



THE FOAM RANGERS Newsletter Urquell

Busy, Busy, Busy!

April 2011 - Volume 31 Pints - Issue 4

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**April
Meeting:
Friday,
April 15th
7:00 p.m.
at DeFalco's**

Bluebonnet Brew-Off Sets New Record!

By Bev Blackwood

The Bluebonnet Brew-Off, one of the nation's largest homebrewing competitions, has set a new record in 2011, their 25th year. Clocking in at over three and one half hours, they handily beat their previous record for long and tedious award ceremonies. "Cut us some slack" urges outgoing Lone Star Circuit President "Just Dave" Girard. "It's our 25th year and we needed to pat everyone ever associated with the event on the back!"

Already delayed by a tardy pub crawl bus, it was rapidly noted that the people on the bus wouldn't have missed anything if they had started on time. "This raffle sucks!" screamed Foam Ranger Bev "Skirtboy" Blackwood. "In fact, it hasn't even started!"



I ain't hearing any awards yet...

He moans, checking the rapidly advancing hour and opening another Bigfoot. By the time the awards were completed after midnight, everyone was too drunk to really remember who had won what. People missing medals, steins or their dignity should contact the Bluebonnet organizers.



Out (of) The Wazoo

By Kyle Jones,
Grand Wazoo

The benefits of batch sparging

The vast majority of the time, when extract brewers are looking to go all-grain, fly sparging is the only process to which they are introduced. By fly sparging, I mean the process where wort is continually run off from below a false bottom or through a manifold while hot water is added slowly to the top of the grain bed. Now don't get me wrong - fly sparging is a perfectly reasonable way to approach all-grain brewing. Fly sparging

has one major advantage over other methods - unparalleled efficiency. This is the reason that fly sparging is the choice for all breweries and brewpubs that brew all-grain- you can get the most extract out of your grain by fly sparging. But you may also extract things you would rather leave behind - like astringent tannins from the grain husks - a common problem when runoff gravities fall too low or the sparge water is too basic (i.e. pH is too low). Also, achieving high efficiency while fly sparging requires a substantial amount of time, as the rate at which sugar is rinsed from the grain bed is continuously declining over time as the total amount of sugar remaining dwindles. Enter batch sparging. Batch sparging refers to a method of mashing and runoff where the sparge water is added in one bulk charge. One runoff is performed after the
(Continued on Page 8)

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First, my thanks to our officers for getting their materials this month in on time! Second, my apologies for running so late with this edition. Brewing, family, MS150 and other issues conspired to keep me from completing the issue by meeting time. I promise to do better next month. Big thanks to Todd for his pH meter article and for Buck's ongoing meadery series!

Seen At The Texas Homebrewers Campout



Was there pig? Of course!



Erik cranks it up a notch...



The butcher of Navasota at work...

Got Hefe?

Compare your Hefe-Weizen with the big boys! Enter your German style helles hefe-weizen in the 2nd annual Hefe-Weizen Shootout. See Doak or Buck for details...



Was there beer? Of course!



**It's a bit complicated...
Let me explain...**



**Sandy? Dammit, get your
butt back in the trailer!**



**Clearly a good time
was had by all!**



This Month in Foam Ranger History

By Sean Lamb, Club Historian (Sorta)

25 Years Ago:

In the Newsletter:

The itinerary for the 4th annual Pub Crawl is set. Most of the places on the list don't exist any more. Dr. Strangebrew tells a new brewer how to keep his beers from being "thin and cidery tasting". The "Rantings and Ravings" column points out that several Foam Rangers are getting married, that DeFalco's is 15 years old, and that club dues have gone up to \$8 per year and everyone needs to pay their F@&!king dues. A brief outline of the history of the Foam Rangers is recounted for everyone's amazement.

At the Meeting:

Held at the Gingerman. Beer of the month was Stouts, draught Guinness stout, Sierra Nevada stout, bottled Guinness stout, Tooth's Sheaf Stout from Australia, and Dragon stout from Jamaica were served.

Other Events:

The First "Texas Homebrew Springfest" gathering at Lake Somerville State Park was held on April 12 & 13. About 50 people attended "members from the new homebrew club in San Antonio, the Bexar Brewers" - but, "members from the North Texas Homebrewers Association in Dallas were conspicuous by their absence."

20 Years Ago:

In the Newsletter:

Grand Wazoo Lou Carrannante declares "Last month's meeting was a blast. A number of our newer members also brought some interesting new beers (nothing under 1.052) to the meeting and I enjoyed it all immensely."

J. D. Gonzales enlightens the readership on the finer qualities of pale ale, covering the history of the beverage and its modern incarnation. Ed Busch contributes an article on the "Ye Olde Yard of Ale Drinking Glass", published by the Dickens Inn "owned by the great Grandson of Charles Dickens" in Philadelphia. Sean Markham continues his "Gallopingsudsucker" column by describing the Brewery Tap bar and giving a recipe for

"Grandma's Breakfast Bread" and "Ken Rich Lasagna". David Power is profiled by J. D. Gonzales.

At the Meeting:

Held at the house of Stacie Watson. John Donaldson made a presentation on brewing in 5 gallon soda cans. "John demonstrated the ease and flexibility of brewing with these canisters"

Other Events:

The 6th annual Texas Homebrewers Campout is held April 27-28 at Lake Somerville State Park. John Donaldson, Tim Case, Jerry Rogen and Ron Kline / Lou Carrannante win at the HWBTA National competition in Reno, NV. Darts Night was held at Cecil's on Gray: "We had a turnout of 10 players. I think someone won but I was paying too much attention to the lovely Urban Animals"

15 Years Ago:

In the Newsletter:

Grand Wazoo Wes Woods thanks the Bank Draft for getting a "bigass mug for the Foam Rangers Waz. What a swell guy. Makes you want to run for office doesn't it?" He also marvels over Larry Mayhew's "worlds most advanced brewing setup" and encourages everyone to come to the meeting at the Mayhew's place to see it. Editor Beto Zuniga describes his brewpubbing trip to California, Oregon and Washington State. A couple of those stupid Dixie Cup post cards from Florida are reprinted. One shows the Dixie Cup in a NASCAR car, another in the jaws of an alligator. Ha ha.

At the Meeting:

Held at the Mayhew's house near Memorial park. Grand Wazoo preached to his faithful from the balcony. Larry demoed his brewing rig. Beer of the month was Pale Ales and IPAs. Karel was too lame to print a list of the beers, so we don't know what was served.

Other Events:

None Noted.

10 Years Ago:

In the Newsletter:

Grand Wazoo Bev Blackwood reminisces about the recent Bluebonnet Brewoff "Several of our members recently represented the club at the Bluebonnet Brew-off and I have to say they put on one heck of a show these Bluebonnet folks, not our members we were just loud and obnoxious." [Some things

(Continued on back cover)

Beer of the Month

Calendar



January 20th, 2012

Porter & Stout



February 17th, 2012

Barleywine & Holiday Beer



March 16th, 2012

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



By Jaime Robles
Secondary Fermenter

For the month of April, we will tour some of the great beers of the British Isles but also

return to our roots – HOMEBREW.

No, this meeting will not replace the homebrew theme for the pool party but I feel that we should share the spotlight with our personal concoctions. Also, there aren't that many examples of Brown, Scottish, Irish, and Old ales around here so it's the perfect occasion to put the "homebrew" back in our homebrew meetings.

As we all know, the British Isles have a long and deeply respected brewing tradition with beers ranging from bitter to malty, and pale to almost black. This evening, we will focus our attention around some of the styles that showcase the richness and depth of the malt – three styles of British browns and one American, Irish Reds, four Scottish ales and, the Old or Stock ale. These styles keep a little bit of the "terroir" element from their place of origin, either due to the water used to brew them or the availability of native ingredients.

Brown Ales This style is amber or brown in color with good clarity. The BJCP currently has three English browns (Mild, Southern English, Northern English) and one American. The Old World versions are malty and moderately hopped, whereas the American style is has the citrus/piney hop character. The tamest of the Browns is the mild ale. But don't let the name fool you. Whether in its pale or dark form, this session ale can pack a lot of malty, rich flavors and is easy to put down several pints of and still be able to function. A mild is great alternative to the mass-produced watery stuff when watching football (pronounced "futbol") or your favorite sport. The Southern Brown style is darker and richer when compared to the Northern version, which

If It isn't Scottish... It Can Still Be Pretty Good!

tends to be a bit drier and has more nuts...I mean nutty flavor. Northern Browns tend to have a higher ABV, too. If I understood my history lesson correctly, the American Brown was actually originated in California but was first introduced into a homebrew competition by the Foam Rangers. Yes, that's why it's called a Texas Brown Ale. Ask one of the older – err, more knowledgeable – Foamies if you don't believe me. Read an interview of Scott Birdwell on this style for further details (<http://texasbeerfreedom.org/2011/02/history-texas-brown-ales/>). The American Brown has to be one of my favorite styles. It combines a rich and roasty malt backbone with a bold amount of bittering and aroma hops. A little bit of everything, all poured into a pint.

Scottish Ales A beer for the malt heads. Unlike British ales, Scottish beers are fermented cooler to suppress esters. The intense sweetness actually comes from the malts used and brewing technique. From the 60 shilling to the high gravity Strong Scotch ale, these beers are definitely malt-forward and rich. Traditionally, since hops were expensive and not native to the area, the Scots used other herbs such as heather to provide another flavor dimension and bitterness. Now, to address the "smoky" character described in the BJCP. This smokiness is very subtle and comes from the peat flavor infused into the local water, which the sweetness of the Scottish yeast strain helps augment. It is not a

rauchbier, folks. Us homebrewers can go about getting this subtle flavor with a very, very small addition of peated malt; a little can go a long way (that's what he said). I use 1 oz of peated malt in 20 lbs of grain and still get dinged on having too much smoke flavor. You know, you'll be fine just leaving it out.

Irish Ales An amber/copper malt-accentuated ale with strong caramel notes and just enough hop bitterness (not much flavor) to prevent it from being cloying. Think of it as a more attenuated Scottish ale. There is also an American version of this, which as expected, has a strong hop character.

Old Ales A rich and complex, usually aged, strong ale born of the British brewing tradition. Common descriptors include vinous, molasses or treacle, sweet, toffee, port-like. This ale is best consumed with a good amount of age on it that develops the malt complexity. Historically, there was a hint of staleness or leather caused by bacteria found in barrels where the beer was aged or stored as stock for later blending. Just as with barleywines, the true skills and knowledge of a brewer are tested in this style. It can be sometimes difficult to distinguish between an English barleywines and Old ales. In some instances, examples of Old ales fill the gap between a strong ESB and a barleywine (i.e winter warmers). However, they can be so similar that you don't even care and drink both as an excuse for learning about the difference.

2nd Annual

Free!

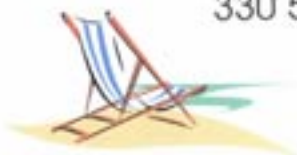
Brew Bayou Beach Blast

Saturday, April 16th, 2011

10:00 am - Sunset

Quintana Beach County Park
330 5th Street, Quintana, TX

(one hour south of Houston)





Do I have any Grey Poupon? But of course!

**Who put this here?
WHO!?!?**



Gimme!



**No more for Scott,
he's raffling tonight...**



**It's not going to make me
look stupid, right?**



**I don't know honey, most
people start out buying
extract by the bucket...**



**Centurion DeWalt hails
the Grand Wazoo!**

Foam Ranger Foto Pages!



Three Horny Devils...



**Andy gets Beer Goddess
express service...**



And then we need blood and hair samples...



Lower... Lower... Almost there... Oh yeah... It's a great beer, I promise...



Missed it by THAT much...

Erik gets lucky...



...while Jackson wonders when he will...

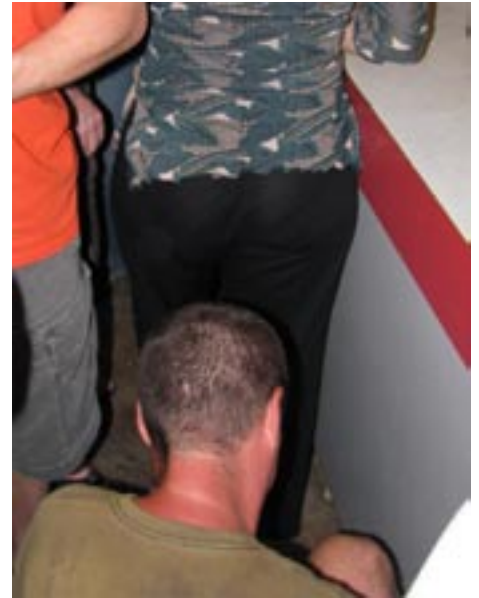


Foam Ranger Foto Pages!

But how do you REALLY feel George?



Andy "Tin Man" Thomas sports a new hat...



Tying your shoe? Suuuure you are!



Aaaannnd... We're Done!

(Wazoo - continued from page 1)

mash time has expired, and then the sparge water is added all at once. The mash is stirred, the filter bed allowed to form again, and then another runoff is performed. Another batch of sparge water can be added, but I stop at a single sparge. Batch sparging has several advantages over fly sparging, and a few disadvantages. One major advantage is that there is essentially no risk of astringency in the wort. In batch sparging, the gravity during each runoff is constant - it does not decrease over time. With a single sparge, the gravity of the second runoff, depending on the gravity of the beer, ranges from 1.014 to 1.022 or higher - well above the threshold for tannin extraction. A second advantage is a decreased boil time. When fly sparging, the wort must be boiled for a long time to evaporate enough water to arrive at the desired original gravity. In batch sparging, the kettle volume at the start of the boil is typically much smaller and can be tailored to the desired boil time. A third advantage is that less time is required on brew day. I typically use a 45 minute mash time and a 10 minute rest after the sparge waters is added, meaning I am ready to start the boil an hour after I start mashing, which is certainly not the case with fly sparging. Finally, I find that my beers are very malty compared to beers made using a fly sparging technique - I have not

verified this scientifically, but I think people who have tried my beer would agree. There is a very plausible explanation for this maltiness, which I will address soon.

The major disadvantage of batch sparging compared to fly sparging is that your efficiency is lower. With only a single charge of sparge water, we will leave some sugars behind in the spent grain. If we perform multiple sparges, we begin to approximate fly sparging and our efficiency increases. At the other extreme, no sparge brewing, our efficiency is very low. Ken Schwarz addressed batch sparging in a very elegant manuscript that is still posted on his website (<http://home.roadrunner.com/~brewbeer/files/nbsparge.html>). In summary, he calculated that efficiency for a single sparge is maximized when the two runoff volumes are equal. The reduced efficiency is accounted for with a "grain scale up factor" based on wort gravity, kettle volume, and other factors. Thus, if you look at my brewing calculation spreadsheet, I have a typical value for brewhouse efficiency (~ 76%), but my actual efficiency is lower by the grain scale up factor. A beer of original gravity 1.052 will have a scale up factor of approximately 12%. This means that I buy 12% more grain, but I spend less money on propane to boil it and I save 30 minutes to an hour on brew day. I scale up both my base and specialty malts. This seems to

give me the right amount of specialty malt character in most cases, and this is what I believe contributes to the maltiness of my beers and the great head formation and retention I typically achieve. However, in very hop-driven beers, you may want to adjust your grain bill to avoid excessive malt character. As the scale up factor increases with original gravity, the amount of grain required to achieve such high gravities may not fit in your mash tun, and you may be forced to resort to fly sparging or supplementing with extract.

As an example, I'll use the numbers calculated for my latest brew, an IPA (you may have tasted it at the March meeting). I built my own spreadsheet starting with a page on batch sparging created by Ken Schwarz.

Target original gravity: 1.065

Desired final volume: 5.5 gal

Necessary wort volume to kettle: 8.5 gal (this high because 8 oz. hops were used, resulting in massive wort absorption)

Boil time: 75 min

Grain bill:

2 lbs light Munich (12.8% of extract)

13.6 lbs Maris Otter (87.2% of extract)

Grain scale up factor: 1.18

Mash water volume: 19 qts

Mash water addition: 7.4 qts

(initial volume restricted to achieve desired mash thickness)

First runoff: 4.35 gal

Sparge water addition: 4.35 gal

Second runoff: 4.35 gal

As you can see, I had to use some extra grain but was rewarded with a shorter boil time and a clean beer. I do think the maltiness was a bit too much, and I would probably eliminate the Munich next time and perhaps substitute domestic 2-row for part of the Maris Otter.

I hope this article inspires fly spargers to think about batch sparging, and also takes some of the mystery out of all-grain brewing for those who are considering the step up. Also, I'll be happy to share my spreadsheet if anyone is interested: just send an email to wazoo@foamrangers.com.

Happy brewing!



Scrivener Sez:

The Care And Feeding Of A pH Meter



By Peter Lott, Scrivener

There is not a lot for me to report this month since I was late to the Ossifers Meeting at the MoonTower. I can report that

the hotdogs are good and they DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH RESTROOMS. If you want further information on what went on there everyone will have to ask someone who didn't have as much to drink as I did, or who was involved in the extramural activities!

Beerbo and I did have a brew in at his house on Tuesday (Bev was invited but was a no show and missed the silliness). We did 2 15 gallon batches and managed to only boil over once and get the wort chillers hooked up backwards once (works really well to melt the ice) but thankfully I bought WAY too much anyway. No such thing as too much ice.



BEER That People Will Drink (In kit form)

We were asked by The Lovely Janet Witaneck what the beer type was and all we could come up with was BEER That People Drink (we hope). Style was unimportant just drinkability. One of Beerbo's previous kegs was floated in the interest of quality control.

[There may have been a club meeting in March, but the Scrivener ignored it. -Ed.]

By Todd Kellenbenz

<Sobbing> "It wasn't my fault. I didn't know"

It turns out I have been abusing my pH meter probes all these years. Like many of you, I have the affordable Hanna Checker handheld. I was

getting relatively short probe life of only a few years. Turns out, you should never let the probe go dry. And just filling the little black cap that comes with it with storage solution is not sufficient unless you refill it every day. Never use plain or distilled water as storage solution.

So here is what I found out and did: First off, a dry unresponsive probe can possibly be salvaged. First try soaking it overnight in some pH 4.0 buffer. It worked for me! If that doesn't work, there are more aggressive methods like soaking in 0.1 M

HCl for a specified time. I won't go in to that. Google it.

There were two recommendations for roll your own storage solution I found. The first was a 3 M KCl solution (224 g of KCl and distilled water to 1 liter).

The second was 2 M KCl in pH 4.0 buffer (149 grams of KCl and pH 4 buffer to 1 liter). The second version is basically what you get when you buy storage solution ready made (which is a 3rd option). If you roll your own, you might also want to add 4% sodium benzoate as a biocide

to prevent mold growth. You will also need a storage bottle. I made one out of a baby food jar and #7 holed stopper. Picture attached. Because of the wide shoulder at the top of the probe, I countersunk the stopper hole with a stone grinder drill attachment so when fully inserted, the probe almost touches the bottom of jar minimizing the amount of solution I need. The standard holed stopper for airlocks is a loose fit on the Hanna checker probe shaft. But after you jam it in about as



A Simple Storage Jar

far as it will go into the jar, it becomes a very snug fit on the shaft.

If you have been abusing your pH probes, isn't time you stopped?





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A Visit To Acoustic Meadery - Continued...

By Buck Wyckoff

When last we saw Buck, he was conversing with Bruce Grossman about Acoustic Meadery in Michigan and of course... Their products!

W: I think honey is a health drink. I mean, you know, in moderation. Alcohol in moderation is good for you and the ingredients in mead are.....

G: Do you want to try some of the cherry?

W: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

G: I usually have stuff on tap

W: So this is fermenting right now

G: Yeah, It's fermenting. It actually should be done in a couple of days.

W: Yeah, so that's you're a....air lock. (Pointing to the clear hose running into a white bucket of water.)

G: It's really slowing down.

W: You said there were three different kinds of apples in this?

G: Yeah. Three different kinds of Michigan apples. There's Golden Delicious, Ida Reds and Romes.

W: Golden Delicious, Ida Reds and Romes? Yeah, I see the orchards all the way from like, Charlevoix to here.

G: Oh yeah.

W: I noticed in the article, you made a comment about plums...they have a hard time selling them and you want to try to help them....give them a venue for their product?

G: Well, I was approached by a guy who sells plums (sets down a drink for me)...

W: Thank you. Beautiful color.

G: You're welcome. They can't....I don't know, they just couldn't give them away. I can't deal with the whole fruit, but.....that actually wasn't what I said. Sometimes things get changed.

W: Every time I've been quoted in an article....this won't happen with me by the way.....I've been quoted in my business in articles....it is always wrong. I don't know if they are stupid

or they just re-write it. So you didn't say that?

G: Not exactly. No.

W: You didn't say you were looking....

G: I didn't say anything like....I don't want to see plum trees get pulled out if they can be profitable. I just said something like, I want to try using plums. There's a lot of plums.

W: (Taking a sip) Ah-h-h-h. The apple's good but I really like this.

G: That's interesting. Some people prefer one over the other. I'm actually not a big cherry person.

W: It almost tastes like it's got a little apple in it. I don't know if it's just the quality of the honey combined with a slight amount of cherry...

G: If you mix them together actually....let me get another glass.

W: I mean, it's a nice rose color.

(Out, then back in with glass in hand)

G: And Guinness will float right on top of that too. And that's really nice.

W: Oh really! When I get home, I should try that.

G: Oh yeah! If you like Guinness, but....it's really good combined actually too, so....(referring to Apple & Cherry Bzzz together)

W: Well, you might start marketing blends.

G: (We sip.) It's real interesting. Because like, the blend....you

can taste cherry and apple, but it almost tastes like something completely different. It's almost like a brand new kind of fruit. I've had cherry apple stuff before, but the mix like that doesn't taste like cherry and apples, so....

W: Chapple, maybe. (chuckles)

G: Yeah, somebody has that out now.

W: Oh really?

G: It's a cherry cider.

W: Is this the kind of carbonation you get on draft? A nice, light

carbonation?

G: Yep. I carb it really low because of the tax break. Beyond a certain volume of CO2 taxes increase.

W: Well, how much is a case?

G: They're 33 a 12.

W: I'll just get a case of each if I can. This will be well received. Yeah, you could like, just make up some name...

G: Well, I have a tropical, but I've only had that available on tap. I'm not making it right now and people really want that. I'm going to change the name to Beach. Beach Bzzzz.

W: Just tell 'em it's Grossman fruit.

G: A mystery fruit. Like schnozberry or something.

W: Yeah. Schnapple. Schnozberry. Willy Wonka-ish.

G: Well, I tell people that sometimes. I want to be the Willy Wonka of the wine world.

W: (Laughs) You'd need some Oompah-loompahs around here.

G: You're looking at him. (Snickers all around.)

G: One reason I use the tart cherries is well, there're local. It's the Michigan big thing down here....but to balance the honey out.

W: Right. It's like hops and malt.

G: I don't add acid. People will add acid blend and stuff like that. I use citric for cleaning and sanitizing, but it doesn't go into the product.

W: Well, it's like a good hop/malt balance, you've got a good honey sweetness and Montmorency Cherry tartness. I saw a sign on the way over here that said "sweet cherries". So

I guess there are other varieties of cherries around here?

G: Yeah. There's a lot of cherries, there's a Balaton, which is a, almost a blend of sweet and tart cherries, but it's really nice. There's

the dark cherries, a couple of different varieties of those. What I really like and haven't made anything from is the white cherries. There are three kinds of white cherries, Emperor, Queen Ann and Rainier. The Emperor's
(Continued on next page)



(Continued from previous page)

are big. They are almost like a little nectarine. And they don't taste real cherry like, and they're....aw....very nice. See, I'm not a cherry person really. I'll buy the white ones. That's it. And the white ones....there's not a lot of growers. And it's hard to make wine out of the white ones, I guess, 'cause they are really slimy to press. One of the wineries, Peninsula Cellars, they make a nice white cherry one. And it's a blend with some grape as well, but it's pretty nice.

W: Do they grow all them cherries up here? Them varieties?

G: Oh yeah. Yep. Everything comes from here.

W: So you didn't say the things about plums that they mentioned in the article?

G: No, I didn't. I'd like to use some

plums. I'm going to probably kick out another two varieties within the next couple of months.

W: What kinds of things are you looking at?

G: I've got two different kinds of... other kinds of honey that I'm going to use.

W: Michigan based honey?

G: Well, one of them is not actually, 'cause I can't get it. It's a buckwheat honey and I can't get it here.

W: That's a darker, stronger flavor.

G: Yeah, it's really nice.

W: So you can do some things with it.

G: It's really unusual and it's really nice. It's got a lot of malty, caramel characteristics to it. And I have another one that....oh...call it blond, but I might even call it platinum, 'cause this is pretty light....you know, the apple....and it's even lighter than that. So I might call it Crystal. And it's just the thistle honey. There's no fruit added back to it. There is cherry actually in the fermentation, but um... it's really light and drier. And the only thing...I've had a couple of people say my stuff's a little sweet. It's only sweet up front, then it disappears.

W: If they think this is sweet, then they should taste mine. But wait until its 18 years old, then it's really good. (Laughs)



G: Yeah. I'll bet.

W: If you can wait that long.

G: But that's been it. What I tell people is, well have another drink of it, 'cause the second drink doesn't seem sweet anymore.

W: So people's reaction is, "Oh, this is a very sweet beverage?"

G: Yeah, but....well, you can measure the residual sugar and it's kind of high. It would be categorized as a sweet wine. What's going on here is more complex than a lot of sweet wines and sweet alcohol beverages that are out there. I've compared it to....Woodchuck's pretty popular.

And I like the Woodchuck stuff. There's not a lot of variation in the flavor profile in a lot of the Woodchuck's stuff. It's a good product. I buy it sometimes and I've tasted it and

I'm like, it's more candy sweet than mine is. Mine's more complex. Well, there's way more going on. They're just kind of sweet, like the Mike's Hard Lemonade and a lot of the malt based beverages.

W: Right.

G: Those are all pretty candy sweet. So taste this, and it doesn't seem sweet really at all and it's certainly not candy sweet.

W: Yeah, I got a friend in Houston who's a real pear cider fan and Ace is his favorite. And, you know, it is pretty good.

G: Yeah, I want to do a pear.

W: I'd like to get him to try this. I think he'll go bonkers for this.

W: What kind of gravity are you hitting?

G: Uh, I hit thirteen bricks.

W: Thirteen bricks?

G: Thirteen plato.

W: Oh, okay.

G: Same thing. It works out to like 10.52 gravity.

W: Uh-huh. So what kind of alcohol...?

G: 6%. Roughly. Give or take. By law or federal regulations, that's as light as you can make wine. It's got to be at least thirteen....

W: So there's a lower limit with alcohol?

G: You can't go below thirteen bricks with honey. So I couldn't make a honey wine or mead that is under 6% because we're really not....well, at least with the honey mixture. Now if you're probably adding more fruit back to it or juice or something like that and it brings it down....and that might not matter. I don't know, that depends, cause....mine are formula wines and I have to submit a formula to the federal government, actually prior to production cause....

W: This is the federal government, not the state?

G: Federal.

W: Why would they care how light it is?

G: I don't know. (We chuckle)

W: Why do they do many of the things they do?

G: And it's the same thing with the bubbles. Why are they taxing the bubbles?

W: They are taxing bubbles?

G: Well, that's why I keep the carbonation low.

W: Be-cause....?

G: If it's carbonated, it will jump to the next higher tax....they consider it...

W: You're tax bracket is based on carbonation?

G: Yeah. Some wines...

W: So like sparkling wines are taxed more than stills?

G: Yeah, yeah. Champagne's taxed a lot higher than still wine for the same strength.

W: That's retarded.

G: Yeah, that's pretty bad. I think a lot of it dates back to....well, you know, there's been a lot of lobbying through the years and wacky laws have been created....and some of the things you can or can't use in wine making...it's really kind of ludicrous.

**To be
continued...
Next month!**



(Continued from page 3)

never change... -Ed.] "Titanic" Bob Daugherty presents the first part of his two article series on Beer Heaven: Belgium in Two Unforgettable Days. A few images from the Bluebonnet foreshadow the Foam Ranger Picture Page. In his Odds & Sods section, Editor David Cato covers Turning Garages into Breweries In Sydney, Australia, and Genetic Engineering for Beer in Norway.

At the Meeting:

Held at DeFalco's on Stella Link. Drunk Ra ate the minutes. Beers of the Month were Saint Arnold Brown, Newcastle Brown, Samuel Smith's Nut Brown, Pete's Wicked Ale. Scottish Ale Belhaven Scottish Ale (in can) English and Scottish Strong Ales Fuller's Vintage Ale 2000, Fuller's 1845 Celebration Ale, Theakston's Old Peculier, Belhaven Wee Heavy, McEwan's Scotch Ale, Gale's Prize Old Ale 1995, Gale's Millennium Ale, Traquair House Ale, Thomas Hardy's Ale 1994, Hair of The Dog Adam Beer, Orkney Brewery's Skullsplitter (Secondary Jimmy Paige's favorite) and other non-style of the month

"surprise" smoky beers that were found between a "rauch" and a hard place.

Other Events:

The First Sunday pub visit was on April 1, the club met at the Texas Brewers Festival at the Garden in the Heights.

5 Years Ago:

In the Newsletter:

Grand Wazoo Rob Kolacny dances

on the graves of the other home brew clubs in Texas and celebrates the Foam Rangers winning the Bluebonnet Cup and reviews the 1st Annual Beer in the Backwoods Homebrew Festival (campout). Secondary "Titanic" BoB Daugherty covers Brown and Mild Ales. Scott DeWalt takes 10 pages to list all of the awards the Foam Rangers won at the Bluebonnet.

At the Meeting:

Held at DeFalco's on Stella Link. Grand Wazoo Rob Kolacny brought some birthday cards for Fred Eckhardt's 80th birthday. The Grand Wazoo then tried to read off all of the Foam Rangers who won at the Bluebonnet Brewoff, but he was soon drowned out by a band of Vikings seated at the back of the room who had begun to sing a song about SPAM, SPAM, SPAM, SPAM.

Other Events:

AHA National Homebrew Competition Southern Regional Judging was held in Houston and organized by Ed Moore.



I WANT TO BE SOMEBODY!



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

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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!)
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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