



# The Brewsletter Urquell

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE HOUSTON FOAM RANGERS HOMEBREW CLUB

VOL. 22 - ISSUE 3



## Homebrew Shop Given Away

Scott Birdwell Mistakenly Raffles Off Store During "Barleywine Meeting"  
Ray and Landry Now Homeless

By Steve "Scoop" Moore

HOUSTON— In a surprise move, longtime Head Bozo of Special Events, Scott Birdwell, raffled off DeFalco's, the homebrew shop that he has owned for over two decades. New DeFalco's owner Lars Kovar, a vacuum cleaner salesman from St. Paul Minnesota, seemed befuddled by the turn of events, "Lordy no! I don't know nothing about making beer. I don't even drink". Kovar happened into the shop his was to soon acquire, while he looking for directions. "I got lost leaving the Hoover Convention at the Reliant Arena; (I) saw all those folks standing around and figured somebody could give me directions back to the expressway". In spite of his lack of homebrewing experince, Kovar joined in the spirit of the meeting, "Golly, a raffle is al-



Birdwell Selects The Winning Ticket

ways fun".

Birdwell is currently in negotia-

tions with Kovar to repurchase the shop that has been his livelihood for most of his adult life. Austin homebrew impresario Lynne O'Conner has also expressed interest in purchasing the shop in order to turn it into a new St Patrick's of Houston. Commenting on her bid, O'Conner offered, "Well, I'd just have to gut the thing". "All homebrew supplies blow except the ones I sell". The shop has been shuttered awaiting its final dispensation.

Longtime DeFalco's personnel Ray Philbrook and Landry Hassell are currently residing under the 610 underpass that Kovar was seeking. According to Hassell, "You can't put away much of a nest egg working for a tightwad like old man Birdwell".

Birdwell's wife Alison was unavailable for comment.

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## Out Of The Wazoo

By Jimmy Paige, Grand Wazoo

If you are receiving this newsletter, congratulations, you PAID your dues, and we thank you. Others who have procrastinated will not be so lucky. I can hear their lamentations and wailings now...Where's my newsletter? Anyway, I heard a funny beer joke the other day. It seems JoJo the brewery worker had the unfortunate task of notifying his coworker Billy Bob's wife



that he had a fatal accident at the brewery. All Billy Bob's wife wanted to know is if Billy Bob died quickly and without any pain. JoJo said, well, yes and no..he said Billy Bob drowned in the lagering tank but he had to get out three times to pee before he expired. Ok , it sounded funny when I heard it.

March is a really great month and we have a lot of things happening. First, we have the Belgian beer blow out on the 15<sup>th</sup> at Defalcos. Want to try all sorts of really strange Belgian beers but were afraid to spend 5 or more

dollars because you were afraid you might have to pour the rest of the bottle down the drain? Well here's your chance to get as little or as much of dozens of those Belgians you will either love or hate. Spend some time reading Kuyler's article and then throw caution to the wind and try them all. It will be a fun learning experience. But beware the ides of March, you might actually find you like those fruity, alcohol packed Belgians.

The next big event is the Bluebonnet Brew Off contest, the first Gulf Coast Homebrew Circuit event for 2002.

(Continued on page 10)

**March Meeting  
Friday, the  
15th  
8 P.M  
DeFalco's**

The Houston Foam  
Rangers Homebrew  
Club

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If you are desperate enough to want to see your words printed in this rag, articles should be submitted in plain-text format to one or all of the Brewsletter Staff at the email addresses above. Hardcopy submissions can be sent to 8715 Stella

## Meeting Minutes

By Eric Wooten, Scrivener

The Waz switched on Mister Microphone, and with a hearty "Hey, Good Lookin', be back to pick you up later!" called the meeting to order. After a stirring round of *Convoy*, which forever assured Jimmy would be the life of the party, he used this fabulous and inexpensive device to remind us to "pay your fucking dues," which, for a limited time



only, are available at the special network price of \$20 in 49 bargain states. Sorry, Tennessee!

Do you suffer from dropsy, ringworm or the heartbreak of psoriasis? English Dave and Joe Lindsey graciously provided the miracle of stout to cure these and other ailments. Also guaranteed to increase sexual potency issues while effectively and permanently eliminating troubling personal rashes.

Win friends! Influence people! Learn to Samba! All at the inaugural Dixie Cup planning committee meeting! Time is limited! March 10<sup>th</sup> at 4pm planning for Copa Dixie XIX (this time it's personal!) commences.

Entirely misadvertised, the Crunchy Frog mailing list wants you! Sign up immediately to receive important missives from the Waz and other carefully selected individuals, as well as some of the best midget porn available anywhere in the world, all guaranteed to be 100% free of Lark's vomit. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter, which also may be redeemed for a free Ram's Bladder Cup at the Whizzo Chocolate Company.

New! For a limited time only, the Foam Rangers are offering these exciting and completely new members: Jason Halbrook, Brad Real, Rick Kelley, Josh Clover, Allan Webber and Jim Rich. These and other new members can expect access to our exclusive secret network of highways and top class escort ser-

vices.

Everyone needs stinking badges, so why not make it a Foam Ranger's badge? "I'm with Stupid" and "I'm Going Nucking Futs!" pale in comparison to an authentic metallo-finish Foam Rangers all-access badge with genuine Lustrene®-like coating and optional underbody protection. What would you pay for this masterpiece of metallurgy? \$4000? \$400? Incredibly, these wearable works of art are available for only \$10, or, if you phone within the next ten minutes, two badges can be yours at the unbelievable, break-the-bank price of \$20.

In a world where respect for beer is an oxymoron (which, incidentally, is one hell of a cleaning agent; 4lbs are only \$19.95 when you mention this article!), all it takes is one good brewer to bring a crooked system to its knees! James Hudac is that man. Despite the brewing trouble in Chinatown and partners that keep getting in the way of bullets meant for him, his no nonsense brand of tapsmanship is now available at such locations as The Big Easy and Mucky Duck. This summer, there's a new tap in town. This beer is not yet rated.

Quickly and painlessly remove unsightly body hair with the miracle of the southern hemisphere, an official La Copa Dixie shirt, reprinted for the first time in color-matched glory and available for order immediately! Similar shirts, such as Crying Fred and Jailhouse Fred, have sold for up to four million dollars at auction. Secure your family's future today with a brilliant yellow seal that's both an investment and a fashion statement. You can't afford not to.

Houston, are you ready to see a rocket-powered combine fly? Sunday Sunday Sunday, for one night only, the Foam Rangers will be converting the Stag's Head into a giant mud-pit (MUD PIT!), complete with beer from Brenham Brewery, which has sold one of its eight exciting kegs to the bar. Be 1/8<sup>th</sup> of history! The historic Stag's Head bar, conveniently located nowhere near potential bookstore locations at Shepherd and Richmond. Act now. Or on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Visit the Club Web Site—It's Fun And Educational!**  
**Www.foamrangers.com**

## Beer Of The Month

By Kuyler Doyle, Secondary Fermenter

Ahh, Belgians beers. The beers many people love to hate. Whether you love them or hate them, you have to admit they are interesting and amazing in that such a little country has created such a diverse array of beers (the widest part of the country is 150 miles). Some find it strange that a country sandwiched between two big wine producers, France and Germany, does not produce a lot of wine of it own. Fortunately for us beer drinkers, the varietals used to make fine wine never thrived in the country's soil. Instead the beer of that country has the same reverence as does wine in many other countries – almost every style has its own glass, many beers are vintage dated and laid down until the right occasion, and sophisticated beer-food pairings are commonplace. The beers of Belgium are indeed the most wine-like in the world. Belgium has sections of the country which speak Flemish and some areas that speak French. Each regions has different styles of beer they brew. So considering we usually focus our beer of the month to one or two styles, it is difficult to get a good sampling of Belgian beers with the usual number of samplings. I guess that's why we had 58 different beers last year!



Unfortunately for us, Titanic Bob and Fly Girl are not making the pilgrimage to Belgium again before the meeting, so we will not have them as a source to bring a multitude of beers directly from the source. However, various traveling Foam Rangers have grabbed some interesting bottles of Belgian beers from other parts of the U.S. to help us have a good variety of beers. As in the last two months, I want to highlight the Belgian styles with classic examples from that country but also want to demonstrate how North American brewers are starting to embrace the beers of Belgium and doing their own interpretations of these beers. There are at

least four different breweries that are brewing almost exclusively Belgian styles of beers. These include New Belgium in Colorado, Alagash in Maine, Ommegang in New York, and Unibroue in Quebec. We will be sampling a few different styles from each of these breweries.

Some of the Belgians brewers have followed the path of taking other classic styles from other countries and creating their own version of it. When Pilsner started spreading throughout Europe as the popular style of the time, Belgian brewers jumped on board and have been brewing it since. It is estimated that 70% of Belgian beer brewed today is of the Pilsner style. The most worldwide version of this is Stella Artois. Belgian pilsners are not typically as distinctive in malt or hop character as in the Bohemian or German versions. During World War II, British soldiers who occupied Belgium brought over some of their own ales. Some of these beer styles grabbed the attention of the locals which led to Belgian brewers to start making these styles as well. The most prominent styles that are still in productions are Scotch ales and the Belgian version of pale ales. We will mainly be focusing on the beer styles which were born in Belgium.

The first style we will investigate briefly is Belgian Pale ales. I discussed the influence that the British had on Belgians to brew pale ales, but many Belgian pales had been in existence prior to World War II. These breweries continued making pale ales but may have altered their formulation, sometimes including different yeast strains, after the British introduced their beer. Belgian pale ales are typically characterized with a fruity and lightly spicy character with a slight phenolic edge. They are not hoppy like we come to expect of the American pale ales. One example of a Belgian brewery that has been brewing the pale ale style since before the war is DeKonnick. We will sample the DeKonnick ale to try a good well known version of a Belgian pale ale. If the Celis brewery

*(Continued on page 8)*

### BOTM Calendar

#### 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 Kolsch

#### August

Pale Ale and Bitter

#### September

Oktoberfest

#### October

Dixie Cup

#### November

Amber Ale and IPA

#### December

Homebrewers'

X-mas Party

## The Business Of Beer

### Afghan Brewing Concern Introduces New Lager

AFGHANASTAN—The Kandahar Brewing Company has introduced its flagship beer, Osama Bin Lager. Jim Koch's evil twin Omar Koch, the founder and president of the KBC, commented, "I use only ignoble hops in my Osama Bin Lager". "It has the perfect blend of hops, malt and real anthrax spores". "I hope all the filthy infidels of the Great Satan will enjoy it very much".

**Foam Rangers  
Calendar**

**March**

- 3 1st Sunday Pub Visit at Brenham Brewery
- 9 Brew-In at DeFalco's
- 15 Club Meeting
- 9-10 Bluebonnet Brew-Off Judging in DFW
- 16-17 Bluebonnet Brew-Off Judging in DFW
- 22-23 Bluebonnet Brew-Off Wilson World Hotel Irving, TX

**April**

- 7 1st Sunday Pub Visit
- 12 AHA National Competition South Regional Beer Check-in at St. Arnold Brewery(??)
- 12-13 MCAB 4 Cleveland, OH
- 12-13 Crescent City Competition
- 13 Brew-In at DeFalco's with Mr. Excitement
- 19 Club Meeting
- 19-28 AHA National Competition 1st Round Judging
- 22 Sunshine Challenge Entry Deadline
- 26-27 AHA National Competition South Regional Beer Judging at (??)

**May**

- 4 AHA National Homebrew Day Big Brew Brew-in at St. Arnold Brewing (??)
- 5 1st Sunday Pub Visit
- 11 Brew-In at DeFalco's
- 17 Club Meeting
- 17-19 Sunshine Challenge XIII Orlando, FL
- ??? Jennings Homebrew Rendezvous

**June**

- ? Big Batch Brew Bash at St. Arnold Brewing

**Competition Corner**

By Bev Blackwood

**"The waiting is the hardest part/ Every day you take one more card/ You take it on faith/ You take it to the heart/ The waiting is the hardest part" -Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers**



I'm trying a new experiment with my beer that I entered for Bluebonnet. After bottling up my entries, I went ahead and left a few out in the hall of my house as a control group. My assumption is that at the worst, the Dallas crew is going to leave our entries in a semi-dark, conditioned space. As the date of the Bluebonnet approaches, I plan to chill them

and give them a try to see what they taste like. That should give me a clue as to what the judges in Dallas will be tasting, from horrible infections all the way to classic malty goodness worthy of a ceramic award stein to hold it. Hopefully our club's quality, industry and skill will shine through this year and we'll make the competition interesting for a change. It certainly helps that over 100 Foam Ranger beers made the trip to their Ft. Worth sorting site. Let me tell you, stuffing my brewing rig into the back of my Accord is easier on the car than piling over 300 bottles of beer in the trunk, back seat and front passenger side! I had visions of crashing somewhere along the way and dying of glass punctures from exploding bottles before drowning in a sea of homebrew. What a way to go. I could just read the report though... Police suspect alcohol was involved in the death. Too bad they'd never realize I was a victim of circumstance!

It was well worth the drive. One thing about attending competitions... It means a LOT to other clubs when we attend their events. Something as simple as my bringing our entries to Dallas delighted them. Had I not had a good reason to be back in Houston that night, I am sure I would have been treated to beer, food and company until I either passed out or weaved my way back across the prairie homeward.

They were also eager to know if we'd have members at first round brewing sessions on the 9th and 10th and how many members were planning to come to the Bluebonnet itself. I never cease to be amazed how people that you see once or twice a year can be SO happy to see you. But that's the great thing about homebrewing. We are all friends sharing a common interest, one that also makes getting together to compete, socialize or party a lot more fun.

Things are heating up for competitions. Hopefully, Saturday the 23rd will be a day of glory for the Foam Rangers, with no fewer than 3 competitions on our schedule. While the World Cup of Beer wasn't exactly heavily entered, I know the Drunk Monk Challenge had at least 10-15 entries. Add to that the 100 or so from the Foam Rangers at Bluebonnet and we could have a very good day!

However, I would be remiss if I didn't remind you of a few harsh realities. There are 814 entries competing for 72 medals at Bluebonnet. We therefore should (all beers being equal) hit a total of about 9 medals in all. I am not going to go all Olympic on you and predict outrageous totals because of the extra care we've taken. I will be happy if we hit what we \*should\* hit. If we do better, then I think our party will be the best post-awards ceremony party in the building. (If I had to guess, North Texas would have reason to worry if they took less than 30, but that might depend on the mix...) Looking ahead to Dixie Cup, 814 entries is NOT far out of our reach. A simple 100 extra entries over last year and WE would be the largest single site homebrew competition in the world... Something to think about!

Our next targeted competitions are the Crescent City Challenge, whose pack and ship will be on March 28th. Then we have check-in for the AHA Nationals, whose final entry date is April 12th. Mark your calendars! We can hand-carry our entries in! Next up in the "hit parade" is the Sunshine Challenge and the KGB Big Batch... plenty of time to brew something NEW for them!

An-ti-ci-pation...

Event	Entry Deadline	Pack 'n' Ship Date	Info
Regale and Dreadhop Hop Barley and the Alers Bouldr, Co	March 22	Thurs. March 14	<a href="http://hopbarley.org/dredhop/">http://hopbarley.org/dredhop/</a>
MCAB IV- Qualified Entries ONLY!	April 1	Thurs. March 21	
Crescent City Competition Crescent City Homebrewers New Orleans, LA	April ??	Thurs. March 28	<a href="http://hbd.org/crescent/">http://hbd.org/crescent/</a>
AHA National 1st Round	April 12	April 12	<a href="http://www.beertown.org/AHA/NHC/index.htm">http://www.beertown.org/AHA/NHC/index.htm</a>

## Bizarro World Bluebonnet Brew-off Will Have Short Awards Ceremony

By Bizarro Brewsletter Staff

The Bizarro Bluebonnet Brew-off will take place March 22-23 in Bizarro Dallas on the Bizarro World. The Bizarro World is an imperfect duplicate of Earth brought into being by an ingenious duplicator ray built by Lex Luthor, the renegade scientist who is Superman's bitterest enemy. Also known as Htrae, the Bizarro world is populated by grotesque creatures known as Bizarros who are governed by the Bizarro Code: "Us do opposite of earthly things! Us hate beauty! Us love ugliness! Is big crime to make anything perfect on Bizarro World!"

According to 2002 Bizarro Bluebonnet organizer, Bizarro Steve Wesstrom of the Bizarro Knights of the Brown Bottle, "This am going to be worst Bluebonnet ever! Us will have short awards ceremony. Us will not drag it out by congratulating all the organizers on how horrible is the contest!" When questioned further about the events associated with the contest and who would be attending the Bizarro Bluebonnet, Bizarro Wesstrom replied "Bee brothers will come alone and wear suits! Us am having Casual Friday theme for Friday Keynote Dinner. All boys am wearing girls clothes and all girls am wearing boys clothes. Saturday night me am keeping clothes on—everyone else am wearing underwear! I am planning on loving ugly homebrewers bodies!"

Additionally, the Bizarro Knights of the Brown Bottle have



Bizarro Steve Wesstrom Invites All Workbrewers

To The Bizarro Bluebonnet Brewon

relocated the contest to central Bizarro Dallas so that contest participants will be near most of the City's beer destinations. Exclaims Bizarro Wesstrom, "Event will suck; Bizarro Gingerman will only be 5 minutes away!" In another unorthodox move, the Bizarro Bluebonnet organizers will start second round judging after 12:00pm so that Judges will have time to properly recover from the Room Crawl.

## Foam Rangers To Run AHA NHC South Region Judging Hell Freezes Over

By Sean Lamb

The Houston Foam Rangers Homebrew Club has agreed to host the Southern Region First Round Judging for the American Homebrewer's Association (AHA) National Homebrew Contest. The decision to host the event was made by Foam Rangers Grand Wazoo Jimmy Paige on Tuesday, March the 4th.

The event was originally slated to be hosted in Austin, Texas by Lynne O'Connor, owner of the Saint Patrick's of Texas Homebrew shop. The judging event is scheduled for April 26th and 27th. Ms. O'Connor withdrew her support of the event in late February. At press time, Ms. O'Connor had not been reached for comment. After Ms. O'Connor's withdrawal, Gary Glass, the AHA Project Coordinator for the NHC, contacted Scott Birdwell to inquire about the possibility of the Southern Region judging being held in Houston. Scott relayed the request to the Grand Wazoo and other Foam Rangers officers, making the following points: "While I, too, would like to have had more than two months notice on getting this together, it sounds like a golden opportunity to me! We don't have to

organize anything but a judging, one round only. No ribbons, no placing, just pass and fail. Only one bottle per entry, too! Gary said that he anticipates around 400 entries, rather manageable by Dixie Cup standards, especially considering we have only one round to deal with. This sounds like a genuine opportunity for us. Our own entries won't have to be shipped or transported out of town. It will be really easy for Rangers to enter the contest, too! With easy entering and no UPS stress tests, I anticipate a high number of Rangers making the Second Round judging in Dallas!"

Not all reaction to the request was positive, with Steve Moore pointing out "Yes, it's 400 entries which is less than a Dixie Cup, but these things do not draw out-of-town judging talent like a real homebrew contest does. There's no pub crawl/speakers/party to make people want to come. The last time they had it in Austin, less than 20 people showed up. There was a pretty major debacle in Boston a few years ago when the organizers couldn't get enough judging talent."

(Continued on page 11)

# Foam Ranger Picture Page



Joe sees a half-finished cup of beer in front of him, snatches it up and chugs it..so much for decisions...



Bring your infirm homebrew forward and I WILL HEAL IT!  
DIACETYL BE GONE! PHENOLS BE GONE!



Czech Socialist party gathering?!  
I thought they said gather for a Czech social party!



Think anyone will notice if I just chug that bottle?



“English Dave “ prepares for the Barleywine BOM by wearing the right protective equipment

Most picture on this page provided by Art Blummer

# Foam Ranger Picture Page



Who writes this crap?



Joe and Sean—Beer Fashion Victims



Some much beer..so few bastards!



My name was Lola, I was a showgirl, but that was 30 years ago, when we used to have a show...



Why yes, I am a biologist, want to come back to my place and see my cultures?

All pictures on this page provided by Art Blummer

**Beer Of The Month** (Continued from page 3)

were still open in Austin, we'd try their pale bock, too. But alas, no!

Speaking of Pierre Celis, the world would likely be one beer style shorter if not for the man. In the 1960's in the town of Hoegaarden, Pierre Celis started his Hoegaarden brewery to revive the "Wit" or "White" style that had been forgotten for some time. Comprised of 50% wheat, this beer has a very pale and cloudy appearance. The aroma and flavor are influenced by the addition of coriander and bitter orange peel to give a unique character. The wheat, spices, and a slight phenolic character from the yeast all make this style a very interesting and complex beer. To get a feel for this style, we will try Mannekin Pis White, Unibroue's Blanche de Chambly, and Allagash's White.

One of the more interesting styles to come out of the French-speaking regions of Belgium is called saison or "season" and was originally a farmhouse style brewed during the cooler months to last through the warmer summer. Right across the border in France they produce the similar "Biere de Garde" which means "beer for keeping." Since we have not explored these diverse styles much in past Belgian tastings, I decided this would be a good opportunity to emphasize a style not previously done. I picked up some bottles in NYC in January for this purpose which have suddenly magically also appeared in Spec's downtown in the last week or so. Thus,

if you like some of these beers, some of them you can march down to Spec's and pick up. Biere de Garde should have a more malty aroma and flavor that also contains a woody character to it. We will first look at the Biere de Garde style by trying Jenlain, a good example of the style. We will also try New Belgium's "Biere de Mars," which is a spontaneously fermented beer based on this style. The saison style typically has a more fruity and hoppy aroma and flavor mixed with a slight spice and malt character. Of this style, we will be sampling Saison Dupont, Moinette, La Floret, Bier de Miel, Saison D'Epeautre (made with spelt, a modern wheat predecessor), Fantome de Noel, and Ommegang's Hennepin.

Lambics are the most winey beer of all Belgians. There are many different techniques that go into making a true lambic. These are all brewed in the Brussels region and made with 30-40% unmalted wheat as part of the grain bill. The hops used in these beers are aged so that they add very little bittering and no real flavor – it's added primarily as a preservative. Lastly, the beer is fermented in open vessels with the native flora in the air around Brussels. This spontaneous fermentation brings in all sorts of organisms to flavor the beer including the typical *Saccharomyces*, but also *Brettanomyces* which adds a "horse blanket" character to the beer as well as organisms that produce lactic or acetic acid like *Lactobacillus* which give the beer its characteristic sourness. The beer is then aged for various time periods in oak barrels,

(Continued on page 11)

## This Month In Foam Ranger History



By Sean Lamb

### 15 Years Ago...

**In The Brewsletter**— Grand Wazoo Jacques Lord opens with his "Overprimed and Gushing" column regaling everyone to have fun when they brew. Dr. Strangebrew answers a real question from a real person asking about making ice beer. "Rantings and Ravings" from Steve Daniel, the BU editor, noted that there was less than \$200 in the club cash box.

**The Club Meeting**—Held at "The Gingerman Ale Garden". The BOTM was Stout, with Guinness, Sierra Nevada Stout, Boulder Stout, Tooth Sheaf and Watney's Cream Stout were served.

**Other Events**— The seventh annual club homebrew competition was held at the Gingerman. The competition was for Foam Rangers only and garnered 53 entries in the categories of Light Beers, Amber Beers, Brown Beers, Black Beers, and Specialty Beers. Steve Daniel won Best Of Show with his wheat beer.

### 10 Years Ago...

**In The Brewsletter**— Grand Wazoo Lou Carannante muses about lashing a raft together with two kegs of each AHA sanctioned beer style on board. Tom Witaneck reminisces about a club meeting at Buck Wyckoff's house in the fall of 1989, "the sight of Scott jumping on the sofa singing and acting out (Devos's) Whip It is forever etched into my brain." An article on yeast preparation by Rodney Morris appeared, along with an

"Ask the Experts" column put together by Mike Jones. Rumors of the formation of the Bay Area Mashtrons were heard.

**The Club Meeting**—Held at Buck Wyckoff's house, BOTM was bocks. Buck gave a technical presentation on making mead. A fresh keg of Seirra Nevada Pale Ale was present.

**Other Events**— Foam Rangers who won at the Crescent City Competition: Lou Carannante/Ron Kline 2nd Place Specialty beer, Mark Crowson 2nd Place Weizen, Dean Doba 2nd Place IPA, Harold Doty 1st Place Dry Stout, Norm Malone 3rd Place Sweet Stout, Bob Mercer 3rd Place Specialty, 1st Place Brown Porter, Jose Rodriguez 1st Place Classic Pils.

### 5 Years Ago...

**In The Brewsletter**— Sorry, but the March, 1997 issue is missing from the archives. If someone has one, I'd like to borrow it to make a copy.

**The Club Meeting**—The meeting was held at Grand Wazoo Steve Moore's house. BOTM was Belgian and Fruit Beers.

**Other Events**—Foam Rangers flocked to the Texas Brewers festival. Foam Rangers won the following Ribbons at the Bluebonnet Brew-Off: Christian Smerz 2nd Place Barley Wine, 2nd Place Belgian-Style Lambic; David Odom/Karel Chaloupka 3rd Place English and Scottish Strong Ale; Mike Gans/Ronnie Phillips 2nd Place Belgian and French Ale; Mike Gans 2nd Place Vienna/Marzen/Oktobefest.

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**Out Of The Wazoo** (Continued from page 1)

We had a tremendous response to the Redneck's plea for liquid support, mustering over 100 entries according to our Competition Coordinator Mr. Blackwood. I want to personally thank Bev for driving our beers to Arlington and ensuring their safety. Based on the quality of homebrew I have been tasting lately from club members, I know many club members who participated in this event, to be held the weekend of March 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, will walk away with some hardware and maybe even a ceramic 1<sup>st</sup> place stein. The contest has a fantastic ROOM CRAWL on Friday night. All the attending homebrew clubs sponsor hospitality suites complete with special themes and multiple kegs of homebrew. If you survive this beer buffet and are able to judge entries the next day you will attain the coveted rank of homebrew Übermensch.

The third event, *actually* it has already come and gone, was the brewery visit to Brenham. We had about 30 people brave the wind and cold to drink the lagers of brewmeister James Hudec. My favorite was the pilsner. Thanks to everyone who made the long drive up 290 to spend time with James and eat barbecue, and for contributing to the food cache. No one went hungry or thirsty. After the brewery visit we got to play Survivor and go hunt for Larry and Leigh Mayhew's country hide-away. Stay tuned for upcoming Brenham events to be scheduled including a lager brew-in at the Brenham Brewery and a campover at the Mayhew's. Our next monthly beer foray will be to the STAG'S HEAD pub on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 2128 Portsmouth in Houston, telephone 713-533-1199.

Our Scrivener, Eric Wooten, will be making his special homebrew March 9<sup>th</sup>. At least the weather was warmer for his brew-in. I hope people were able to visit with Eric and watch his techniques. Thanks to Ron Solis for bringing his Belgian Pale Ale to our meeting that he made last month at the club brew-in. I think Mr. Excitement and Carolyn Sackett will be making some fine homebrew for the upcoming brew-in in April. Might it be some bride ale?

We had a good showing at the contest in Kansas City recently. I swore I did not want to get anymore of those goofy pink and white third place ribbons but this time I managed to get two! Well, my daughter liked them anyway. I guess I'll have to make better beer to get a 2<sup>nd</sup> or even a 1<sup>st</sup> like Tre and Joe were able to do.

The next Gulf Coast contest after Bluebonnet will be the Crescent City Competition in New Orleans. I am waiting to hear back from the folks in New Orleans and as soon as we do the details will be posted. It is scheduled for April 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> so the entry deadline will be upon us soon. Once we set the official pack and ship date for this contest, we will hold another pre-pack n' ship judging at Defalcos. Just bring your entry paperwork and an extra beer and get judging feedback on what category your

beer should be entered into.

I had the pleasure of attending, along with fellow Ranger Dave Power, the 1<sup>st</sup> annual BASHTARDS homebrew party hosted by the Corpus Christi BASH club last February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in Port Aransas. It was great fun and the BASHers were excellent hosts. The keg of Arrogant Bastard was flowing before I got there so my thirst for hops was quickly satisfied. They were a thirsty group who made short work of my keg of English mild in less than 4 hours. I could not attend the beer olympics and crawfish boil on Saturday but I hear it was a hoot! This is one event I will be attending next year and I hope you do too!

Membership cards were passed out last meeting and will continue to be next meeting for those current dues paid members. See me at the meeting if you have not picked up your new card. Thanks to all our new members. We will work to bring you Foam Ranger metal badges and etched pint glasses in the near future. Please be patient.

I want to encourage everyone to enter the AHA National contest this year. The National meeting and second round judging will be hosted in Arlington this year. In addition, we have been approached by the AHA and asked to host the regional AHA First round qualifying event. I think this will be an excellent opportunity for the Houston homebrew community to put their mark on running a first class qualifying contest. It will take a concerted effort from everyone to pull it off and make things run smoothly. So stand by for additional details to be announced by Bev. He tells me he could not get enough of running the Dixie Cup so he has volunteered to be the coordinator for the event if all goes as planned. We will all need to pitch in and spread the work around. To keep costs low, we will ask people to sponsor judges from out of town, as Sean Lamb calls it, the BEDS for BREWERS program. One big positive to consider--your entries to the AHA regional event *you will be able to hand carry* and not have to subject them to the UPS torture test. Get involved and be part of history in the making!

Well, I am out of ideas and Sean and Steve have graciously let me extend the submission deadline. I hope you all continue to keep making excellent homebrew this month and sharing your products. See you soon.

**Hell Freezes Over** (Continued from page 11)

round event will earn Bev BJCP organizing points.

While planning for the judging event has not been finalized, Wazoo Paige and Bev hope that costs can be kept to a minimum and that judges in the Gulf Coast area can be encouraged to participate.

**Beer Of The Month** *(Continued from page 8)*

some go through long aging periods and others short periods. These differentially aged beers are then used to produce different classifications of lambics. One uncommon version is the longer aged unblended lambic. We will be trying the Cantillon Bruocsella 1900 as an example of this type of lambic. Faro is the type of younger aged blended lambics where dark sugar is added to balance the sourness. Most lambics are a blend of the aged beer with some young beer that still retains some residual sugars to offset the tartness. The primary example of this is called gueuze. We will be trying Lindemann's Cuvee Renee Gueuze as an example. Other means offset the sourness is the addition of fruits. Many fruits are used including cherry, raspberry, peach, currants, and grapes, although the first two are the most traditional. The terms Kriek and Framboise refer to the addition of cherries and raspberries, respectively. These terms don't necessarily refer to the use of lambic as a base as in the Liefman's beers which use a brown ale as the base. We will be sampling a Lindemann's Kriek as an example of this addition of fruit. As an American version still using spontaneous fermentation, we will try the New Glarus Belgian Red ale.

In the region around Flanders they also are known for their sour ales. There are two varieties – the “oud bruin” or “old brown” and the Flanders Red ales. These beers are different from lambics in that they use all barley malt, don't use aged hops, and they don't have a *Brettanomyces* horse blanket character. They are aged in oak which lends an oaky character and is where many of the souring organisms reside and add tartness to the beer. Both of these styles are strong in malt with good tartness so the balance is a nice thirst quenching sweet and sour affect. We will be trying Liefman's Goudenband as an example of the Oud Bruin style. This is the base of that breweries fruit beers. Unfortunately it is not currently possible to get the classic example of Flanders red, Rodenbach Gran Cru, in the U.S. Interestingly, the current head brewer at New Belgium used to work at Rodenbach and has created a Flanders red style called La Folie which is only available at the brewery but may be distributed in the future.

Now we move on to the strong ales of Belgium. The main categories of this are the strong golden ale, the tripel, the dubble, and the strong dark ale. First we'll start at the lighter end of the spectrum. The strong golden ale has a fruity aroma and flavor with some hops balance with a soft malt background. We will be trying Duvel, Lucifer, and North Coast's Prangster as examples of this style. The Tripel style was started by the Trappist monastery Westmalle in the 1830's. Tripels can have a spicy and phenolic character to it which is not found in strong goldens and they usually have a nice residual sweetness. We will be trying the Karmeliet, Maredsous, Allagash, and New Belgium versions of tripels. Another Trappist ale that defies categorization is from the Orval monastery. This beer is a dry, hoppy ale that has a secondary

fermentation with various forms of yeast which can impart some of the “horse-blanket” characters of lambics. BJCP lumps it into a “Belgian Specialty Ale” category that includes all beers that don't really fit anywhere else. The dubbel is yet another monastery-derived style that is characterized with rich malt aroma and flavor balanced by the ripe fruit esters produced by the yeast strain. We will sample the Chimay Red, Affligem Dubbel, Ommegang, and Allagash versions of dubbel. The Belgian strong dark ales can range in alcohol strength and in character. The fruity esters of these beers is common balanced by a malty complexity and alcoholic warmth. There's not a huge difference between this style and the dubbel. The dubbel has monastic roots whereas this style can vary. This style also includes the versions which are very high in alcohol (which are essentially Belgian barleywines). When lower in alcohol, they don't have as rich a malt character as the dubbel. We will sample the Pauwel Kwak and the La Trappe Quadrupel (from a Trappist monastery in the Netherlands) as examples of this style.

Whew! Have you all actually finished reading all of this? Well, this again shows you why we have had so many examples in the past – there are just so damn many beer styles! I think we have a great selection to highlight the main styles and educate ourselves what they're supposed to taste like from Belgium and then see how close U.S. brewers or we homebrewers can get to the real thing. I'm sure many will also bring other examples from their personal collection to the show! Should be another great session!

**Hell Freezes Over** *(Continued from page 5)*

The green light for hosting the event was given by Grand Wizard Jimmy Paige after it was verified that the AHA will be providing budgetary support for the event. Bev Blackwood has volunteered to organize the event. Organizing an AHA 1st

*(Continued on page 10)*

## Brewer Assistance

**Need help brewing? Contact one of the following folks. Use some common sense and please respect their stated time restrictions!**

Kehn Bacon 281.420.5096 Before 11:00 PM

Bev Blackwood 713.432.1248 (H) 713.972-4832 (M) Before 11:00PM

Joe Lindsey 409.925.4664 (H) 409.763.2386 (W)

Steve Moore 713.923.2412 Before 11:00 PM

Ron Solis 281-324-7157 Before 9:30 PM

Jim Youngmeyer 713.667.0455 (H) 713.267.5108 (W) Before 9:30 PM

Jimmy Paige Phone 281-894-0307, pager 713-603-2512, call before taps (10pm)

DeFalco's 713.668.9440 During business hours

# THE HOUSTON FOAM RANGERS H O M E B R E W C L U B

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Brewsletter Office  
8715 Stella Link Rd.  
Houston, TX 77025-3401



**March club meeting is  
Friday the 15th at DeFalco's  
(on Stella Link)!**

**Welcome New Members!  
Keith Shoup, Rick Kelley,  
John Spitz, Jim Rich, Jeff  
Clover, Jason Holbrook,  
James Gardner, Brad Reel,  
Bob Compher, Allan Webber**

## I Want To Be Somebody!

**Sign Me up To Become a Member of the Houston Foam Rangers Homebrew Club!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership  Renewal  Change of Address

**Membership Fees** (per year) \$20 Individual/ \$30 family

Paid Before January 1..... \$18.00/\$27.00 (Pay early and save \$\$\$!!!)

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 Sept. 30..... \$15.00/\$22.50

Paid Between October 1 and November 30..... \$20.00/\$30.00 (Includes the next year!!)

Please make your checks payable to **The Foam Rangers**

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

The Foam Rangers  
8715 Stella Link Road  
Houston, TX 77025-3401