to getting things done.

My chief concerns for the year ahead are that we actually brew beer and enter contests in force. We were the recipients of a huge number of entries at the Dixie Cup in 2000 and it’s critical that we reciprocate that generosity and interest in order to keep the Dixie Cup among the premiere events in the country. We do not exist in a vacuum, nationally or locally. What we do as a club resonates throughout the country and plays a major role in what happens locally. If we choose to be exclusionary and stuck-up about who we are, it simply generates a “fuck you” attitude among our brewing brethren. If we throw our arms wide and are generous, gracious and fun, then we reap the rewards in abundance and our reputation grows. If we aren’t out making sure people know that Houston is the best damn homebrewing city in the country and that the

Foam Rangers are part of the reason why, then I’m never *going* to be “The most powerful man in homebrewing.” I *want* that fucking title to mean something people! The fez means little outside the confines of the club and that title comes across as conceit if it is spoken in anything other than jest outside of a meeting. However, our actions as a club (and by extension, a city) will go a long way towards making us more than just that bunch of loonies from Houston.

My words to you in this, my first edict, are as follows: first, be a homebrewer. You can’t stand your ground among brewers if you don’t actually brew. It’s easy to find reasons not to do things. Lord knows I work hard to find reasons *not* to go to the gym! However, brewing is *fun*, it’s a good thing to do, it’s a good thing to do with friends and to share with friends. Whether you enter beers in contests is secondary, you need to be brewing! *That* is our lifeblood as a club. Second, be a gracious Foam Ranger. We should never come off as holier, better or more important than any other homebrewer or homebrewing club. Lest we forget, the Dixie Cup is living in Dallas these days and the Sunshine Bowl and Bluebonnet Cup haven’t been here in a *long* time. If we nail all the trophies to a DeFalco’s shelf, *then* we can puff up and strut a bit, because we will have proven our might. Until then, we need to be ambassadors of good will for the club, showing that we “get” that homebrewing is about being friends and enjoyment of quality beer, not who’s biggest, best or wins the most. If we get the reputation that we’re the party animals of the brewing world, generous, fun to hang with *and* good brewers, the respect and admiration of others will follow. Then and *only* then, will the fez command the respect it deserves and once again the man wearing it will be the homebrewing world’s God. I await my ascension, let’s get to it! ♦

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February Brewsletter

Articles are due Friday, February 2

January Meeting

Friday, January 19
8 PM
DeFalco’s

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Brewsletter submissions should be submitted in $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ / $\text{L}_{\text{A}}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$ or plain-text formats (HTML and RTF formats are also acceptable, though not preferred) to the editor at the email address above.

December Meeting Minutes

Kari & Kuyler Doyle, Scriveners

As the intro to being your humble servants as Scriveners, our first assignment is to take minutes at a Christmas party. Huh? How do you do that? Well, we've given it our best shot and in true holiday fashion have summarized the party in rhyme and verse. Here's how it happened:

'Twas a couple of weeks before
Kwanzaa, and all through the
brewery,

Many creatures were stirring, it was
the homebrewers' party!

The taps were all flowing, there was
amber, brown, and red,
While visions from barleywine
danced in their heads.

But that is not all, there was home-
brew galore!

A couple of KGB'ers had passed out
on the floor.

And Bev with his openers and Dave
with his fez,

Were getting prepared to make Bev
the Pres.

When out in the brew house there
arose such a clatter,

I sprang from my picnic bench to
see what was the matter.

When what to my wondering eyes
should appear,

But a man in a paper hat, with a
large Belgian beer!

With that beer in hand, and red
robe lined in gold,

I knew in a moment it must be St.
Arnold!

Although in appearance, his brew
tanks looked the same,

He shouted, and whistled, and
called them by name!

Now Adrian, now Brigid, now
Edmund and Florian,

On Hildegard, on Idesbald, on
Dorothy and Gall,

From the bottom of the tank to the
top of the wall,

Now ferment, ferment, ferment you
all!

His eyes—how they twinkled, his
dimples, how merry,

From plenty of homebrew, his nose
like a cherry.

He had a broad face and a little beer
belly,

That shook when he laughed like a
bowlful of jelly.

He spoke not a word, but went
straight to his work,

And filled all the glasses, then
turned with a jerk,

And laying his finger aside of his
ass,

He stumbled to the driveway and
then raised his glass.

He boarded his Bentley, to his des-
ignated driver gave a whistle

And away they cruised, like a shot
from a pistol.

But I heard him exclaim, as they
drove, with a tout—

“Enjoy the Christmas Ale now, but
look out for my stout!”

Okay, now for the real story. It was a festive occasion at St. Arnold's brewery for the party. There was much beer in the house. There was good eats, too. In the spirit of the season, a group of toys and donations were contributed for The Frontis Project.

There was a brief business meeting conducted by our outgoing Grand Wazoo, Dave Cato. During this meeting, Bev handed over the bottle openers to Jimmy Paige, ceremoniously naming him the new Secondary Fermenter. Dave then passed the fez on to Bev, crowning him “the most powerful man in homebrewing.” After adjusting the fez a couple of sizes, he wore it proudly. There was much celebration.

Bev stepped up to the microphone and proceeded with giving out awards. The first award given was the Donna Smith award. As we all know, Donna Smith, the Foam Rangers' “den mother” passed away last year. Donna helped out with Foam Rangers meetings and events, and Wayne, Stacey, and the Foam Rangers wanted to present an award annually in Donna's name to honor a woman who spends a lot of her own time and energy supporting homebrewing in Houston, either by leadership or by supporting an active homebrewer in the community. This year's recipient was Sherri Solis, who was always present at events helping out and giving endless support to husband Ron, the KGB Czar. Not only did *Continued on page 4*

Beer of the Month

Jimmy Paige, Secondary Fermenter

WHILE many of you thought you might be reading about a small snail who gets his ass kicked, or Pokemon, or a lesbian-toasting volcano, this article is all about the *beer*. Two favorite styles of mine, and most likely yours, stouts and porters—those dark and usually hoppy ales.

For starters, I would recommend everyone trying to read about the monthly beer styles on your own as there is so much historical information that can't be given justice in this short article. The Classic Beer Style Series books, available at DeFalco's, provide good backgrounds as well as some decent recipes. In addition, talk about the beers at each meeting, or keep a log-book of tasting notes. These will be especially helpful when it comes time to take the BJCP exam. Obviously, we will try to continue to bring you those hard to find beers not accessible in Houston. Bev Blackwood has spoiled us this past year with his beer foraging feats. I would like to thank the Doyle's for their help in providing some very good west coast porters and stouts this month.

Porter originated in the 1700s with a mixture of three casked ales called three threads. Some ingenious person, probably a homebrewer, figured out how to make the same "mixture" from one wort, the "entire butt," which became known as porter. This style dominated England for years and the early porters were made from brown malt, were high in gravity usually around 1070, and were very bitter. Porter began to decline in the mid 1800s as malting techniques improved and people began to favor pale ales and lighter colored beers. The influx of glass drinking vessels further led to porter's demise.

Porter paved the way for its big brother stout. By 1803, the Guinness brewery in Dublin was making only porter. Soon extra stout and stout porter styles were introduced. Guinness eventually became the largest brewery in the world in the 1800s.

Today, the BJCP lists two styles of porter, robust and brown. The robust being more heavily hopped, higher in alcohol and having a more chocolate-like, fuller body; OG 1050–1065, IBU 25–45. The brown porter has a more mild roastiness, color and hoppiness; OG 1040–1050, IBUs 20–30.

The stouts are broken down into five styles, although the Russian Imperial Stout is now grouped with barleywines. Dry stout has more intense bitterness and roastiness from the use of roasted barley. The draught versions have

a creamy mouthfeel due to the use of nitrogen and/or CO₂ gases; OG 1035–1050, IBUs 30–50. The sweet stout is much smoother in flavor. It was sometimes referred to as milk stout because of the use of lactose, or milk sugar. They are full bodied and creamy; OG 1035–1066, IBUs 20–40. A variation of sweet stout, oatmeal stouts are full bodied using flaked oats to enhance mouthfeel and complexity; OG 1035–1060, IBUs 20–50. Foreign extra stout has a more intense roasted grain aroma and is higher in alcohol than most stouts, originally brewed for shipment to tropical climates; OG 1050–1075, IBUs 35–70. Lastly, Russian Imperial stouts, have intense fruity, malty and roasty flavors. Alcoholic strength is noticeable as they were originally shipped for export to Russia from England; OG 1075–1095, IBUs 50–90.

Commercial Beers For January

For this next meeting the following will be presented:

Porters Alaskan Smoked Porter, Eel River Ravensbrau Porter, Butte Creek Porter, Sierra Nevada Porter, Fuller's London Porter.

Stouts Saint Arnold Stout, Bison Chocolate Stout, Bert Grant's Imperial Stout, Napa Ale Works Oatmeal Stout, Lost Coast 8 Ball Stout, Guinness Stout, Murphy's Irish Stout, Beamish Irish Stout, Young's Oatmeal Stout, Mackeson's Stout, Old Rasputin Imperial Stout.

For something extra, try a Snakebite, a mixture of stout and cider. We will have some fermented cider on hand for those who want to experiment. We will have one kegged, home-brewed robust porter using home-roasted malts, for your drinking pleasure and comparison.

Recipes

Porter (for 5 gallons)

8.0 lb. Domestic 2-row
1.0 lb. German Munich
1.25 lb. Cara-Munich
0.5 lb. Belgian Special B
0.5 lb. Chocolate
0.25 lb. Black Malt
0.25 lb. Medium Crystal

Beer of the Month

January

Porter and Stout

February

Barleywine and Holiday Beer

March

Belgian and Fruit Beer

April

Brown, Old, and Scotch Ale

May

Bock

June

Wheat Beer

July

Pilsner and Kölsch

August

Pale Ale and Bitter

September

Oktoberfest

October

Dixie Cup

November

Amber Ale and IPA

December

Homebrewer's X-mas Party

Continued on page 6

DeFalco's
Brew-ins

January 13

Kehn Bacon

February 11

Bev Blackwood

March 10

Open

April 14

Joe Lindsey

May 12

Open

June 9

Open

July 14

Open

August 11

Open

September 8

Joe Lindsey

October 13

Open

November 10

Jimmy Paige

December 8

Open

As you can see, we have many brew-ins without a volunteer to do them. Please sign up to host this important event.

**Upcoming Pub
Visits**

February 4

Two Rows

Dues Are Due

Kehn Bacon, Treasurer

YOUR Foam Ranger dues are past due (mine too!). For many of us our memberships expired at the end of December and our dues are now overdue. This is just a friendly reminder to renew your membership at the January meeting, or you can drop it off at DeFalco's or mail it to the shop — 2415 Robinhood, Houston, TX 77005. Membership

fees are \$20 for individual and \$30 for family memberships and include a subscription to *The Brewsletter Urquell* and a plethora of additional benefits too numerous to print in this small space. Please make checks payable to **The Foam Rangers**. If you have any questions regarding your membership, you can contact me anytime at kehn@flash.net. ♦

December Meeting Minutes

Continued from page 2

Sherri take off days to check people in for the Dixie Cup, she was also always there to make sure Ron got home okay! Sherri received an etched glass award for her contributions.

The next award was started last year and is given to an active member of the homebrewing community who works to bring together the clubs and advance homebrewing in Houston. This year's recipient was our own redneck, Phil Endacott. Phil has been a motivating force in the Foam Rangers for a long time now but has also extended his influence on other area homebrew clubs. He has spearheaded the last two National Homebrewing Days at St. Arnold's and has helped homebrewers make bigger batches of beer with his "big rigs." Bev announced that he was proud to give this award to Phil, but that we are also saddened that Phil's influence will soon be lost to Alaska since he and his wife are moving. Phil was given a plaque and also awarded his very own "WWFD" (What Would Fred Drink?) T-shirt which was custom-made in Phil's favorite color—pink.

In other news, Bev announced the creation of an all inclusive Houston Homebrewers list. In order to subscribe,

1. Address an e-mail to:
majordomo@crunchyfrog.net
2. Leave off your signature and do not put anything in the subject line.

3. In the body of the message add the following: `subscribe houston-homebrewers user@mail.host`
4. Send it.
5. You will get a confirmation message from majordomo@crunchyfrog.net shortly.
6. To confirm, send an e-mail to: majordomo@crunchyfrog.net and take the authorization code line that the confirmation message just sent you and put it into the body of the message (leave off the signature and subject again).
7. You should get a final confirmation e-mail back shortly thereafter with a welcoming message and instructions on unsubscribing and so forth.
8. That's it!

The only all homebrewer's events now scheduled is the trip to Jennings which will again occur on May 19, between Mothers Day and Memorial Day weekends. The first Foam Rangers meeting will be on January 19 (again the 3rd Friday of the month) and will feature Porters and Stouts. We are starting a new year so our new Treasurer Kehn Bacon will be expecting dues, so bring your checkbooks!

Later in the party, there was a special appearance by St. Arnold himself. He came bearing a gift of a large bottle of Scaldis Noël to share. Unfortunately, the miracle was not repeated on this day and the bottle did run dry. Oh well, maybe next year! ♦

Watch This Space

Bev Blackwood

I'VE been a very bad and lazy boy! (The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy homebrewer.) A little event called the Dixie Cup seems to have disrupted my usual stream of consciousness and my recent ascension to Grand Wazoo of the Foam Rangers seems to have sucked all my available time into some black hole, never to be seen again. Nonetheless, I hope to continue my efforts to unify and promote Houston homebrewing.

This isn't going to be easy though. Despite my best efforts, the Foam Rangers insist on being *The Foam Rangers*. You can't begrudge them that. After all, they were the first, they remain the largest and these days they may in fact be the most active club in the city. However, that doesn't help anyone who is interested in entering beer from non-Ranger clubs into national competitions and it certainly won't hasten the day when the Bluebonnet Cup and Sunshine Bowl again grace the shelves of DeFalco's or The Brew Stop.

I would love for there to be a pan-Houston organization that covers all local organizations. It should be a simple matter for such a brewing group to plow into these out of town competitions and walk away with significant honors and maybe the big prizes themselves. However, it wouldn't be long before the out of town clubs twigged to the fact that we were banding together for the sake of competing and soon formed their own coalitions and were on a par with the Houston groups. What to do? What to do? It may be this simple: If you want to enter contests, be a Foam Ranger. I cringe at the implications for all the local clubs, but it may be the only way to consolidate our power. We are a vibrant and active brewing community. I can think of few others that host 3 major competitions a year, attracting substantial numbers of entries year after year. The KGB's Big Batch may be the *only* competition of its kind in the country. Free, single style, with the right to go on and brew with professionals as the reward. The Lunar Rendezbrew is a big undertaking in its own right, with over 100 entries, not an easy effort by any means.

I hope to make provisions within the structure of the Foam Rangers to allow outside members to enter major competitions without having to *be* a Foam Ranger. However, the credit *would* go to the brewer *and* the Foam Rangers, not to your home club. Perhaps there is a middle ground that allows us to recognize our local brewers for their individual efforts, but allows the total community to savor the fruits of victory, even if there's the wrong club's name on the entry form. I've often spoken of a blanket organization for the Houston clubs, but I'm increasingly convinced that this will only result in a blanket Dallas club and a blanket Florida club, which will once again place us in the position of competing against groups larger than our own.

I urge everyone to bring me your concerns, talk to me about your ideas and work with me to find a way where we can cooperate as a community. I'm not especially worried about getting the Dixie Cup back to Houston, I just want us to work as a team.

Club meetings and news

Bay Area Mashtronauts

Next meeting: 6:30 p.m. January 11, at Bradley's in Webster. February meeting: 6:30 p.m. February 8, at Bradley's in Webster.

Brew Bayou

Next meeting: 7:00 p.m. January 18, at Smithhart's Country Grill in Clute.

Deja Brew

Next meeting: February 1, Location TBA.

Foam Rangers

Next meeting: 8:00 p.m. January 19, at DeFalco's. Beers of the Month for January are Porters and Stouts.

Golden Triangle Homebrew Club

Anyone interested in Golden Triangle events can call Joe Kubenka at (409) 721-9810 nights or (409) 575-1581 days for locations and times.

KGB

Next meeting: 12:00 Noon, January 21, at The Brew Stop. (Tentative)

M*A*S*H

Website lists it as "Died of Apathy." Truly a shame.

Competitions

January 28, 2001 — Orlando, FL — Meadlennium 2001. Entries due January 9–23. Entry fee: \$6 per entry. Judging on January 28 and awards ceremony on February 4. Contact: Ron Bach, (407) 696-2738 or (407) 897-2880 ext 104; E-mail: mead@cfhb.org; Web: www.cfhb.org

February 10, 2001 — Boston, MA — 7th Annual Boston Homebrew Competition. Entries due February 2. Entry fee: \$5 per entry. Contact: Tim Holland, (508) 835-2686 (home) or (781) 442-2022 (work); E-mail: tim.holland@east.sun.com; Web: www.wort.org

February 16, 2001 — Shawnee, KS — Kansas City Biermeisters 18th Annual Regional Competition. Entries due January 20 – February 3. Entry fee: \$6 per entry. Contact: Mike Porter, (913) 422-8810 or (913) 422-5998; E-mail: mike@dynamicanalysis.com; Web: kcbiermeisters.org

March 17, 2001 — Denver, CO — Reggale and Dred-hop Homebrew Competition. Entries due March 9. Web: hopbarley.org

March 17-24, 2001 — Berkeley, CA — World Cup of Beer. Entries due March 10. Entry fee: \$6 per entry. Contact: Lee Shephard, (510) 336-1546; E-mail: lshepard@earthlink.net; Web: www.bayareamashers.org

March 23-24, 2001 — Irving, TX — 15th Bluebonnet Brew-

Off. Entries due February 10 – March 2. Entry fee: \$7 per entry. First round judging held March 10–11. Final judging and awards ceremony will take place March 23–24. Contact: Dave Dixon, (817) 318-1495 or (817) 931-1768; E-mail: ddreaded@home.com; Web: welcome.to/bluebonnet

Events

May 19, 2001 — Jennings, LA — LaTeX Rendezvous! Details coming soon! ◆

Rangers on the Move

Dave Cato, Brewsletter Editor

As most of us know by now, one of Houston's brewing icons, Phil Endacott, is leaving us for the wilds of Alaska (that is unless "Lightfingers" Lamb succeeds in chaining him to the Bradley's brewhouse). We will all miss Phil and wish him the best of luck in Alaska.

Unfortunately, Phil is not the only Foam Ranger leaving town in the immediate future. Your humble editor is also hitting the road and moving to Portland, Oregon. As a consequence of the move, there will be a few changes—some temporary, some permanent—in store for the brewsletter and the mailing lists.

Thanks to the "miracle" of e-mail, I'll still be able to finish my term as brewsletter editor. No need to browbeat a reluctant volunteer to take over the brewsletter just yet—that can wait until November. You'll continue to receive your monthly issues of this august journal in a timely manner. The only difference is that it will have a Portland postmark on it, and if you have any hardcopy submissions you'll need to mail them to me instead of dropping them off at DeFalco's.

Because my computer will be off-line for at least a week during the move, and I have no idea how long it's going to take US West (or Qwest, or whatever they're call-

ing themselves this month) and Covad to get my DSL line installed in my new house, the crunchyfrog.net domain will be unavailable for a (hopefully brief) period of time beginning January 17. This means that the email addresses at crunchyfrog.net, which includes the various mailing lists, will be temporarily unavailable. In the interim, you can contact me for article submissions, etc., at dpcato@speakeasy.org.

The final move that I'm aware of is DeFalco's itself. Scott lost his lease on the current property (actually, he just didn't want to take out a second mortgage on his house to be able to pay the inflated rent that his landlord wants) and will be moving DeFalco's to a new location next month. Look for the new DeFalco's at 8715 Stella Link at Linkwood—across the street from Spec's, between South Braeswood and Loop 610. We'll have more information about the move next month, and you can always stop by the shop to find out more details in the meantime. The February meeting will be our last one at the current DeFalco's, so plan to come out for the barleywines and say goodbye to the "old" DeFalco's and be prepared to say hello to the "new" DeFalco's at the March meeting. ◆

Beer of the Month

Continued from page 3

Use 1.0 oz. Northern Brewer hops and 1.0 oz. US Goldings, each for 60 minutes. Use any American style or English ale yeast. I prefer Wyeast 1272 or White Labs English Ale yeast. Substitute 6.5 lb. amber extract for domestic 2-row if doing a partial mash. OG about 1.050.

Dry Stout (for 5 gallons)

7.0 lb. Maris Otter pale 2-row
0.25 lb. Belgian Aromatic
0.25 lb. Brown Malt
0.75 lb. Flaked Barley
0.75 lb. Roasted Barley

Use 1.0 oz. East Kent Goldings and 1.0 oz. Fuggles for 60 minutes. OG about 1.045. For a partial mash, substitute 5.5 lb. dark extract for the 2-row. Use Wyeast 1084 or White Labs Irish yeast. ◆



Amber Ale
 Kristall Weizen
 Brown Ale

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 the Foam Rangers
 for your support!**

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12 Issues	\$150	12 Issues \$200	12 Issues \$300

Contact the Brewsletter Editor for more information.

FOAM RANGERS HOMEBREW CLUB

Brewsletter Office
2415 Robinhood St.
Houston, TX 77005-2509



Foam Rangers Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail Address _____ BJCP Level _____

Amount Paid _____ New Membership Renewal Change of Address

Membership fees (per year) — \$20 individual / \$30 family

Paid before January 1 \$18.00 / \$27.00 (save \$2.00 / \$3.00)

Paid between January 1 and March 31 \$20.00 / \$30.00

Paid between April 1 and June 30 \$17.50 / \$26.25

Paid between July 1 and September 30 \$15.00 / \$22.50

Paid between October 1 and November 30 \$20.00 / \$30.00 (includes the next year)

Make checks payable to **The Foam Rangers**.

Bring this form to the next meeting, drop it off in person at DeFalco's, or send it to:

The Foam Rangers
2415 Robinhood St.
Houston, TX 77005-2509