



HOPLINE

Newsletter of the Crescent City Homebrewers Club

June 2024

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 3rd

Location: *Deutches Haus*

2024 Edition

Table of Contents

Volume 36, Issue 6

President's Corner	2
Brewoff Schedule	4
Upcoming Events	6
Five Questions for the Brewmaster	8
Brew For Thought	10
Food and Whine	21
Club Links	22

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – JUNE 2024

Greetings to Mashers, Extractors, and Imbibers!

Welcome to the June Edition of the Hopline in month six of my Glorious Reign!

Summer is here, and it's getting hot. Take care when brewing and remember to hydrate between homebrews!

Here's some of this summer's upcoming homebrewing events for you:

The June Meetup will be on June 24 at Bywater Brewpub around 7. This will be the last hooray for Sonny's place, they are closing on July 1. Everyone should go visit Sonny this month before they shut their doors.

We will also be showing at Larry Brew Fest on June 22. Talk to Craig if you want to bring a beer! Every keg donated gives you 2 tickets. June's Brewoff will be this year's first Brew in a Bathing Suit at Neil's house on June 29. We will be brewing a saison.

This year's Bus Tour will be on July 13, not the 27th as previously published. We will be visiting Northshore breweries. Tickets are \$40 per person for club members and one guest. The bus will leave from the Deutsches Haus at 11AM. We will first visit Low Road Brewing and Gnarly Barley in Hammond and then Barley Oak and Chafunkta in Mandeville. We will also have a Bonus Brewoff on July 20! This will be the second attempt at our collaboration with Oak Street Brewery. The recipe will still be a British Brown.

In August, the Hays will host a semi-aquatic Mead Day to help beat the heat on August 3. The August BIABS will be on August 17 at Barney's house!

As always, contact one of the DUMBO Collective to sign up for a Brewoff. We are always looking for hosts, chefs, and brewmasters!

So long, and thanks for all the beer,

Genevieve Mattei

CRESCENT CITY HOMEBREWERS – EXECUTIVE BOARD 2024

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BREWOFF SCHEDULE FOR 2024 (Subject to Change, Really)

Date	Style	Host	Location	Brewmaster
	Winterfest Break			
2/24/24	Irish Red	Bywater Brew Pub	3000 Royal Street New Orleans	Hector Meier
3/23/24	Marzen	Skeeta Hawk Brewing	455 North Dorgenois Street New Orleans	Will Lambert
4/13/24	Brown Ale	Oak Street Brewery	8201 Oak Street, New Orleans	Group effort with the brewery
5/18/24	Crawfish Boil	--	The haus	--
6/29/24	BIABS	Neil Barnett	5636 Hawthorne Pl NOLA, 70124	Neil
7/20/24	Brown Ale - repeat	Oak Street Brewery	Oak St. Brewoff - Repeat	Group effort with the brewery
7/13/24	BUS TRIP			
8/3/24	Mead Day BIABS	Brad and Tammy Hays		
8/17/24	BIABS	Barney Ryan		
9/30/24	??	??	??	??
10/24	Octoberfest Break			
11/2/24	LTHBD	??	??	??
11/23/24	Oyster Stout	Charles Sule	6325 Perlito Dr NOLA	

*BIABS = brewing in a bathing suit

Standard Wort price \$30.00 Standard Lunch price\$10.00

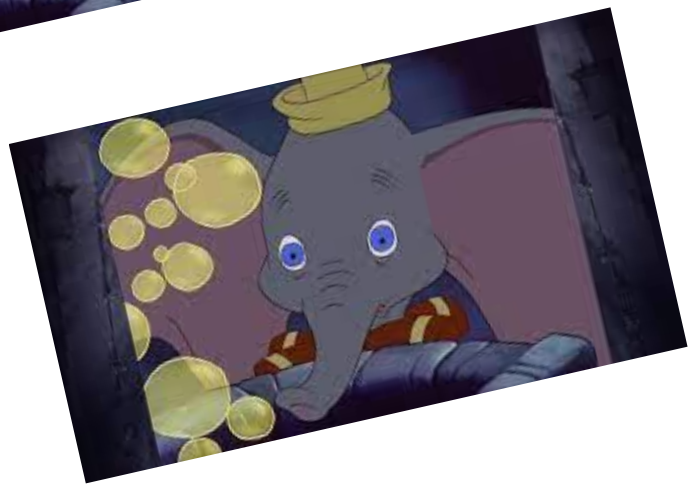
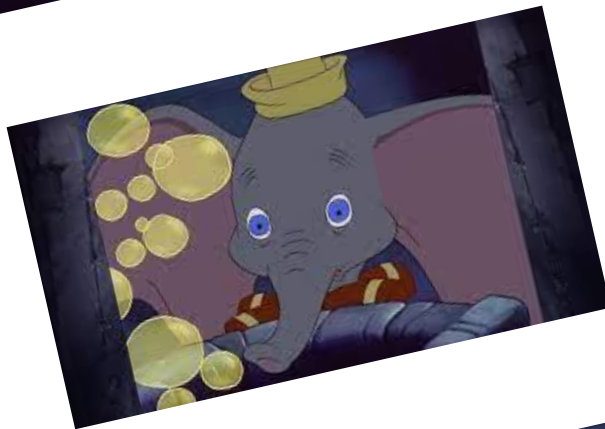
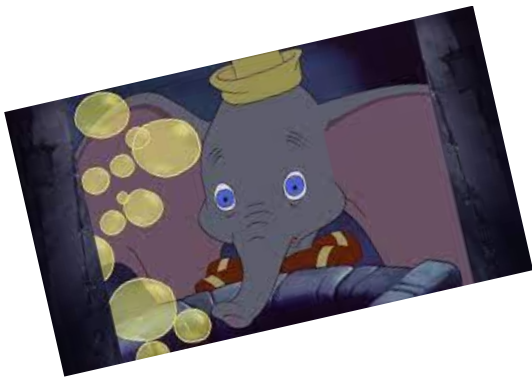
For any new members, a Brewoff is a group event in which we make 50 gallons of beer with the Club equipment. The wort is then split up into ten, 5-gallon units. The units are given out to the Host(1), Brewmaster(1), Chef(1), Equipment Movers(2), and Grunts(5). Guests and Alternates are encouraged to sign up and join in the fun. Wort participants must bring their own 5-gallon fermenter, and yeast. If you are interested, email DUMBOS at jack.horne@gmail.com or sign up at the meetings. [Buy a truck](#)

Hey Everyone,

Greetings from the DUMBOS. Not much to report. We are bursting with anticipation (not from our bathing suits, wise-a#\$#) for the first Brew-In-A-Bathing-Suit of the year at Neil's place on June 29. We still have some grunt spots open, and this is a popular one for guests. Drop us a line if you want to join in. Remember, speedos must be pre-approved!!

Prost,

DUMBOS



UPCOMING EVENTS

HERE ARE SOME
GREAT EVENTS
THAT YOU MAY BE
INTERESTED IN:

Jun 5	General Meeting 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
Jun 8	Thibodeaux On Tap
Jun 22	Larry Fest 4 PM – Castine Center, Mandeville
Jun 24	CCH Meetup 7 PM – Bywater Brew Pub – <i>Change from earlier info</i>
Jun 29	BIAB Brewoff 8 AM – Neil's
Jul 3	General Meeting 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
Jul 13	Brewery Bus Tour Return to the Northshore. Gnarly Barley, Low Road, Barley Oak and Chafunkta brewing.
Jul 18	CCH Meetup 7 PM – Zony Mash
Jul 20	Brewoff – Oak Street Round II 9 AM – Oak Street Brewing
Aug 3	Mead Day Brewoff At the Hays'

Aug 7	General Meeting 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
Aug 17	BIAB Brewoff 8 AM – Barney's
Aug 22	CCH Meetup 7 PM – NOLA Brewing
Sept 4	General Meeting 7 PM – Deutsches Haus
Sept 5	Emerald Coast Beer Pairing Dinner Location and brewery TBD
Sept 6	Emerald Coast Beer Festival 5 PM – Seville Quarter, Pensacola, FL

We have many more events in the works for later in the year. Watch this space, or check out <https://crescentcityhomebrewers.org/calendar/>.

Know of any events going on that we might be interested in? Let us know at crescentcityhomebrewers@gmail.com



FIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE BREWMASTER – JUNE 2024

Matthew Horney

Owner/Head Brewer – *Ecology Beer Creative*

1. How did you start brewing?

I started in 1999/2000 when I found my dad's old home brewing equipment in the basement of my parent's Michigan home. I asked if I could give it a go. He gave me his copy of Charlie Papazian's The Complete Joy of Homebrewing and gave me everything he had. I started reading and made my way to the local homebrew store and began down a very curious road.

2. How did you get into commercial brewing?

I got my start during the recession in 2010. After working as a landscape architect in Atlanta for nearly 10 years with the last bit in China. The company had reached a sad turning point and the China office was closed and I was the last of 50 people to be laid off. I decided a career change would be best and started my search across the south-eastern United States and that led me to Louisiana. I moved and worked for Abita, then moved back to Georgia to brew for Terrapin, then back to Louisiana to brew for the Old Rail before starting Ecology Beer Creative in New Orleans. It was a crazy run but each step had a purpose and led to bigger things. It's all still amazing to think how fortunate I was to have somehow created these opportunities.

3. Which style(s) are you most interested in brewing and why?

I love Belgian beers and classic styles. There is something about Belgian beer that is mysterious yet exciting from both a formulation and historical standpoint. Belgian beers have such complexity and trying to pull the flavors in to each style is pretty complex but when successful it is something to behold. I love formulating these recipes as some of the historical formulations are kept secret. You have to know your ingredients and your process. This goes for classic styles as well. Learn and understand what makes them unique. Lagers, Pilsners, ESB, whatever it is I just love creating them in my way with my own thoughts on water, grain crush, time, and temperature.

4. What is the most challenging aspect of being a commercial brewer?

These days it's brewer and owner so the challenges run deep but as a commercial brewer it's not the process so much as it is logistics. Keeping the canning and labeling equipment in tune, boiler running at optimum, making sure I have ingredients on hand when I need them, making sure parts are available, and water is continually treated and to standard are some of the things that do pose a challenge. Something is always in need of attention. It can be consuming to manage all these components. There is a lot of effort beyond brewing and recipe formulation to bring a beer to a glass and its at this point you will find just how many hours really are in a day and how much mental capacity and physical energy you have.

5. What advice do you have for homebrewers?

If you want to make good beer follow a consistent procedure and learn your styles. Know the off flavors. I'll say this again....know the styles. Know your water and treat your water. Know and accept criticism. Document your brew days. Never stop learning and never pretend to know everything.

BREW FOR THOUGHT – JUNE 2024

Gruit – A Continuing Attempt to Unravel History

By Mike Retzlaff

Many years ago, before the common use of hops as an ingredient in the making of beer, gruit was used to preserve and flavor ale. This also applied to other fermented beverages such as mead, metheglin, braggot, etc.

Gruit (gruet, gruede, grut, grute, gruyt, gruyte) was more than just a mixture of various herbs and spices. It seems a common belief that the brewer just gathered up wild herbs and spices from glens, meadows, and forest floors to suffice his needs in the brewhouse. In fact, the various plants that went into a gruit blend came from many varied and far off places. At the time, some of these imported ingredients eclipsed the price of hops by a factor of 3 or 4 times. Many of the components of gruit got their start as traditional medicinal concoctions to treat various ailments of the human condition.

It is well documented that in the area of the Netherlands and North Western Germany, the collection and supply of these ingredients became an industry unto itself. Gruit houses gathered the herbs from traders and processed them as a blend for sale to brewers. Individual recipes don't seem to have survived but, available records do indicate that the Gruit Houses purchased a number of things:

- **Bog Myrtle** (sweet gale, *Myrica gale*)
- **Porsch** (marsh rosemary, sea-lavender, statice, caspia – latin *Limonium*)
- **Bekeler** (Laurel Berry)
- **Serpentien** (scharpe tonge, scherpentangen, sermentangen, sermontaine, siler montanum – all seem to stem from “*Laserpitium Siler*”; an herb that grows in the Alps and is commonly called Laserwort or snake herb)
- **Resin** (it isn't clear if this was an ingredient or for use in cooperage)
- **Juniper Berry**
- **Anise**
- **Koemps** (mentioned in a gruthaus record in Köln)
- **Kerse** (cherries in Dutch is kerse or kersen; in German kerze = candles. Ingredient or used for lighting in the workplace?)
- **Saxifrage** – latin *saxum frangere* (stone breaker) an herb used for relief of kidney and bladder stones.
- **Bayberry** – another plant of the *Myrica* genus.
- **Ground Ivy** – aka Alehoof, a ground creeper of the mint family. *Glechoma hederacea*
- **Cascarilla** – *Croton eluteria*, still used to flavor Campari and Vermouth.

In addition, Gruit Houses (German & Dutch) purchased Peat, Malt, and Vezan (?) to combine with their mixtures. These assembled concoctions were sold to the brewers. These “other brewing ingredients” were not purchased in sufficient quantities to actually make ale but it is speculated that they were included to make a syrup for inclusion in the brewing process and possibly to mask the exact formulation of the gruit.

City governments generated revenue through taxes on the gruit. For some Dutch cities, the taxes on gruit amounted to as much as 23% of the total city revenues so it was an important and substantial industry.

Similar brewing practices existed in other places.

In Wales, the ingredients of gruit consisted of wild sage, saxifrage, betony (Bishop's wort), wild marjoram, and thyme in various mixtures.

The Medieval English brewer utilized sweet gale, marsh rosemary, millfoil, ginger, cloves, cinnamon, ground ivy, nutmeg, mace, fennel, mugwort (wormwood), guinea pepper, and mint.

The ancient Britons used mugwort (wormwood), bayberry, ground ivy, pine & willow bark, cascarilla bark, broom, extract of aloe, and calocynth (bitter apple).

With the advent of hops, the use of gruit ended over a very short period. Hopped beer was being brewed in the Low Countries around 1320. Over the next 100 years, gruit ales had virtually disappeared.

In 1357, the '*novus modus fermentandi cervisiam*' dictated that this 'new method of brewing' required the "new herb" (hops) to be separate from gruit and to be boiled with the wort. Gruit had not been processed that way as it was added during fermentation or even post fermentation.

In 1380, there were about 30,000 residents in London with around 1,000 breweries. Most brewed small quantities as the beverage did not keep well. This "new hopped beer" was accepted in the army and onboard ships where durability was of key importance. Even with competition from foreign brewers, it took some time before hopped beer caught on in the British Isles.

It is interesting to note that the Romans brought hop rhizomes with them when they occupied Britain. However, the Romans used them as a culinary ingredient.

It is important to remember that the use of gruit isn't the same as just adding spices to a Belgian White beer. Unfortunately, I don't have a recipe to suggest. There is some information that might be helpful in my [Adding Spices](#) article.

Thought for self Improvement

The fact that there's a highway to Hell
and only a stairway to Heaven
Says a lot about the anticipated traffic flow.

YEAST

by Charles Sule (September 2000)

Yeast is the most important aspect of fermented beverages, like BEeeeeeeER!!! There are so many yeast strains being used to make different concoctions all over the world. Each has found its niche to make some type of alcoholic beverage for man. Beer yeast has evolved in this way for thousands of years. NO matter if you are brewing Ales or Lagers, yeast is a vital part of making quality beer.

Making a quality wort for your beer is pretty easy to master. Then you select the best hops you can find. Now you've cooled your wort and it's ready to pitch. STOP! Before you pitch that Wyeast smack pack into 5 or even 10 gallons of beer, think about all the effort that it took to get you to this point in the brew. Pitching the correct amounts of yeast for your batch size will make your beer sooo much better. It will even act as insurance for any small errors you may have made along the way. Bacteria and mildly hazy wort can be overcome by a good solid fermentation.

At the very least you should make a yeast starter. $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon for a 5 gallon batch of Ale (double for 10) or $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 gallon for a 5 gallon batch of Lager. This is still pretty small. The only way to pitch the proper amounts is to harvest yeast from a previous batch. Sometimes you can get some from a friend who is racking a fresh brew. Pitching 1 cup of past into a 5 gallon batch will really give you a nice fermentation. I usually consider my first batch, where I use a starter, as a big starter for the rest of my beers. Once I have a good quantity of yeast, then I start brewing.

It is not always easy or convenient to keep a strain going for too long. But you should try brewing 3 or 4 beers in a row (2 or 3 weeks apart). Harvest and pitch for each batch. This will give you a nice stock pile of excellent beer. It will even save you a few dollars by reusing the yeast. I have kept the same Munich #2308 strain going for over 1 year. It all started with one smack pack of Wyeast from BrewHaHa. It was pretty low maintenance. I only washed the yeast with distilled water a few times over this period. It's all in the timing. Each brew had to take place 2 to 4 weeks apart. If I was using an Ale yeast, I would have to brew even more often, like every 1 to 3 weeks. Using this schedule, I was able to keep the yeast healthy and strong. Every beer came out excellent. But there are alternatives to keeping a yeast going. You can, as I mentioned, get some from a friend. Talk to your fellow CCHers and see what they're brewing. See if you can get some yeast from them or help out another brewer from your most recent batch. The local breweries may also be able to help you out from time to time.

Well, you've probably got the point by now. Pitch quantity and quality. There are some new products coming out by Wyeast that are supposed to be closer to proper pitching quantities. At this time, I have not used them but I am interested!

There are many ale, lager, and specialty strains available from the yeast labs. They are all pretty good yeast strains. Each has its own preferences for environment and such. It takes some research to figure out what temp a particular strain performs best at. For the most part, ales like 60 – 70F and lagers like 40 – 55F. I prefer to brew lagers for a couple of reasons: I like a lager as my everyday beer and brewing lagers fits my schedule a little better (now that I have a new

daughter, making a quick ale now and then is looking pretty good!! I have not had the time to brew lagers on a regular basis.) I do enjoy ales and I do brew them, just not as often as lagers.

My favorite lager yeasts are #2308 Munich and #2124 Bohemian. I also like #2206 Bavarian. For ales, I like #1968 ESB and #1056 Chico Ale. I've tried almost all of them and all make good beers. It's just a matter of taste and picking out the characteristics that I like. I'm sure most of you have your favorite yeast strains already picked out.

There really isn't much more I can say about yeast. Keeping your pitching rates high is about the best advice I can give a brewer. The strain you use is up to your preferences. The only other advice falls more into fermentation practices than yeast – even though they are inseparable.

Keeping a steady temperature in the proper range is important. Pitching your yeast into wort that is at the proper temperature is also important. Also, a diacetyl rest is important for some lager strains.

In the next article I will cover wort cooling, fermentation, fining, and filtration. These topics will fit together nicely in one article. Until then, keep brewing and pitch large amounts of yeast!

Good luck and keep on brewin'.

From Ron Guarino

19 Key US Cities To Visit In The Craft Beer Revolution

Read More: <https://www.foodrepublic.com/1305634/key-cities-visit-craft-beer-revolution/>

<https://www.foodrepublic.com/1305634/key-cities-visit-craft-beer-revolution/>

San Francisco's Anchor Brewing, once left for dead, purchased by Chobani founder


<https://www.foxbusiness.com/markets/san-franciscos-anchor-brewing-once-left-dead-purchased-chobani-founder>



Surf The Raddlie

FANTASTIC ACTIVITIES ALL CLUBS CAN DO

By Ron Minkoff



TURNS OUT, YOUR CLUB DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BIG OR RICH TO BE AMAZING.

- You really dig your local homebrew club. Great people, fun times. But you wouldn't mind if the club upped its game. Turns out, your club doesn't have to be big or rich to be amazing. Sometimes you just need a good idea. The Hogtown Brewers have a grocery list of compelling activity ideas that will push your merry band of homebrew enthusiasts to spectacular levels.

This article, based on a recent Homebrew Con™ seminar, will walk you through an extensive lineup of fantastic club activities that will:

- Raise membership engagement.
- Make it inviting for new members to step up.
- Establish incentives to get your members brewing.
- Provide a compelling homebrew education curriculum.
- Develop your club website to actually be useful.
- Drive strong charity and community involvement.

I should probably mention a little of our club's street cred, so you'll know this is a worthwhile read. The Hogtown Brewers have been around since 1985, and around 42 percent of our 200+ membership is female. They're kinda known for the philanthropy thing. And they're so busy, we need to add a 13th month to the club calendar.

In any given year, we have 30 to 50 distinct events and activities, taking up 75 to 100 or more days. It can be a lot. →

One last thing before we get to the list. What does “Surf the Raddie” even mean? When Hogtown won the Radegast in 2016, they gave us a nifty paddle which we nicknamed “the Raddie.” Whenever we do an activity that makes us feel good about our club, we call it “Surfing the Raddie.” And that’s the feeling we want to share with your club.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Minister of New Blood

It’s everyone’s job in the club to welcome new members, but we do have an officer’s position to be that special ambassador for rookies: The Minister of New Blood.

When a new member application is received, the Minister of New Blood sends a personal welcome email to the newbie. This pre-written template introduces and describes some of the club basics, such as:

- The club’s email list (we automatically add them) and the club Facebook page;
- A schedule of general meetings where we do bottle shares and potlucks;
- An invitation to our club’s executive meetings (more on this soon);
- A rundown of the major upcoming club events during the year; and
- Information on how to gain access to the members-only section of the club website.

When we see the new member at their first meeting, the Minister will hand them some new member swag: a Hogtown tasting glass and bottle opener. The Minister then takes a photo and posts it to our membership list, which can only be seen in the password-protected members-only section of our website. If your club starts to get sizeable (say 50 or more), having photos of your members is very helpful so everyone gets familiar with their fellow club zymurgists.

Great Idea, You Do It!

This is a cherished mantra in our club, and one of the easiest ways to get a member more involved. How many times have you heard a club member proclaim they have the next amazing idea that sounds great on paper? Inevitably, the next question is, who in the club should spearhead the project. The collective answer should always be, “Great idea, you do it.” Occasionally, they actually follow through and really do it! You get something new and nifty for your club, and a more involved member.

The Answer Is: The One in My Hand

At general meetings, we try to get everyone to use a name tag. It helps members, both new and rarely-seen, get better acquainted. To make this more effective, we’ll have

members write their personal answer to the Question of the Day (QoD) on their name tag. An example of the QoD could be “What’s in your fermenter?” or perhaps “What’s your favorite fermented beverage?” Questions and answers that start conversations are always best.

A Compassionate Gesture

Life happens to your fellow club members. Sometimes that means a congratulatory event, but also, unfortunately, sometimes that means something profoundly sad. When news of such a life event hits our ears, we have a formal member outreach program that will send an appropriate response to the member. For example, it can be a “welcome” baby card (with a gift card, if your club has funds for that), or a condolence card from the club when a member suffers a loss in the family. The gesture can be quite meaningful to the recipient.

Exec Meetings: Everyone’s Invited

To round out this section on member engagement, here’s a little gem that gets both new and seasoned members to step up and be active: invite the entire membership (not just your club officers) to your executive meetings. These gatherings are where the heavy planning gets done, and allowing all members to join in makes them feel more a part of the club. Up to you and your club rules if non-officers can vote. But we let everyone vote. Besides, aren’t you usually wondering who in your club is the next heavy lifter? Well, they couldn’t make it easier for you: they’re the ones who accept your invitation and show up.



New member swag.

BREWING PROMOTION

Brew Day Themes

We don’t always need a reason to brew. But when we do, brewers love brew day themes. To get you inspired to come up with your own, here are some we do:

- **Interclub Collab Group Brew** – Is there another homebrew club within a couple of hours of your town? Buddy up with them for a brew session where each club keeps half the batch.
- **SheBrew Group Brew** – Our female members enjoy participating in the Queen of Beer and SheBrew homebrew competitions. Each year we hold a group brew to promote these competitions and bring together female brewers. Each participant brings her own equipment, ingredients, and recipe.
- **King/Queen of the Hill** – Like many homebrew clubs, we award a “Brewer of the Year” to the brewer who earned the most competition points that calendar year. For this intraclub contest, the BOTY winner chooses a particular style (usually one they are really good at). Participants then brew it and submit their entries in an attempt to topple the smug King or Queen.
- **The Quest** – Participants use their own equipment and process to brew the same recipe using the same ingredients. Theoretically, all resulting beers should taste the same, right? Yeah, no. Each brewer submits a couple of bottles. All brewers then gather around a table, get a blind sample of everyone’s entry, and try to guess which sample is theirs. Then, all



Hogtown Brewers won the 2016 Radegast Club of the year award.



QoD: Favorite type of fermented beverage?

brewers collectively decide which sample was the best.

- **Moonlight Brew** – This terrific communal group brew event is held each March on a Saturday night that is closest to the full moon. Everyone brings their own equipment, ingredients, and recipe. The basic rules are that you cannot fire up your burner until at least 6 p.m., and you must brew a dark beer (at least 17 SRM).
- **Knights of the Barleywine** – Another group brew event where everyone brings their own equipment, ingredients, and recipe (although some years we turn this into a wort share event). You must brew a barleywine, or a style that is barleywine adjacent (e.g. old ale, Scotch ale, British strong, etc.)

We've got more, but you get the idea. Come up with some that work with your crowd.

Buddy Brew

Buddy Brew is a formal program in our club that targets new members who have no equipment. We pair the new member with an experienced brewer. New female members are usually paired with experienced female brewers. Together, they brew a 5- or 10-gallon batch. Cost of ingredients is shared. The experienced brewer takes care of fermentation, though they both participate in kegging/bottling. If the club has some funds, an ingredient stipend could be given to the experienced brewer. This is a great opportunity to provide one-on-one training for beginner brewers in the club.

Homebrew Dopamine Hits

You've heard the old joke: How do you know if someone is a homebrewer?

Answer: They told you!

Homebrewers love showing off their brewing and culinary kung fu. They live for that dopamine hit! But opportunities to publicly show off outside of their club or circle of friends and family are rare. Your club can encourage more brewing by setting up public pouring events for your members. [Be sure to check with local and state laws if you aren't sure pouring homebrew for the public is legal in your area.] Common opportunities have always included pouring at local beer fests or holding an intraclub competition where the winner brews at their local brewery.

But you can expand these pouring opportunities by getting involved with local community or charity events. For example, we now participate in a local Oktoberfest celebration. We set up a booth and pour complimentary homebrew samples to the crowd of 3,000+ (yeah, they dig it, and not just because the samples are free). We also do complimentary pours at certain charity events (such as a festival held at our local bat conservancy) as well as pour at our own charity beer/food pairing event. This one raises over \$3,000 for the charity partner (see *Eat This, Drink That* in May/June 2020 *Zymurgy* for details). Evaluate what's happening in your area to come up with pouring opportunities that will encourage your club members to brew more.

BEER EDUCATION

Hands-on classes and labs are great activities that are right up a homebrew club's alley. Here are a few examples we've done that may help inspire ideas for your club.

- **Calibration Lab** – Members bring their own measurement equipment, including hydrometers, refractometers, thermometers, and pH meters. In a group

setting, each is evaluated and calibrated; for example, refractometers by using a two-point calibration with known exact-concentration sugar solutions.

- **Kegging Lab** – No matter how mundane kegging can be, I assure you there are brewers in your club new to it, and they're very curious to see how others do it. This is a good candidate for a class lab.
- **Bottling Lab** – Another class lab candidate, perhaps coupled with the keg lab, especially if the focus is bottling for competition. Using your tool of choice (e.g. Beer Gun or counter-pressure filler), you may want the students to first practice on a keg of water. Then, when everyone has the basic technique, bottle up a keg of actual homebrew. Allow the students to take their bottles home with them.
- **Canning Lab** – This one probably falls into the category of "funds needed," but if you are able to procure a canner, it's an obvious hands-on lab for your club.
- **Mead Lab** – Post-fermentation mead adjustments are a mystery to many homebrewers. Perform a hands-on lab on a traditional dry mead using various adjustments. For example, sweeten the mead to various specific final gravities (e.g., 1.020, 1.025, 1.030, etc.) in side-by-side cups and evaluate the difference. Next, provide different measured infusions of tartaric acid in the mead (also in side-by-side cups) and evaluate the effect. Other post-fermentation adjustments can be included in the class.
- **Blind Tasting Lab** – Great lab for brewers, especially aspiring BJCP judges. There's a large variety of blind tastings you can come up with. For example, a porter vs. stout style challenge in which each participant has 10 blind samples in front of them. Their mission: pick which ones are porters and which ones are stouts. You can do this challenge with various similar styles (e.g. German Helles vs. German Festbier). For details on this and other blind tasting challenges see *The Game Is Afoot* in July/Aug 2023 *Zymurgy*.



SheBrew Group Brew event.



Oktoberfest, Hogtown-style.

CLUB WEBSITE

The typical homebrew club website provides basic information, such as the next meeting day, a blurb about the club, how to join, etc., but it usually stops there. Your club website can be much more than a collection of basic static text. It can be a wealth of homebrewing resources as well as an application that's integral to the operation of your club.

Below is a list of feature ideas that can be used to upgrade your site. I'm not going to go into the technical how-to, but I will indicate the level of difficulty to implement. You can view our version of these features at hogtownbrewers.org.

Next Meeting Google Map (easy)

Don't merely list an address of your next meeting. Provide the user with an inter-

active Google Map to make the meeting location clearer.

Club Activity RSVP (easy)

We use a Club Activity RSVP Google Form for everything. Whenever we have an event, we use this to gather basic attendance information: how many do we need to feed for our executive meetings; who is bringing their own cider for cider days; and how many participants will need supplies for brewing classes, just to name a few. The list of RSVP examples could be pages long. Suffice to say, the one-time setup of a club RSVP form is very easy to implement, and has an outsized usefulness to running the club. View our version at hogtownbrewers.org/rsvp.

Brewing Resource Page (easy)

There are endless ideas for this one. For our resource page, we not only list the usual resources for malt, hops, yeast, water, calculators, etc., but we also include information on how to: use gelatin as a fining; make your own Belgian candi sugar; use Malta Goya as a yeast starter substitute; and build a "poor man's counter-pressure bottle filler." There are so many possible uses for a resource section on your site. You can view our version at hogtownbrewers.org/brewschool.

Medal-Winning Recipes (easy)

No doubt your club members have brewed many award-winning recipes. Don't keep it to yourself! Publish the recipes on your site so your other club members can up their brewing game.

Media Promotion (easy)

If your local magazine, TV station, or newspaper ever features your club in an article or interview, don't be too humble! Post the feature on your site (or at least, post a link to the feature).

Members-Only Password Protected Area (moderate)

Having a protected members-only section has been crucial for our club's internal operation. Within this section, we include a:

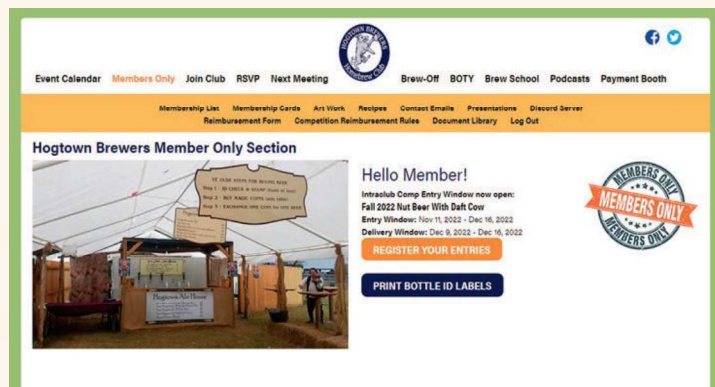
- Membership list with photos and contact information for each member;
- Document library where we keep our meeting minutes, bylaws, policies, event resources, etc.;
- Past education presentations;
- Club logo artwork gallery—We have multiple versions of our logos, and we provide each logo in formats suitable for digital display and printing. No need for any member to have to hunt down the one person in the club who designs and hoards all the artwork;



Hogtown Brewers members.



HogtownBrewers.org.



Members-only Section.

- Membership card generator—Members have the option to generate their membership card in PDF format. They can then decide whether to print and laminate it, or simply store it on their mobile device;
- Reimbursement form—If a member needs to be reimbursed for anything by the club, this formal submission process helps us document and keep track of the payments.

PHILANTHROPY

Supporting local charities is not only a hallmark of good citizenship, it's also an excellent networking opportunity for your homebrew club. The visibility of charity support opens doors to other great collaborations and elevates the club. Bottom line, charity support is a win-win-win.

Here are some philanthropy activity examples your club can do that do not necessarily require any club funds:

- Local river/creek cleanup;
- Blood drive;
- Food drive;
- Beer/food pairing event;
- Homebrew presentation (can be done at science museum expos and even at assisted living facilities);
- Brew day silent auction item (help a charity raise funds by offering a "how to brew" class for their silent auction);
- St. Baldrick's Shave Event (stbaldricks.org/head-shaving);
- Small-scale local charity beerfest (using just a few local breweries).

WHENEVER WE DO AN ACTIVITY THAT MAKES US FEEL GOOD ABOUT OUR CLUB, WE CALL IT "SURFING THE RADDIE" AND THAT'S THE FEELING WE WANT TO SHARE WITH YOUR CLUB.

If your club does have time and some extra funds, here are additional activities:

- **Periodic Contributions to Local Charities** – This would be a straightforward cash donation on a monthly, quarterly, or other periodic basis that fits with your club finances.
- **Adopt A Road** – Programs in different regions will vary, but essentially you commit to periodically pick up trash along a stretch of road. For the Adopt A Road program in our area, the commitment is quarterly, every three months. There is a small one-time fee to pay for the "Adopt A Road" street signs (which include our club's name), but the program provides trash bags, vests, and a few litter pickers. As for which road? We picked a 1.6-mile stretch that leads to one of our favorite local breweries.
- **School teacher support** – Do you know how much the typical teacher uses their own personal funds to finance supplies for their classroom each year? \$300? \$500? According to multiple public school teachers I've interviewed here in Florida, it's closer to \$1,000. A homebrew club donation can make a big difference here.

- **Beer Run** – I'm not quite sure why, but a lot of people like to run. Organize an event and pair this activity with commercial beer and homebrew to raise funds for your favorite local charity. The SAAZ homebrew club in Melbourne, Fla. has been doing this for years and currently raises \$8,500 annually! (Saaz.org/cms/bottoms-up-beer-run).
- **Ronald McDonald House Visiting Chef** – This is a great activity for homebrewers to show off their culinary chops while doing some real good for the community. There may be a charity in your area that allows an outside group to come in and cook a meal for their beneficiaries. For example, the Ronald McDonald House charities provide lodging and support for families with children hospitalized for serious illness. Many chapters have a visiting chef program where an outside organization supplies the ingredients and the "chefs" to prepare meals (dinner or breakfast) in an onsite kitchen. Hogtown has been participating in the visiting chef program at our local chapter since 2018.



Philanthropy.



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LIFE SKILLS

One of the great things about being in a club is that it can organize educational seminars for its members that they'd normally not attend. A class that teaches a life skill is one of them. "But brewing is a life skill," you say. Why yes it is! However, I'm referring to non-brewing topics such as CPR and self-defense. The idea is that your homebrew club probably has members with expertise in certain specialized or niche areas, and they can hold classes to teach those skills to your club's members. In Hogtown, we've had members teach bee keeping, sushi, yoga, cheese making, bird watching, knitting, and more. I bet the talented members in your club could do a few of their own!

THIS AND THAT

To round out our club grocery list, there are several one-off, low-cost activities we do that might be good candidates for your club too. Here's a rapid-fire list:

- Pre-Thanksgiving (or any pre-holiday) club bonfire;
- Tie-dye club shirts;
- YouTube or TikTok podcast series on homebrewing;
- Themed potluck (e.g., Mediterranean, Thai, Iron Chef, etc.);
- Collab with a local supply shop for a monthly homebrew bottle share;
- Club confection session to make bulk Belgian candi sugar.
- Write a Zymurgy article! (I bet your club does something unique that's worth sharing.)

Plus, there's this one last little nugget...

1. Register your club as a not-for-profit (if it isn't already).
2. Network in your community to find an event that will allow you to be an alcohol vendor.
3. Get insurance.
4. Get a special event alcohol license from your state.
5. Buddy up with a distributor to procure beer and dispensing equipment.
6. Decide on the process for customers to pay for and receive their tasty beverage.
7. Pay your sales tax (if required).
8. Use your newfound revenue to make the homebrew world a better place.

Yes, these steps are highly summarized. Although each one takes effort, I would say step #2 is the hardest. But if you do find a way to settle into an event as a commercial beer vendor, your club will be living the good life!

I hope we were able to give you a few idea zingers that will help raise your homebrew club's game so your merry band of brew enthusiasts can have even better times. That, my friend, is Surfing the Raddie!

Ron Minkoff has been brewing in the comfort of his driveway since 2003. He is a past president of the Hogtown Brewers and a BJCP-certified beer (and mead) judge. He enjoys spearheading many of his club's fantastic activities, and if you flip a few pages ahead, he'll meet up with you again for some chilled stovetop brewing!



SELL BEER

Commercial beer, that is. This is a terrific club activity that can be used to raise funds for your club, charity, or both. Most of the tasks needed to sell beer are already in your skill set. There are several details needed to pull this off, which you can read about in a previous article titled The Good Life in the May/June 2018 issue of Zymurgy. But I'll summarize the main points here.



AHA CLUB RESOURCES

To access the world's most robust homebrew club resources, including the AHA Insurance program, Homebrew Con past seminars and more, visit HomebrewersAssociation.org.

Also, join the AHA at GABF October 10–12, 2024, in Denver, Colo., to attend the Bootcamp for Club Officers.



FOOD AND WHINE – JUNE 2024

From Ricardo DelosReyes

Flemish Beef Stew

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 pounds beef flatiron or blade steaks, cut into 1/3-inch-thick slices, about 3 inches wide
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 3 cups thickly sliced onions
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- Three 12-ounce cans beer (Any Dark Belgian Style Ale)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- Chopped parsley, for garnish
- Boiled carrots and potatoes, for serving

Directions

1. In an enameled cast-iron casserole, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter. Season the beef with salt and pepper and add one-third of it to the casserole. Cook over moderate heat until lightly browned, 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a bowl. Repeat with 2 more batches of meat, using the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter.
2. Add the onions to the casserole, cover and cook over low heat, stirring, until browned, 8 minutes. Stir in the flour until the onions are well-coated, then slowly add the beer. Return the meat to the casserole along with any accumulated juices. Add the thyme and bay leaves, cover and simmer over low heat, stirring, until the beef is tender, 2 hours.
3. Uncover and transfer the meat to a bowl. Simmer the sauce over moderate heat until thickened slightly. Discard the bay leaves. Return the meat to the casserole and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with parsley and serve with boiled carrots and potatoes.

Make Ahead

The *carbonnade* can be refrigerated for up to 3 days. Reheat gently.

Suggested Pairing

This stew is so hearty that it can handle a very tannic red like Cabernet Sauvignon.

SITES OF INTEREST

Crescent City Homebrewers:

[Crescent City Homebrewers](#)

[CCH Member Application](#)

Local Brewing Supply:

[Brewstock](#)

Louisiana Craft Beer Info:

[Louisiana Craft Brewers Guild](#)

Breweries:

[504 Craft Beer Reserve](#)

[Big Easy Bucha](#)

[Brewery Saint X](#)

[Bayou Teche Brewing Company](#)

[Brieux Carre Brewing Company](#)

[Broad Street Cider & Ale](#)

[Bywater Brew Pub](#)

[Callipe Beer Works](#)

[Chafunkta Brewing Company](#)

[Courtyard Brewery](#)

[Crescent City Brewhouse](#)

[Deutsches Haus](#)

[Ecology Beer Creative and Taproom](#)

[Gnarly Barley Brewing Company](#)

[Gordon Biersch](#)

[Kingfisher Cider](#)

[Miel Brewery and Taproom](#)

[New Orleans Lager and Ale Brewing Company](#)

[Oak Street Brewery](#)

[Old Rail Brewery](#)

[Parish Brewing](#)

[Parleaux Beer Lab](#)

[Port Orleans Brewing Company](#)

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Member Pages:

[Crescent City Brew Talk](#)