



# THE FOAM RANGERS Newsletter Urquell

It's Before 9 A.M. Somewhere!

February 2011 - Volume 31 Pints - Issue 2

**In this Issue:**

<b>Minutes &amp; MCAB</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Febrewarys Past</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Glory Days</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>9 A.M. Already?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Incriminating Evidence</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Snowflakes &amp; Plain Ol' Flakes</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Fred Fights For Beer!</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Braggot Buzz</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Get Listed!</b>	<b>12</b>

## DeFalco's Rocked By "Leaky Wicks" Scandal.

*By Bev Blackwood & Steve Moore*

DeFalco's owner Scott Birdwell is on the verge of ousting the Foam Rangers from the shop premises due to the influence of the "leaky wicks" scandal.

The Foam Rangers, with their preponderance of male members and the massive amounts of beer available at meetings often find themselves at the mercy of the "one holer" bathroom. "God forbid a woman gets in there!" Bemoans an unidentified Ranger, "We would all be out the door!" Indeed, that seems to be the major issue (as it were) as Foam Rangers "leak" in (and on) the surrounding premises. "I come in Saturday mornings after a meeting" complains the hairdresser next door, "and it smells like my mama's



### Many leaky wicks lead to a major problem at DeFalco's.

outhouse!" She glares across to the homebrew shop "Those boys be leakin' on my doorstep and I am going to start kickin' their behinds!"

Birdwell, in the throes of trying to move his shop isn't happy about the situation either. "You know, they could cross their legs for a bit" he gripes. "But NO..." He's been hit with penalties and threats of being cut off from Mastercard and Visa, who are responding to complaints from the surrounding merchants. **(Continued on page 10)**



## Out (of) The Wazoo

*By Kyle Jones, Grand Wazoo*

Foam Ranger membership increases by one!

January 31, 2011. From this day forward, my life would never be the same. A different set of priorities, and life viewed from a

new perspective. I've always believed that creating a beer is a thing of beauty, creating a life is on another plane entirely. Now bags of grain have been replaced with bags of diapers, the sweet intoxication of alcohol by lack of sleep. Carboys by car seats, pediococcus by pediatricians. Before

this day, the first thing I reached for after coming home from work was a Bigfoot or a Celebration. Now, the first thing I reach for is still a cause for celebration (and a Celebration at times), but found in her swing instead of my refrigerator. A new passion has taken residence in my heart, one that in some ways is a perfect fit with homebrewing. How, you say? All-grain brewing is full of dead time, useful for holding, burping, and changing a two-week old baby. Mash in, wait 45 minutes. Start the boil and sanitize equipment, wait 60 minutes. Time that used to be spent goofing off or daydreaming is now put to good use – an increase in efficiency!

I've had nine months to prepare, but what could possibly prepare you for something like this? I think back to my first batch of homebrew, and I find some comforting

**(Continued on Page 8)**

**February Meeting:**  
**Friday,**  
**February 18th**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**at DeFalco's**

**The Brewsletter Urquell**  
**Official Organ of the**  
**Foam Rangers Homebrew Club.**

**Grand Wazoo:**

Kyle "Call Me Daddy" Jones  
 wazoo@foamrangers.com

**Secondary Fermenter:**

Jaime "Too Loud" Robles  
 secondary@foamrangers.com

**Scrivener:**

Peter "Heavily Edited" Lott  
 scrivener@foamrangers.com

**Purser:**

Sharon "Pay Your Dues" Hayes  
 purser@foamrangers.com

**Competition Coordinator:**

Bev "Glory Days" Blackwood II  
 competitions@foamrangers.com

**Bozo Head of Special Events:**

Scott "Too Loud" Birdwell  
 stupidtoad@foamrangers.com

**Was Waz:**

Doak "Get Off Me Scott" Procter  
 waswaz@foamrangers.com

**Brewsletter Staff and Other Slaves:****Editor:**

Bev "[-Ed.]" Blackwood  
 editor@foamrangers.com

**Food God:**

Erik "Pig Boy" Ribeiro

**Extra Articles By:**

Thomas Coburn  
 Buck Wyckoff

**Ella Grace appears courtesy of:**

Marisa and Kyle Jones

**Webmaster:**

Beto Zuniga  
 webmaster@foamrangers.com

**Mail Guru and Unix Geek:**

David Cato  
 otac@crunchyfrog.net

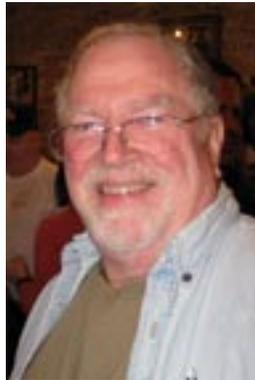
The Brewsletter Urquell is published by the Foam Rangers Homebrew Club, 8715 Stella Link, Houston, Texas 77025

**©2011 Foam Rangers**

All articles may be reprinted without permission, provided proper credit is given to both the author and the Foam Rangers and a case of really good homebrew is sent in tribute.

Once again, all my articles were in on time... Way to go officers! Of course, without Thomas & Buck's articles, I'd still be in a world of hurt, space wise. Thanks to them as well! It's amazing how busy things can get all of a sudden and this Brewsletter is just the start of the Foam Ranger "busy season" that lasts until June or July. Good thing there's barleywine to keep the editor sane until then!

# Foam Rangers Get Rowdy... Again!



By  
**Peter Lott,**  
**Scrivener**

January's meeting: Porters & Stouts were served.

It was announced by a very LOUD Waz that we now have PayPal as a means to pay your dues. DO

IT NOW!

The first Foam Rangers Club Only Competition will start in February so you better start brewing. There is a mention of the club campout April 1-3 and confirmed by Kyle so start packing. There will be help needed before the campout and after cleanup and burial of the dead.

**PAY YOUR DUES.**

Erik Ribero (Pig Boy) is the Food God so give him a hand or a pig or just help.

The AHA Rally at St. Arnolds is coming up on February 27th. For those interested [for those just wishing to hum the Imperial March from Star Wars - Ed.] there will be more information at the February meeting. Blue Bonnet entries will be picked up at the February meeting by Bev. [Please have your paperwork in order. -Ed.]

Scott is selling Girl Scout cookies so please see to it that the DeFalco's heiress makes her quota.

The usual rants were heard at the Raffle as usual; at which time the meeting fell apart in typical fashion.

The Officers meeting was held in the Gingerman's beer garden and we/Scott/Allison/Jamie were told we were being too

loud to which we all agreed.

Attending Officers:

Waz - Kyle, Secondary - Jamie, Scrivener - Pete, Was Waz - Doak, Dixie Cup coordinator Party Boy - Roland and his Better Half Melissa. [and Competition Coordinator & Brewsletter Editor Bev, albeit a bit tardy. -Ed.]

The Dixie Cup Theme will be: The Dixie Cup Goes Down... Under.

Current volunteers are:

John Gonzales - Graphics

Sly Bastards - Pub Crawl

Sound by Mosher

Head Steward - Will Holobowicz

A lot of the talk centered around keeping Saint Arnold happy with the Foam Rangers so they will continue to be so kind as to allow us to store the Dixie Cup entries in their cold box and do First Round judging there. Kyle thinks we (I.E. The Club) should take out an ad in the Houston Chronicle thanking St Arnold and DeFalco's for their long time support. We have a fair amount of money so this concept will be brought up at the meeting.

Many Speakers were discussed but sooner or later someone has to call them? Whoever they are: Kyle??

Remember the Club Competition is this Friday promptly (right, sure, you bet) at 7 p.m.

The ownership of the Houston Carboys is still up for discussion so if anyone wants/needs to be an investor please see Doak for up to the minute information.

THE ABOVE COMMENTS MAY OR MAY NOT BE AN ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF ACTUAL FACTS. Ask Scott and Jaime; They were too loud.

## Foam Rangers Impress at MCAB

By Bev Blackwood II

The Foam Rangers hosted The thirteenth Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing (MCAB) at Saint Arnold Brewing Company on January 23rd. The entire event was held in one day with 215 total entries being judged. Grand Wazoo Kyle Jones headed the event with help from Foam Ranger officers and members along with judging help from all Houston area clubs. MCAB brewers qualify to enter by winning first place at a Qualify-



ing Event, such as the Bluebonnet Brew-Off or the Dixie Cup. Of the Foam Rangers who

qualified, Rolland Pate brought back a Gold medal for his ESB III in the English Pale Ale category and a Silver for his Wacky Wheat KC in the Light Hybrid Beer category. Bev Blackwood won a Gold medal for his Belgian Golden Strong Ale, Brewday Belgian (which was originally brewed for the March 2010 Foam Rangers meeting) in the Belgian

Strong Ale category. Be sure to congratulate our MCAB winners!



## This Month in Foam Ranger History

By Sean Lamb, Club  
Historian (Sorta)

### 20 Years Ago:

**In the Brewsletter:** Editors John and Carmen Donaldson beg for someone to set them free from the purgatory that is cranking out the best damn homebrew club publication on the planet. *[Ain't THAT the truth! - Ed.]* Grand Wazoo Lou Carannante begins his reign by announcing that there will be darts one night a month and that new Secondary J. D. Gonzales will be casting his beer net far and wide to get beers not regularly found in the Houston vicinity. He encourages all beer-blooded Rangers to look for beers during their peregrinations. He also pleads for someone to donate a fez for the Grand Wazoo to wear at meetings. J. D. scams words from M. Jackson to espouse the greatness of porters and stouts. Too much crap about the Bluebonnet Brew-off takes up too many pages. Mr. Donaldson states that he is "saddened and angered to be told that some scum stole a major portion of the club funds from the money box" and that Dr. Strangebrew is still unaccounted for.

**At the Meeting:** Held at Harold and Judy Doty's place out Bear Creek way on February 15th. "There was great food, great beer and much more." A technical presentation was given by Wazoo Lou Carannante on building a mash tun and a wort chiller. He displayed several versions of each implement. He introduced Jeff Talbott who had constructed a 15 gallon stainless steel fermenter. Tom Witaneck won a 3 gallon Cornelius keg during the raffle. Beer of the Month was porters, with offerings from Anchor, Sierra Nevada, Samuel Smiths Young's (Original) and GASP! Santa Fe Brewing Co.

**Other Events:** None Noted.

### 15 Years Ago:

**In the Brewsletter:** Grand Wazoo Wes Woods publicly revels in his newfound powers. He demands that "at least one member other than myself must humiliate

themselves at each major (club) event. This keeps club cohesion in order. Other members are urged to promote club the humiliation through peer pressure and alcohol." Scrivener Andy Thomas writes some drivel about erections at the January meeting and the sheriff being a near. An article announcing the availability of St. Arnold Cask Conditioned Amber Ale forces shouts of joy from every member who reads it. The picture pages include postcards from Florida showing the Dixie Cup standing in for a Xmas tree stand and partying with the Sunshine Cup on New Year's Eve.

**At the Meeting:** Held at Steve Moore's "humble bachelor abode" Wes Woods is unable to keep the Fez on due to his massive cranium. Solutions are discussed. There were many discussions about competitions in Dallas, New Orleans and Florida, as well as the Bank Draft's "Brewer For A Day" event and some new competition at Saint Arnold called the Big Batch Brew Bash that was being run by the KGB. Help is solicited for the DeFalco's move from Morningside to Robinhood. The meeting wrapped up as Steve's dog Mookie took a liking to Wes' leg.

**Other Events:** None Noted

### 10 Years Ago:

**In the Brewsletter:** Grand Wazoo Bev Blackwood has moment of enlightenment when he declares "Heavy hangs the head that wears the Fez. But if there's one thing guaranteed to lighten the load, it's barleywine," Slipping in and out of some alternate universe he also declares that Steve Moore is "Looking for help in running his "Go Speed Brewer Go" experiment for a not too distant issue of Zymurgy." Scriveners Kari and Kuyler Doyle write something about the January meeting. Secondary Jimmy Paige rants about barleywines and holiday beers, and include a recipe for 5 gallons of "Littlefoot" barleywine using 19 pounds of grain. Bev fills at least a page with his "Watch This Space" column about upcoming events, club meetings and competitions.

**At the Meeting:** Held at DeFalco's on Robinhood. Grand Wazoo Bev Blackwood arranges to have his wife *[Actually it was the Sly Bastards being Bastards. - Ed.]* call his cell phone in an effort to make him seem important while

(Continued on page 10)

## Beer of the Month

### Calendar



January 20th, 2012

Porter & Stout



February 18th, 2011

Barleywine & Holiday Beer



March 18th, 2011

Belgian Ales & Lambics



April 15th, 2011

Homebrew!



May 20th, 2011

Bocks, Dark Lagers, Dunkel



June 17th, 2011

Wheat, Wit, Fruit & Rye



July 15th, 2011

Homebrew!



August 19th, 2011

Pale Ale, Bitter & Steam



September 16th, 2011

Oktoberfest & Smoked



October 20th - 22nd, 2011

Dixie Cup XXVII



November 18th, 2011

I.P.A. & Ambers

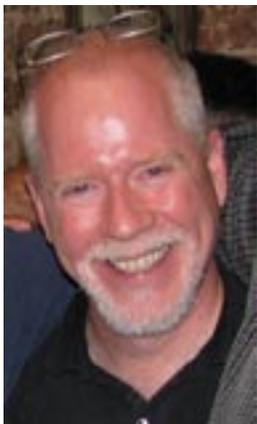


December 4th, 2011

Homebrewer's Xmas Party

# Friends, Foes, Competitors

*By Bev Blackwood II, Competition Coordinator*



The first time I ever held the Bluebonnet Cup, my first thought was that they had screwed up. We had been tracking

our points throughout the awards ceremony and were pretty sure we were in second place. However, when they called me up to the dais to allegedly speak about the upcoming AHA regionals, I found myself presented with the giant ceramic stein. It was a memorable moment. For the first time, the Foam Rangers had won at Bluebonnet. That just didn't happen. The Dixie Cup (by contrast) had been regularly won by the North Texas Homebrewers and Central Florida Homebrewers. We didn't win other clubs' trophies, they won ours. Turns out they HAD screwed up and we were officially tied for first place. We fixed that problem two years later (and for the following three years after that) by winning it outright. Since then, the North Texas Homebrewers have returned to prominence at the Bluebonnet, keeping their big hunk of ceramic

home the past three years. We also took home a few other awards, including the Crescent City C-Cup, the Gulf Coast Homebrew Club of the year and the Lone Star Circuit Club of the Year. During all that time, we've been a hanging onto our own beat up hunk of brass (the Dixie Cup) and not by a small margin! We've been blessed with prolific and skilled brewers. Heniff, Reilly, Kolacny, Paige, Pate. The list reads like the legends of Texas brewing (although we somehow missed out on some guy named Oberlin.)

Over the years we have also made it easier for our members to enter. We did this by paying for shipping (once we paid for all shipping to MCAB events) and by hand delivering our entries to the event here in Texas to be sure our beers were well cared for. This year is no exception. Our entries will be taken to Dallas and hand delivered to the sorting. In this way, we assure our beers are as close to perfect as we can make them before judging. Some question whether it's worth supporting the Bluebonnet through our entries. They look at Dixie Cup entry totals from the North Texas Homebrewers and demand a tit-for-tat response through our not entering. I understand where they are coming from, but I would rather be known as a member of a club that brews with passion and competes with a will than one that

chooses its battles based on what's in it for them. One day the NTHB will be badasses again, just like the Austin Zealots are now and we will see them at Dixie Cup in force. I note we don't throw much love (in terms of entries) the Zealots way, despite the fact they entered this past year's Dixie Cup very heavily. I will be looking to change that this year and to attend the Homebrew Inquisition with an eye to getting them into the Lone Star Circuit. (Who doesn't want an excuse to travel to Austin?)

The Circuit is ultimately what it boils down to. We have an opportunity to regularly interact with the homebrewers from Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Austin and Lubbock thanks to the Circuit. We do so by entering and attending each others events, but also through the friendships and rivalries we form. We encourage one another to strive for that first time win, be it the Dixie Cup, the Bluebonnet stein or the Lone Star Circuit trophy itself. The beauty of it is that not only do we have a great time doing it, there's great beer to boot! I will be collecting entries for Bluebonnet at this month's meeting. Please have your entries ready to go, with proper paperwork and some type of packaging. Large numbers of entries should ideally be in well marked boxes with copies of paperwork in each box. Watch the Foam Ranger e-mail list for updates on judging opportunities and the collection date for entries to the next event after Bluebonnet, the Alamo City Cerveza Fest!

**BREW ★ ENTER ★ JUDGE ★ WIN**  
 THE CONTESTS OF THE LONE STAR CIRCUIT!

★ **BLUEBONNET** ★  
 IRVING, TEXAS  
 ENTRY DEADLINE:  
 FEBRUARY 25, 2011  
 BLUEBONNET BREW-OFF  
 MARCH 25-26, 2011

★ **ALAMO CITY** ★  
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
 ENTRY DEADLINE:  
 APRIL 3, 2011  
 ALAMO CITY CERVEZA FEST  
 APRIL 29-30, 2011

WWW.LONESTARCIRCUIT.COM



**Past glories, from left to right: Dixie Cup, Crescent City C-Cup, Bluebonnet Cup, Bluebonnet Club Awards, Gulf Coast Homebrew Club of the Year (Photo from 2004.)**



**By Jaime Robles**  
**Secondary Fermenter**

## Who Cares Where It's 9 a.m.?

I'm sure that this has been done before by a past Secondary but I will give it a

whirl anyway. I will write my article while sipping on some barleywine. Hopefully, the quality of my writing will go up as the level in my bottle goes down. Doubtful. Here we go.

Taking a quote from our esteemed Bozo Head of Special Events, Scott Birdwell, "It's Barleywine, bitches!". Oh yeah, and Holiday Beers. These high octane elixirs are ideal for consumption during the season when the days get shorter and the nights get cooler (or Icemaggedon in Houston). Their warming complexity can be the perfect companion.

Holiday specialty beers are all about the mixture of spices and traditional beer ingredients to create flavorful concoctions with many dimensions and depth. Fruits, a variety of honeys and other herbs can also be used but it's not a requirement. The spices are a must, however. For this meeting, I have beers that allude to Christmas but you'll also sample beers from other holidays such as Thanksgiving and seasonal releases. Just another way to spice up our meeting. HA!

Traditionally, Belgian-style beers have been used as a base for holiday beers due to their high alcohol levels and phenolic, fruity characters. Their profile is already spicy to begin with so it was a logical choice. Nowadays, you can find other cleaner styles such as brown ales or bocks that have been spiced. The guidelines for this style can be a bit vague and open to a variety of interpretations (21B "Christmas/Winter Specialty") since it's pretty much an open-art category. While some purists believe that spices have no place in beer, it's important to keep in mind that spicing a brew is another way to show the versatility of brewing. I sometimes

think of this style as liquefying some of the great solid holiday desserts – pudding, Christmas cookies, gingerbread houses, pumpkin pies, fruit cake – and drinking them out of a bottle. Creativity, experimentation and self-control with spices are also key ingredients for this style. Remember, more isn't always better.

Our club's obsession for barleywine, especially before 9 AM, is well-founded. This can be related to its unusually high alcohol content, complex flavors, and side effects that include drawing on your chest with sharpies, smashing glassware on your head or just an overall lowering of your inhibitions.

English in origin, barleywines possess an attractively rich malt character and bold hop balance that can morph into very complex ales when cellared. This complexity makes it difficult to confine barleywines into strict stylistic parameters. Creativity and a real understanding of the brewing process is crucial when making this style; not just to show off your mad brewing skills, but also because these batches cost a pretty penny to make. Diligent attention must be placed on the yeast's health, range of grains used and hop utilization.

**\*\*Intermission to open another bottle\*\***

The 2008 BJCP guidelines divide barleywines into American and English. Both of these are similar from a malt perspective with a bold richness and caramel, toffee-like

flavors (the range is quite vast). The main difference is in the types of hops used and the emphasis on bittering hops. American barleywines obviously have a resinous and/or citrusy profile and focus heavily on the early bittering to balance the rich maltiness. British versions focus on showcasing a deeper malt and compliment with the more subtle flavors of English hops. Now, do not confuse an American Barleywine with an Imperial IPA. In a barleywine, the hops are not stupidly extreme, the malt is richer, and the body is fuller.

Holiday beers and barleywines are great digestifs and go very well with rich desserts. Some of the more pungent cheeses also pair very well with the richness and thickness of a barleywine. The carbonation of the beer helps scrub the tongue of any residual oils from the cheese and prepares the palate for the next bite. Barleywines are difficult to pair with main dishes since they tend to overpower them, but leave some room in your stomach and liver. A goblet (or pint, if you prefer) of a barleywine may be the only dessert you need. Special thanks to Fundrew and his friend, David Raines, for helping me find some of these incredible potent potables.



### Texas Homebrewers Campout

Register Online!!!

April 1-3, 2011

**Beer In The Backwoods IS Back!!!!**



Drink-A-Lympics!!



Campsite:  
Just North of Carlin, TX, Off of SR244.  
\*\*See Website for directions\*\*

[www.TexasHomebrewersCampout.com](http://www.TexasHomebrewersCampout.com)

The Ultimate Family-Friendly Beer Event of the Year

**Save \$\$\$!!! Register by March 15, 2011 and save \$5 per person**



Where the hell is Scott?



I'm the Waz and I say we have stout NOW!

# Foam Ranger Foto Pages!



Fish pie? Anyone?

Beer, it's not just for T-Shirts anymore.



Don't mind my reach...



I'm Wazoo and I get all the beer I want, dammit!



You want some "light beer?" Hold on a sec...



So are you sure this is ALL I have to do to get in the Brewsletter?



It's okay dear, just tell uncle Steve ALL about it...

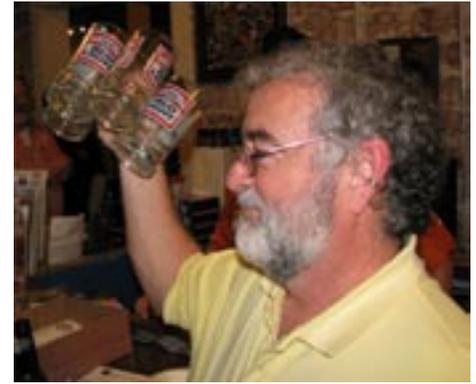


Charles starts picking some winners...

Hey, how come all her tickets have an "x?"



More stout?  
Yes, please!



Thanks, you Bastards!

**Foam Ranger**  
**Foto Pages!**



Wow, I really CAN see your tassel!



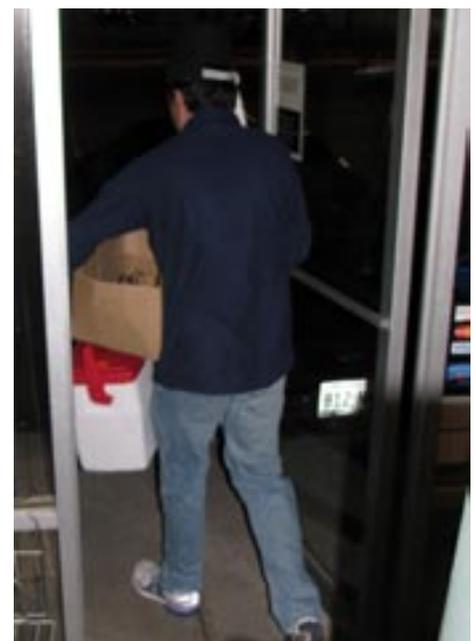
Well, it's not big around, but it sure is short!



Wait, Sean!  
It's not August yet!



I just wanted to feel the power between my legs...



The Waz ditches us.

(Wazoo - continued from page 1)

parallels. I blindly bought some ingredients based on some vague suggestions from a graduate school professor. I blindly bought a bunch of baby stuff from a list cobbled together from store employees, parents, and a birthing class instructor. I combined the ingredients in an order that seemed logical, partly based on the advice of some stranger who wrote a book. When Ella cries, I try things that seem reasonable, and usually in some semblance of order – burp her, change her diaper, find her mom to feed her. And if this doesn't work, I turn to some book written by someone I don't even know.

After the ingredients were combined, I added some yeast, did the best I could to “control” the temperature, and waited. I had no idea what was going to happen. The anticipation was intense. In the hospital, Ella would be wheeled to the nursery every so often for tests, or placed under a warmer to control her temperature. I waited anxiously each and every time. I had no idea what was going on. The wort in the carboy was soon bubbling, the airlock popping. This

must be OK. Ella is back. The tests are OK. I bottled my first batch and waited patiently for it to carbonate. I tasted the first bottle and it was overwhelmingly...BITTER. It slowly dawned on me that perhaps my professor hadn't meant for me to put all 5 oz of hops in for the entire 60 minutes. Maybe there was a better way to distribute the hops throughout



**Our newest  
Foam Ranger, Ella Grace.**

the boil. But it was mine. I had made it, from basic ingredients, fermented it, bottled it. And I was proud. Strangers and friends alike often comment on how calm and serene Ella is. But occasionally she cries and screams, her face reddens and turns blotchy, and she writhes in frustration. But she is mine, a product of my love for my wife. And I am proud. After that first batch, I was hooked. I strived to be a better brewer, to learn, to educate myself. I invested my time, energy and resources into my hobby, because to me it was worth it. And now, once again, I am hooked. I strive to be a good father, to educate my daughter, to invest in her my time, energy, and resources. Because she is worth it.

### Club happenings

The MCAB XIII finals were a grand success. Twenty people attended the beer fault course at the Flying Saucer on Saturday, where we went through at least 20 pitchers of beer. Brock Wagner stopped by and gave an excellent 45 minute talk on brewhouse QC. BJCP judges who attended will be receiving CEP credit. Judging on Sunday was a blast, and a big thank you to everyone who came out and judged. We had judges from the Redstick Brewmasters, Bay Area Mashtronauts, KGB, Foam Rangers, Brew Bayou, CIA, and other clubs. We had just enough judges to be able to divide the entries into reasonable flights. The BOS panel was one of the most entertaining I have ever seen, deliberating for over an hour before finally agreeing on the winners. According to John Peed, the event we hosted received a 95/100 in the MCAB evaluation system, a phenomenal score. We also ended up making about \$500 for the club in the process, money that will be put to good use this year, more to come on this later. Thanks to everyone who worked hard to make this happen, and a big thank you to DeFalco's for putting up with the entries at the shop and to Saint Arnold for allowing us to sort, store, and judge at the brewery.

The Texas Homebrewers' Campout is back this year, April 1-3, 2011. Check out <http://www.texashomebrewerscampout.com/> for all the details on this event. Thanks to Sarah Gonzales, George West, Jonathan Goudy, and Robert Chan for working hard to get the event together. They still need volunteers for all the tasks that come along with hosting the campout, so please check the website and contact one of them if you are willing to help. Finally, we have a theme for Dixie Cup this year! This year's theme will be “The Dixie Cup Goes Down Under”. Thanks to our Secondary Fermenter for that one. Stay tuned for more information from Rolland Pate, our DCC this year. Don't forget to bring your bottle for the club competition at the February meeting! All you have to do is drop it off by 7 pm and tell us which category and subcategory you are entering. Now let's drink some barleywine!

**SAINT ARNOLD**  
TEXAS OLDEST CRAFT BREWERY

2000 LYONS AVE HOUSTON TEXAS  
GO TO [WWW.SAINTARNOLD.COM](http://WWW.SAINTARNOLD.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION  
-SECONDS FROM DOWNTOWN-

**OPEN HOUSE & TASTING**

MONDAY - FRIDAY  
GUESTS ADMITTED FROM 3:00 - 3:30 PM

SATURDAY  
GUESTS ADMITTED FROM 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

# Is Every Homebrew A Snowflake? Get Real!

By Thomas Coburn

I was originally going to talk about *The Series Of Five*, a project I took upon myself, to show the differences achieved when using only two grains and modifying the weights used of each, while using it in a hybrid mead, the braggot. That will have to wait as a more important issue crossed my brewing path this month which kind of irked me a tad as I have always felt that homebrewers should be able to achieve results that commercial brewers achieve only at a smaller scale. For those who saw the calling, a gentleman is writing an article on brewing and the homebrewers that do it. As I am interested in sharing our craft I volunteered my time for an interview. One of the questions asked during the interview was do you believe that homebrewers can achieve identical brews in their homes, meaning can you repeat a recipe over and over and achieve the same

results? My quick and short answer was yes. Which he followed up with the statement, "other homebrewers I asked said that there is great difficulty in doing so." Now while I agree brewing in the home provides variables that are sometimes difficult to control, I don't believe that these variables are out of the homebrewers control to achieve identical results if careful planning and execution are followed. Which lead me to think what variables have the greatest influence on flavor? My answer really came down to a few select items that brewers could vary and thus altering their brew assuming all other variables such as grain bill and yeast choice remain the same. They were mash temperature control, length of boil and hop addition, sparge temperature, yeast pitching rates, fermentation

temperatures and sanitation. All of which are reasonable to control in the home brewing environment, So I guess my question still remains why do homebrewers believe they create snowflake beers? Perhaps I am blessed that I have been able to replicate time after time some of my favorites, and I am sure you have your favorite house beer as well, so perhaps it comes down to having faith in your skills and confidence in your product and always ask questions if you need help improving. Until next month when I divulge more about my series, relax and have a homebrew.

## Feb. Brew-In & First Sunday!



Waitin' on my Foamies...



Brew day done!



"Hold me Doak... Never let me go!

Say WHAT?



Soon to be enjoyed at a Foam Ranger meeting!



**Dues Paid Foam Rangers Members Receive a 5% Discount at:**  
*DeFalco's*

website:  
[www.defalcoss.com](http://www.defalcoss.com)

8715 Stella Link  
Houston TX 77025  
(713) 668-9440  
sales at defalcoss.com

**TOLL FREE ORDER LINE:** (800) 216-BREW (2739)

*Ask about getting your very own Frequent Fermenter Card!*

# Beer And Loathing In Houston, Texas

by Buck Wyckoff

Dixie Cup IV was held in DeFalco's parking lot October, 1987. This was when DeFalco's was next to the Gingerman. Not that daFlaco's parking lot didn't have it's own charm, but we brought in bales of hay to give the illusion that you were sitting on something other than asphalt.



We were so desperate....I mean, it went so well the Dixie Cup was held in this very parking lot a second time, sans hay.

While putting up a flier at Pier One Imports in The Village advertising upcoming said Dixie Cup, I ran into Felicia Jeter, news anchor for KHOU, who showed interest in the event. Several days of not holding my breath later, Elma Barrera shows up with cameraman in tow.



She, on the other hand, is so not happy to be there. That she thought this assignment sucked was written all over her face. I can only imagine she spent most of her stay dwelling on the juicy assignment that other reporter got to go on.

But being a professional, she soldiered on. At some point, she was put in front of Fred Eckhart



and the interview began....

**EB:** Um....I think about, or hear about wine tasting, making wine is a more refined kind of hobby. Nobody ever thinks about making beer. Is that an exception?

**FE:** But beer is much more complicated. Anybody can make a wine because the ingredients are more or less cut and dried. You take your grapes and ah, nurse them along and pretty soon you have wine. You can't do that with beer. Beer has too many variables. Too much....too many possibilities. And you have much wider range of beer. Beer is varietal and seasonal whereas wine is simply varietal.

**EB:** Beer drinkers make me think of people who have red necks and pickup trucks and you know....a... .don't do a lot but drink beer and have pot bellies. Is that a terrible, terrible perception?

**FE:** Not a....it's not a genteel way to look at it.

**EB:** Okay....tell me then....if you were to be able say one thing in a story about beer making, what would it be?

**FE:** It's....beer is the coming beverage. Beer is the beverage that's going to beat wine out. And there's going to be more variety of it. And it's going to be the one people are looking for. You just need to go a... .some...the place next door here....got 16 different draft beers and he has another place with twenty different draft beers.

**EB:** I think it has too many calories in it. It will never make it.

**FE:** There's less calories in beer per ounce than almost anything else. Fruit jelly has more calories than beer. Wine has more calories than beer. Milk probably has more calories than beer per, per ounce.

What I find most interesting about this historical excerpt is what has transpired since and the beer renaissance we currently enjoy. Elma just expressed what most people thought at the time. Fred was a prophet. Elma was an infidel. We've come a long way baby! (16 taps at the Gingerman? Whoo-hoo!!)

**(Leaks - continued from page 1)**

DeFalcos.com has also experienced outages as the landlords have at times cut off internet access due to the urinary excess.

One Foam Ranger drunkenly summed up the problem. "Urine wants to be free!" He slurred, "We are just providing the free flow that nature intends, what's wrong with that?"

**(History - continued from page 3)**

conducting club business. Scott Birdwell announced that DeFalco's would be moving on March 10th and that all hands would be appreciated in helping with the move. Beer of the month was barleywines and holiday beers, but no list remains extant.

**Other Events:** The first First Sunday visit happened at Two Rows on February 4th.

## 5 Years Ago:

**In the Brewsletter:** The headline article explores the phenomon of St. Arnold appearing in the head of a glass of stout duiring the January club meeting. Grand Wazoo Rob Kolacny encourages all club emembers to enter and attend the Blue Bonnet brew-off. Secondary Titanic Bob Daugherty explains barleywines and strong beer, including providing tips on making good homebrewed versions. Scrivener Sean Lamb covers the January Porter and Stout meeting.

**At the Meeting:**Held at DeFalco's on Stella Link. 73 barleywines, old ales and christmas beers were consumed. Old timer Andy Thomas and departee Colby Sheridan both showed up. The meeting ended after 3AM on Saturday.

**Other Events:** The First Sunday visit happened at BJ's in Willowbrook on Febewery 13th.

# Braggot: Honey & Beer With Barleywine's Buzz

By Thomas Coburn

While this month's meeting is focused on Barleywine, I'd like to talk about its cousin, Braggot. Pronounced like "bracket," I prefer not to use this pronunciation (entering Thom's distorted world of history, some facts may be true) instead I use a soft "a" therefore it comes off as perhaps some womans' brassiere: bra-ggot. My feeling is the Scottish needed something to compete with the English's barleywine and as I can attest, the Scottish nights in the lowlands and highlands are cold. The Scots had raided an English village to prove they were the hearty ones of the island and during their raid they "borrowed" the English's beer for analytical purposes. Upon consuming the barleywine beverage, the Scots soon realized that their wee-heavy was a bit wee-limp, in comparison to a strong English barleywine. What to do, what to do. Ah, like a good Scotsman they devised a plan, they would make a sack mead, and then toss in the ingredients to a strong beer, and with a bit of bagpipe fanfare, braggot was born. (end of Thom's distorted history.) Now you can see how I would prefer my pronunciation as mead definitely can be traced to Scotland and the Scots with their deep brogue would never say bracket, an evil English pronunciation no doubt chosen to insult the Scots for developing something as strong as their barleywine.

So, now to the real meat as they say. Braggot is a hybrid of beer and mead, which can be mixed in various proportions, but generally to be considered a Braggot the honey proportion needs to be stronger than the malt proportion, although I have tasted braggots with equal proportions and they are excellent. Due to the amount of sugars added some braggots can reach or exceed strengths achieved in barleywines. But unlike barleywines, honey is the star, and balancing the honey with malt is a true art form.

I find Braggot is a good cross over for homebrewers into the mead category as it incorporates skills they already

have... extract or all-grain brewing with the simplicity and complexity of mead vinting, Vinting is technically what is being done in a "pure" mead as no "tea" is being made of the honey. Generally, I prefer to do a simple one step infusion mash with my grain bill resting at 154° F for one hour. Although a stepped decoction mash can be used, I find the time involved is not worth the extra hassle as the taste difference is really not noticeable in the end product. At the end of the boil add your honey and cool to pitching temps.

The grain bill can be slight as as a pound, on up to a full on beer, my typical style. Just remember gravity will also be extremely high if you're doing a full on beer and *then* adding 10-15 pounds of honey. Thus, all standard beer yeasts are out and it is time to step into wine yeasts. With a braggot you want strength but you don't want it completely dry. I personally prefer Montechet, with a proper starter. "What did you say? Make a starter with dry yeast?" Yes, your mead has a lot of sugar to process and it is going to need help, and I don't buy the garbage that the yeast have the proper balance in the packet to start an active fermentation with a mead. Mead is notorious for stuck or slow fermentations, so giving your yeast a healthy start is a must. Then for good measure add some yeast nutrient to your batch. Wine

yeasts tend to ferment above the ale temperature range, to develop some of their complex flavors (think saison.) As this will produce fusel alcohols, aging will be required to mellow out the mead. Corking rather than capping is recommended.

Braggot can be still, sparkling, hopped or unhopped. It has a wide range with a multitude of nuances but perhaps it is the beverage you want to try next, as the cold winter months drag on.

Now on to some recipes:

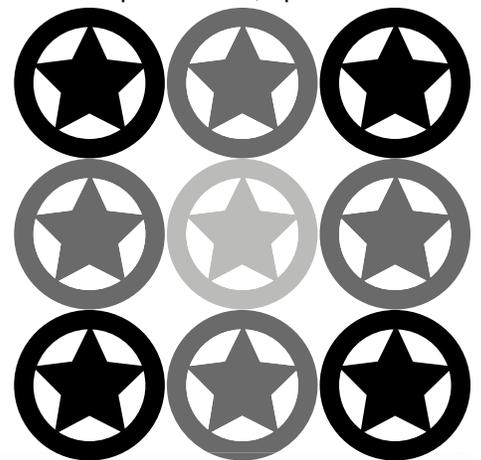
**For 5 gallons:**

- 10 pounds clover or similar light honey
- 6 pounds 2 row
- 2 pounds Special B or similar specialty grain

Hops of your choice or no hops.

Montrechet starter

This recipe produces a braggot of barleywine strength, with notes of plum, raisin, dates and a finish of blackstrap molasses, I prefer it still.



**BREW ★ ENTER ★ JUDGE ★ WIN**  
 THE CONTESTS OF THE LONE STAR CIRCUIT!

**NEXT EVENT:**

**ALAMO CITY  
 CERVEZA FEST**

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

**ENTRY DEADLINE**  
 APRIL 3, 2011

**ALAMO CITY CERVEZA FEST**  
 APRIL 29-30, 2011

[WWW.LONESTARCIRCUIT.COM](http://WWW.LONESTARCIRCUIT.COM)

# Got E-Mail? Get On The Foam Rangers Lists!

By David Cato  
List Administrator

The Foam Rangers have a variety of e-mail lists to keep thier members in touch with the club's activities and one another. Check out the various descriptions and sign up for the one that best suits you!

The **foam-rangers** list is a general discussion list for the club and consists of individual e-mail messages that are delivered *as they are sent* to the list. Because of the potential for a large number of messages, you may prefer to subscribe to the **foam-rangers-digest** list instead. The digest version is sent *once per day* and contains all messages sent to the **foam-rangers** list the previous day.

If you **only** want to hear club news and announcements from the Grand Wazoo, subscribe to the **foam-rangers-announce** list instead. Note that you do not need to subscribe to the **foam-rangers-announce** list

if you subscribe to one of the other lists because all messages sent to the **foam-rangers-announce** list are automatically sent to the **foam-rangers** list, and by extension the **foam-rangers-digest** list.

How do you sign up? Read on! In the example that follows, **LISTNAME** should be one of these mailing list names:

**foam-rangers**  
**foam-rangers-announce**  
**foam-rangers-digest**

Replace **LISTNAME** with the actual name of the list when subscribing! To subscribe to one (or more) of these lists, send the single line:

**subscribe LISTNAME**

in the body of an e-mail message, in plain text (make sure the message is not sent in HTML or RTF format) to:

**majordomo@crunchyfrog.net**

You should receive a reply from the server requesting that you complete the subscription by sending another message back to **majordomo@crunchyfrog.net**.

Once your subscription is confirmed, you will receive a reply with the guidelines for the list you subscribed to, including instructions for unsubscribing in the future.



**I WANT TO BE SOMEBODY!**

**SIGN ME UP TO BECOME A MEMBER OF  
THE FOAM RANGERS HOMEBREW CLUB!**



**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY/STATE/ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_ **WORK PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**AMOUNT PAID** \_\_\_\_\_  NEW  RENEWAL  CHANGE OF ADDRESS

**Membership Fees: (per year) \$35.00 Individual / \$45.00 Family**

Paid between December 1 & December 31	\$30.00 / \$40.00 (Pay early and save!)
<b>Paid between January 1 &amp; March 31</b>	<b>\$35.00 / \$45.00</b>
Paid between April 1 & June 30	\$30.00 / \$40.00
Paid between July 1 & September 30	\$25.00 / \$35.00
Paid between October 1 & November 30	\$35.00 / \$45.00 (Includes the next year!)

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

Bring this form (and your payment) to the next club meeting, drop it off at DeFalco's or send it to:  
The Foam Rangers, 8715 Stella Link, Houston, Texas 77025-3401