

The Draught Card

NEWSLETTER DATE—NOVEMBER 2009

HIGH PLAINS DRAUGHTERS

Last Meeting— October 16th at LTB

Our last meeting included visitors, beer, food, beer, a technical presentation, (did I say beer?) discussion, and more beer. The Draughters met at Learn To Brew on October 16th to conduct our technical meeting. The first order of business, was to discuss officer nominations for the next year. Mike Divilio confirmed that he would accept a nomination to continue as Trail Boss for the Club. Unfortunately, Joel May indicated he has too many competing pressures in the upcoming year to accept a nomination to continue as the Club Ramrod, so we are looking for candidates to fill the Ramrod position. The Editor indicated that if nominated, he could continue to serve in that capacity. We are still looking for additional candidates and nominations at the November technical meeting. Step up Draughters and help the Club by serving in any position to support our members.

We had a couple of web forum users that visited the meeting—a hearty welcome to Roberta and Patrick—sister and brother, and new homebrewers. The Ramrod reported that the old Club banner was found—it had just been misplaced after the last Brewfest event. The old banner is in pretty tough shape, so we'll be finalizing the possibility of a new banner purchase at the next meeting.

Our Schoolmaster, Stan Babb, gave an excellent presentation on Sanitization—keeping all of the nasty bugs out of our beers. He definitely emphasized knowing the difference between beer clean, and sanitized, and the methods used to achieve the desired result—better beer using careful sanitization procedures.

There was plenty of award winning beer, great homebrews, and snacks to tide everyone over. The meeting adjourned and the beer flowed. A great time was had by all in attendance. If you weren't there, sorry we missed you. BREW!!!

Last Impromptu Club Meeting—October 12th—With author Brian Yaeger

There was a special meeting on October 12th as Craft Brewing author Brian Yaeger visited OKC. The meeting was held on a Monday to accommodate our visiting guest's schedule as he travels across the United States in search of great brews and brewers. Brian is the author of Red, White, and Brew: An American Beer Odyssey and his book info can be found at: http://booktour.com/author/brian_yaeger Brian is on another Beer Odyssey—this time about homebrewing, and he had his pen and paper at the ready as he interviewed all of the Draughters present. We also enjoyed some great homebrew during the interviews and discussions that followed. Brian indicates his next book will be out within 18-24 months.

Next Club Technical Meeting—November 20th—At Learn To Brew

Our next Technical Meeting is November 20th from 7-10 PM at Learn To Brew. Expect a recap of recent events, a reading of the minutes, officer elections, another technical presentation, and plenty of seasonal homebrew to go around. This will be our second technical meeting in as many months, and last technical meeting for the year. Hope to see you there, Draughters! BREW!!!

In THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ Last Meeting—At LTB
- ◆ Impromptu Meeting—Special visit with Brian Yaeger
- ◆ Next Technical Meeting—November 20th at LTB
- ◆ Legislative Initiative
- ◆ Telling Our Story
- ◆ Proverb and FACTOIDS
- ◆ Calendar of Events
- ◆ Beer Quiz
- ◆ Brewfest 6 - The Event's a GO!
- ◆ Brewer's Resources—on the web
- ◆ AHA's New Website!!!
- ◆ The ABLE Commission
- ◆ Quiz Answers
- ◆ Club Only Competition (COC)
- ◆ 2009 Officers Contact List

Legislative Initiative—Our Time Has Come

As many know, Oklahoma is now one of three States on the infamous list where homebrewing beer is 'not legal'. Basically, this means that there are no words in the State Statute that allow brewers to make homebrewed beer, although there is verbiage that allows for homemaking wine and cider for your own personal and family use, up to 200 gallons of each, pursuant to obtaining a license (at no charge) from the Alcoholic Beverage Laws Enforcement (ABLE) Commission. The exclusion of those three little words from the Statute—OR OF BEER, has been long considered to be a simple clerical error carried over from the days of Prohibition.

The last time an attempt was made to correct this clerical error was in the 1995 OK Spring Session, and the sponsor, Senator Gene Stipe, had just been accused as one of the most corrupt politicians of his day—not necessarily a great sponsor to advance our cause, and certainly the Oklahoma political and social climate was vastly different 14-15 years ago. Well, our time has come to correct that clerical error. The Editor has been leading a legislative initiative effort to rectify the omission of those three little words, by contacting State legislators and requesting sponsorship of a bill that will correct Title 37, Section 505A and insert those three little words that will bring homebrewed beer to the same legal status as wine and cider.

I have never been one to count my chickens before they hatch, but the good news so far is that we have not one, but two sponsors in the State House of Representatives. State Representatives Cory Williams (D-Stillwater), and Colby Schwartz (R-Yukon) have indicated interest in the legislative initiative and Cory indicated he has his staff preparing the corrective language necessary, and also said the Bill to carry this language should be included as one of the eight allotted Bills allowed to be introduced in the next (Spring) legislative session.

Cory has also indicated an interest to meet with local craft brewers throughout the State to improve commerce in the State's beer industry. The Editor has contacted many of the State's breweries and brewpubs to invite them to attend, hear what the Honorable Mister Williams has to say, and present their views, as well. Now, if we can just find out who our sponsor will be in the State Senate, we can look forward to the Spring session with some anticipation. Look for updates in the next Draught Card. BREW!!!

Homebrewing—Telling Our Story

Channel 4 News is doing a story on homebrewing—the craft, process, procedures, and legislative issues that affect the hobby we all know and love. Interviews were conducted recently, with ABLE Commission reps, Local HB Shop owners, and the Draught Editor. Hours of interview time will probably be condensed to just a few minutes, once the Channel 4 News Editor clips and snips all the incoming video footage. Watch for the story in a Channel 4 News 10 PM broadcast in the very near future.

PROVERB!

Homebrewed beer legislation is a lot like this quote—

"Life is all about timing... the unreachable becomes reachable, the unavailable become available, the unattainable becomes attainable. Have the patience, wait it out. It's all about timing."

Stacey Charter

Beer FACTOID—Homebrewers pitch too little yeast. Pro brewers usually pitch 10 million yeast cells for every milliliter of wort. To match commercial pitching rates, homebrewers should pitch 200-400 billion yeast cells. A dry yeast packet typically contains 50 billion cells. A liquid vial contains 70 to 140 billion cells. The smack packs contain around 100 billion cells. This means if you do not create a starter, you are under pitching. Smack packs are not starters. They activate the yeast metabolism, but they do not increase cell counts.

2nd Beer FACTOID—The famous German Purity Law of 1516, "Reinheitsgebot", is missing an essential ingredient for beer. Yeast was added as an ingredient to the German law during the 20th century. The Reinheitsgebot remained in effect until the European Court of Justice repealed the law in May of 1987!



Calendar of Events

There are still plenty of events on the Club Calendar. Club Meetings are generally held on the 3rd Friday of the month. Upcoming meetings and special events are:

November—Club meeting, November 20th from 7-10 PM

December—Draughter Christmas Party—event on December 12th at Stan and Penny Babb's. No regular club meeting planned.

January 2010—Robert Burns Night. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 15th at 7 PM, at a site to be determined. Prepare your Scottish brews for this popular event.

This schedule is posted on the Draughter website- www.draughters.com in the Tap Room. Please check for updates as the schedule continues to ferment over the next few months.

Next year's full schedule will also be fermenting soon. Our usual events to start the year are a salute to the poet bard—Robert Burns in January. The Club will be supporting the Brewfest event at the Cox Convention Center sometime in February, and begin preparations for the largest single site homebrew competition in the USA—The Bluebonnet BrewOff, which is usually held around Spring Break in mid March. BREW!!!

Brewfest 6 is a GO!

Chris Milum from Learn To Brew, continues to move Brewfest 6 forward, and has targeted February 2010 for the event in the Cox Convention Center. It's time to start dusting off the kettles and forming those Brew Crews to make the beers to support this fine event. Of course, many brews from last Summer will stand the test of time and age well between now and then. Beer categories we are looking for include: American Lager, Classic American Pilsner, Light Hybrid Beer, Bock, Doppelbock, or Weizenbock, India Pale Ale, Porter or Stout, Belgian Tripel, Specialty Beer or Fruit Beer, German Wheat or Belgian Wit Beer, Amber Hybrid Beer, Scottish and Irish Ale, American Pale, Amber, or Brown Ale. Form a Brew Crew soon!!!

Brewer's Resources—Around the corner or on the web

Beer Radio Shows—<http://www.beerinfo.com/index.php/pages/beerradiopodcast.html>

Beer Television—<http://beeramerica.tv/>

Beer Community—<http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/> - NEW WEBSITE FOR THE AHA!!!

Finding Local Brewpubs—<http://www.beerinfo.com/index.php/pages/brewpubsUSA.html>

The Beer Library—<http://www.beerinfo.com/index.php/pages/beerlibrary.html>

Beer Wiki Resource—http://www.homebrewtalk.com/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

Vote with your wallet—SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BREWERIES!!!

Beer Quiz

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| 1. What country drinks the most beer per capita? |
| 2. When were the first beer cans produced, and why? |
| 3. What was the first brewery established in the United States? |
| 4. What is the oldest active brewery in the USA and when was it established? |
| 5. How many distinct beer categories are there in the World? |
| Answers are at the bottom of Page 4 |



The American Homebrewers Association Launches a New Website

For a long time, we've been going to Beertown.org to get AHA and homebrewing information. Since this site also supported craft brewers, we in the homebrew community often felt like we were just tagging along, without a site of our own. Now, that's all changed. The AHA has just launched its own website for homebrewers. Among the many changes, and completely different look, the AHA now has direct links to an online version of the AHA Tech Talk forum, where homebrewers can ask questions and seek additional advice about all things homebrewed. If you are a paid member, you can register on the site and establish a login and password to be used in searching new features on the website, like Homebrewopedia, with links to the latest issues of Zymurgy—now online. There are blogs, tweets, and a new section that tells the homebrewer how to—Pimp My System. Surf the web to: <http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/> for more info. BREW!!!

So, who is the ABLE Commission, and should you be worried?

The subject of Oklahoma homebrewing legality crops up sometimes in homebrew circles. After homebrewing for over 20 years, I've never had the misfortune of having a run in with the legal authorities. In fact, I've had plenty of friends, including local police, sheriffs, judges and the like, stop by the house to ask that ever famous question—"Whatcha got on tap right now?" Of course, that request is followed by pouring a sample or three of homebrewed beer. Are these folks reckless lawbreakers? The answer to that question is not quite so easy to define—after all, Oklahoma Title 37, Section 505A does not have any verbiage that specifically allows homebrewed beer, but we are actively working to correct that issue. Are these public figures worried about the ABLE Commission arriving to confiscate the beer and write out a ticket and levy a fine that could ruin their careers? The answer to this question is much easier—don't expect to see ABLE stopping by to see what you're doing when it comes to homebrewing. It's not that they don't have an interest in enforcing a State Statute. To be honest, it's a numbers game, and the numbers are stacked strongly in your favor. Here's why.

Channel 4 News recently interviewed ABLE Commission officials, and ABLE admitted that since there are over 54,000 licensed and regulated facilities within the State, including breweries, restaurants, grocery stores, liquor stores, convenience stores, brewpubs, etc... their hands are full with these regulated facilities—they just aren't staffed to track down unregulated facilities, like homebrewers, to see what they're doing.

Does that mean you can openly thumb your nose at the Statute and ABLE? Well, I don't rub anyone's nose in the legality issue, and continue to brew, and I don't look over my shoulder expecting to see the ABLE folks either. There hasn't been a prosecution under Title 37, Section 505A in over 20 years. There is a legislative initiative making its way through the State Legislature, that will soon correct the clerical oversight and give homebrewed beer the same legal status as wine and cider making. I do not know if our legislative sponsors are trying to relieve the annual (no cost) licensing requirement with ABLE, but will report on this as soon as I read the latest draft of the corrective legislative verbiage. Until then, I BREW and think you should too!!!

ANSWERS to BEER QUIZ on Page 3

1. The Czech Republic drinks more beer per capita than any other country—161.5 liters per person. China drinks more beer than any other country (350 million hectoliters) but this is only #53 per capita. The USA ranks #2 by amount, but #11 per capita.
2. The first beer cans were produced in 1935. Drinkers were no longer going to taverns, and breweries needed to get beer into the homes. The smaller packages made it much easier to get beer home.
3. No named brewery, but Nicholas Varlett obtained from Peter Stuyvesant a patent for the first brewery in America on February 5, 1663 (it was a Monday for the incurably curious). This brewery was on Castle Point in Hoboken, New Jersey.
4. The oldest active brewery is the D.G. Yuengling & Son brewery in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, founded in 1829.
5. A little dated info, but in the 2007 Great American Beer Festival, there were 76 distinct beer categories. Each category represented a unique beer style.



DRAUGHTER and NATIONAL CLUB ONLY COMPETITION—COC is back in full swing, so keep on brewing Draughters.

The last local Club Only Competition (COC) was for European Amber Lagers and was judged at Learn To Brew on October 2nd. Just a couple of entries—both of them Oktoberfest Lagers. One was from the Trail Boss and the other from the Editor. Mike Divilio barely edged Gary Shellman in the local COC, by the slimmest of margins, returning the slim victory favor from the Amber Hybrid COC conducted about six weeks prior. Mike's O'fest went to the National COC for judging by the Jayhops of Kansas, and competed against 43 other beers from 24 other States, but unfortunately didn't score a victory. Specific information on the styles we competed against in Category 3 can be found on the web at <http://www.bjcp.org>.

The next local Draughter CoC is on November 20th at Learn To Brew—5:30 PM, for some of the Big Belgians—Belgian Strong Ales, that includes the five sub-styles in Category 18—Belgian Blond Ale, Dubbel, Tripel, Golden Strong, and Dark Strong. There's still plenty of time to get your Big Belgians bottled, and entered for our local competition. Pull out your best Strong Belgians and get them into competition. The specific information on each of the styles in Category 18 can be found on the web at <http://www.bjcp.org>.

COC event information can be found at: <http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/pages/competitions/club-only-competitions/schedule/2009-2010-competition-year>.

You will be able to drop off your entries at either LHBS by 4:00 PM, on the day of local judging and they will be picked up for the competition. GOOD LUCK DRAUGHTERS!!!

We're on the web—www.draughters.com

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