

THE FOAM RANGERS Brewsletter

VOLUME 33, ISSUE 4



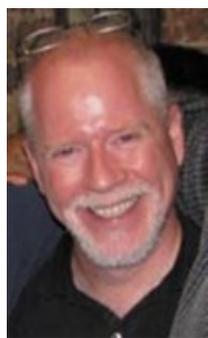
APRIL 2013

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What's a Waz?
- Competition Updates
- OMG Pictures

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Out (of) The Wazoo

Bev Blackwood II, Wazoo

I had the pleasure of exchanging a few e-mails with the original "Grand Wazoo" (or at least the first one we can collectively remember) of the Foam Rangers the other day, the Very Reverend (yes, you read that right) Andrew Bradley, Rector of The Church of the Good Shepherd in Brownwood, Texas. For several years now, we've been trying to fill in the list of our leaders all the way back to the current club's founding in 1983. Sadly, Rev. Bradley doesn't recall who preceded him in the office of Wazoo, stating: "As you may imagine, the names

have faded into the sudsy past." He did note that then (as now) "Scott [Birdwell] served ex-officio regardless of who was in office and was the light and life of the group." For his part, Scott is pretty sure that there weren't any Wazoos before Andrew, as the club itself wasn't exactly "locked down" just yet. "The Houston Homebrewers Guild was founded at the Ale House in late 1980 by myself, John Adams, Steve Liston, John Stone and a couple of others." Scott recalls. "The first "meeting" took place at the shop on Morningside in January 1981. Meetings were "intimate" in those days, we'd be lucky to break double figures at the meetings initially." The club itself wasn't formal-

ized until homebrewing became legal in Texas in 1983, when the Houston Homebrewers Guild formally became The Foam Rangers.

You may well wonder why the obsession with Wazoos past. After all, the club isn't the same now as it was "back in the day." Things change, people move on and new traditions emerge when old ones fade. However, I think that club history is one of those things we forget at our peril. I was rather startled to discover at the beginning of my term that we need to do a bit of tweaking to our articles of incorporation. Why? Well (among other administrative details) we apparently should be holding our elections in

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Beer Style of the Month

Dan Muñoz, Secondary

This month's meeting is focused on a very wide array of beer styles and flavors. Starting with a focus on homebrew, you can ex-

pect to find anything from an imperial stout to a funky, strange fruit beer. Also featured are Scottish, Irish, Old and Brown ales. Some brief history and descriptions from the BJCP guidelines:

Scottish and Irish Ales

The Scottish ale sub-styles are differentiated mainly on gravity and alcoholic strength, although stronger versions will necessarily have slightly more intense flavors (and more hop bitterness to balance the increased malt)

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Letter from the Editor

Lindsey Brewer-Muñoz, Newsletter Editor

Howdy Foam Rangers,

March/April have been insane months for me! Between flying to Europe with the Secondary for a belated honeymoon in Paris and London (IN THE SNOW) and prepping my 6th graders for the STAAR test AND the flu, I honestly don't know how I was able to find any spare time for anything, much less an endeavor such as the Newsletter. In fact, I'm currently sitting in San Antonio, preparing to head to yet another bombardment of staff development. Whew! I cannot wait for summer (or maybe just a couple of beers to relax...). Here's hoping your March and April have been smooth and stress-free.

Thank you to Nena and David for sending in pictures for the Newsletter!

If you have any ideas for articles (or would actually like to write an article), want to share pictures for the newsletter, have any questions or concerns, please feel free to write to me at editor@foamrangers.com

Your 2013 Foam Ranger Officers

Wazoo	Bev Blackwood II	wazoo@foamrangers.com
Secondary Fermenter	Dan Muñoz	secondary@foamrangers.com
Scrivener	Janine Weber	scrivener@foamrangers.com
Purser	Sharon Hayes	purser@foamrangers.com
Newsletter Urquell Editor	Lindsey Brewer-Muñoz	editor@foamrangers.com
Competition Coordinator	David Rogers	competitions@foamrangers.com
Dixie Cup Coordinator	Will Holobowicz	dixiecup@foamrangers.com
Food God	Noel Hart	food@foamrangers.com
IT Coordinator	Alex Cresswell	info@foamrangers.com
Was Waz	Jaime Robles	waswaz@foamrangers.com
Bozo Head of Special Events	Scott Birdwell	stupidtoad@foamrangers.com
Foampage Webmas-	Beto Zuniga	info@foamrangers.com

Beer Style of the Month (Continued)

Traditional Scottish session beers reflect the indigenous ingredients (water, malt), with less hops than their English counterparts (due to the need to import them). Long, cool fermentations are traditionally used in Scottish brewing.

Old Ales—A traditional English ale style, mashed at higher temperatures than strong ales to reduce attenuation, then aged at the brewery after primary fermentation (similar to the process used for historical porters). Often had age-related character (lactic, Brett, oxidation, leather) associated with “stale” beers. Used as stock ales for blending or enjoyed at full strength (stale or stock refers to beers that were aged or stored for a significant period of time). Winter warmers are a more modern style that are multi-, fuller-bodied, often darker beers that may be a brewery’s winter seasonal special offering.

English Brown Ales are generally split into sub-styles along geographic lines. Southern English (or “London-style”) brown ales are darker, sweeter, and lower gravity than their Northern cousins. Developed as a bottled product in the early 20th century out of a reaction against vinous vatted porter and often unpalatable mild. Well suited to London’s water supply.



Out (of) The Wazoo (Continued)

January! (And no matter how much you’d like one, there’s no requirement for us to give you a membership card...)

In the grand scheme of things, those are minor quibbles. What’s more important is remembering how we got to where we are today and the list of Wazoos reminds us exactly how that happened. The Foam Rangers fell on some hard times in the 1990’s as other clubs formed, siphoning off the suburban brewers. Membership dwindled by almost half and had it not been for the efforts of a couple of Sly Bastards, you might be sitting home on the third Friday of every month wondering why there aren’t any good homebrew clubs in central Houston. Looking back, you can see that we have always been a club with a certain character, a certain willingness to push the boundaries of good taste and questionable behavior. It takes people of a certain character to keep that irreverence going, all while trying to not break laws (or toilets) and avoid being so eccentric (or offensive) as to put off our own members.

When I look at that list of past Grand Wazoos, I see people (all of whom I consider good friends) who took on the job for the good of the club, but also to have a good time. People who might say outrageous things, but quietly do what was necessary to keep us going. It goes without saying that any volunteer run organization can lean too heavily on some members for too long and eventually burn them out. We’ve been fortunate to have a dedicated core of officers and individuals who willingly band together to get things done and always seek to recruit new blood into the club to carry it forward into the future. The amazing thing is they’ve managed to do so without becoming boring or so hidebound that our club can’t adapt to the changing homebrewing world around us.

Many people have remarked (with some amazement) at the abundance of homebrew at our meetings. That really shouldn’t come as a surprise to anyone. After all, we **are** a homebrewing club. However, the emphasis hasn’t always been as pronounced as it is now. The present influx of homebrew is the result of several years of effort by recent Grand Wazoos to bring homebrewing back to the center of our club. Sure, it’s great to have beer of the month, but ultimately you can go anywhere to drink commercial beer and the influx of craft brew to Texas has gone from a trickle to a flood in an surprisingly short stretch of time. What better time to re-focus on homebrew and see what our own members can amaze us with?

Hopefully, some things will never change much. The awesome energy and fun of Dixie Cup, the award winning skill of our club’s brewers, the somewhat off-center attitude we bring to the hobby and of course, always remembering “It’s just beer™” when things don’t go our way. One thing is certain to change though... The list of the Grand Wazoos who’ve cared for and nurtured the club through the years will grow longer and new names will be added to carry us forward. As for me, I’m just a guy lucky enough to be on the list for a second time.

Officer Meeting Minutes

Janine "J9" Weber, Scrivener



Rockwell Tavern in Cypress—It's always something! This month the meeting coincided with the pro-am competition at Karbach. Forgive me for not knowing exactly what it was called. Several of our clubbies entered it including David Rogers and Noel Hart.

Who was there: Bev (Waz²) minus the fez, J9 (scrivener) with her pencil, Alex C (IT), Will H (Dixie Cup Coord) and Wes Powell (a past member who was sitting off by hisself and never DID join us!?). By and by, Steve Capo (Lucky Bastard) arrived, later followed by David R (competition coord) and Jeff Riley. Sharon (Purser) was still out because it's still tax time and they wouldn't release her from prison – I mean the office - yet.

Dan and Lindsey (Secondary & Newsletter, respectively), though back from their trip to the Continent and the Island, were not there either....can't remember why.

Several KGB members joined us. The Johnsons were there (Jeff: the Other Skirt Boy, Melinda and Ms Dith <Meridith>), Al Franciosi (who brought home brew!) and some other miscreants who were lurking around the other end of the table. The Lucky Bastard ordered....what else? an Arrogant Bastard. The rest of us ordered from a pretty interesting beer list, though they were running kind of low and blowing kegs left and right, especially after us being there for a few hours.

This was a pretty casual meeting and I'm not sure I caught everything going on, but I was paying attention when the Lucky Bastard volunteered to run the Dixie Cup Pub Crawl. There was some discussion about whether or not to revisit The Usual, a bar favored by women (...). Apparently JD (Gonzales) is working on another kick-ass t-shirt design. Will has been rounding up speakers – he got Chris White from White Labs to commit and it looks like we'll get a panel of Brock Wagner (Saint Arnold), Scott Metzger (Free Tail Brewing) and our own Charles Vallonrat of the Texas Craft Brewers Guild (aka Scary Bastard) to discuss the new beer brewing and distribution laws in Texas.

Around this time David R showed up (doing his best impression of Mr. Excitement) and reported that no Foamers won anything at the Pro-Am competition. Oh well, next time!

Alex C reported on the progress with the database and webpage. He's making some progress but could really use some help from fellow members who have knowledge of webpage design and databases. Apparently Sharon got a bunch of help from Foamies and now has an updated and complete Membership database. Thanks to all who helped with that! That's what it takes to keep a club like ours running: volunteers with skills.

Upcoming KGB competition, the Big Batch Brew Dash, will feature witbier as the competition specialty beer. Plan your brews accordingly.

By this time, we all had at least 2 pints and all I managed to catch were the occasional strange utterance, e.g. the Waz declaring, "...smelled smoke in my piss!" (apparently after drinking a rauchbier). Jeff R was braggin' about how Zainasheff (of Brewing Classic Styles fame) "really liked my smoked chicken!" Just sounded odd. J9 tried to pour the Quad (that Franciosi brought) with the dang cap still on (!? Gotta pay more attention!) Jeff Riley: "Do me! Do me!!" After the scrivener left, Melissa (of David & Melissa fame) arrived after doing some crazy half-Ironman triathlon event. Way to go Melissa!

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Next time you go to Rockwell Tavern, bring your binoculars – their beer board is a TV on the wall, waaay up there. Most of us had to walk up to it and squint to read it. Try their deep-fried pickles, AMAZING!

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"That's what it takes to keep a club like ours running: volunteers with skills."

Second(ary) Thoughts

Dan Muñoz, Secondary

Sh!tfaced Book—Always eager to share what new arrivals I'm imbibing and to see what's available in Houston, I came across an app (and website) that allows me to share what I'm having, what I think, and where I'm drinking. You can add "friends" and compare notes as well as earning badges for the competitive types. All in all, fairly easy (and free) to use. If you're feeling the need to brag about a rare brew you're sipping or just feel like seeing what others are drinking give it a shot. You can check it out at www.untappd.com or Untappd in the app store.



Meeting Pictures



Competition News

David "DR12" Rogers, Competition Coordinator



Results! And lots of details about upcoming competitions...

Foam Rangers, we have results! Bluebonnet BrewOff event was held last month and boy was it an adventure. New rules imposed this year limited each individual to 20 entries regardless if they were part of a team, or individual. There was also a cap of 1500 entries, which was reached prior to registration closing. On the weekend of the event, the Foam Rangers secured a location in the "Room Crawl" area and began

classing up the joint with our paper bag sign and beer label placards. Hors d'oeuvres were served and Friday night's guest speaker was Fritz Rahr began delivering his breweries' marketing slides with additional comedic commentary. After Fritz was done, the commercial tasting began without much of a fanfare. Once folks figured out there was free beer, the room filled to capacity. I took the opportunity to thank brewery representatives that donated to Dixie Cup, and to sample a few new Dallas breweries that don't yet distribute to Houston. Around 10pm, the divider opened and the crowd began flooding in to taste the homebrew. From the Foam Rangers we had Jeff Reilly with a Red Ale, Cream Ale and ESB, Rolland Pate with a Helles and American Pale Ale, and me with a Robust Porter. All of the beers were a hit and we saw several repeat customers throughout the night. Saturday afternoon was focused on the pub crawl because all of the judging had been completed before the festivities began.

Category	Style	Place	Brewer	Beer
2	Pilsner	2nd	David Rogers	German Pilz
7	Kolsh	2nd	David Rogers	Not a Kolsh
9	English Pale Ale	2nd	Scott Fertak	El Bitter
9	English Pale Ale	3rd	Noel Hart	Sir Christopher the Special
10	ESB	1st	Hank Keller	London Calling ESB
21	Strong Stout	3rd	Jeff Reilly	Czar Obama
23	English IPA	2nd	David Rogers	English IPA-A
25	Imperial IPA	2nd	Bev Blackwood	California Dreamin
27	Belgian Wit & Farmhouse	1st	Girthy Fidd	Girthy Wit
29	Sour Ale	3rd	David Rogers	Flanders!
37	Wood Aged Beer	2nd	David Rogers	Whiskey Barrel Imp Stout
39	Traditional Mead	1st	Jeff Reilly	I Regularly Beat My Mesquite

Overall Awards	
Best of Show Mead	Jeff Reilly
Homebrewer of the Year	David Rogers

These awards at Bluebonnet firmly place us in 3rd place in the Lone Star Circuit, 5 points behind Cap & Hare and 12 points behind 1st place. You know what that means, right?! Brew some beer and enter it, ASAP!

In related news to the Lone Star Circuit, there is a new competition that has been added, making this 8 total competitions. This new competition is a subset of BJCP categories and is limited to German Style beers. While the dates haven't been set yet, get your lagers brewing and your refrigerators running for this new competition in August.

In non-Lone Star Circuit news, Karbach's Carboy Class results were announced on April 7th. The winners were: HM: Kevin Mitchell and Jeff Sulton, 3rd: Darrell McGregor, 2nd: Tim Murphy, 1st: Emory Steiner. If you know these folks, thank them, and lead them to the next Foam Rangers meeting.

The next ProAm style competition will be Southern Star's competition. This is an open style, brew whatever you like. It doesn't have to fit any BJCP category, but it would sure help if you want it to do well at GABF. Remember that they need 4 bottles, but also remember that there is no entry fee. Other news for other Texas Pro-Am competitions are as follows: Rogness Pro-Am in Austin, Style is ESB; NXNW ProAm, Style is Fruit Beer; Flix Brewhouse Pro-Am, Style is Belgian Blond Ale. Keep in mind that for every ProAm competition you have to be a member of the AHA to eligible to win.

MCAB time is upon us once again. What does MCAB stand for you ask? Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing. MCAB is a conglomerate brewing competition that you have to "qualify for" by placing 1st in any of the qualifying competitions listed on their site. I sent out an email via the email list as well as on Facebook that listed the qualifying brewers and the categories they qualified with. Dixie Cup and Bluebonnet were MCAB qualifiers last year (2012), but for 2013, Dixie Cup is the only Texas MCAB qualifier. If you'd like to learn more about MCAB, email me or find me at a meeting, or go to their website at <http://masterhomebrewer.org/>. We will have a pack and ship on April 25th at Defalco's. Have your entries labeled and paid for, and bring some packing materials because these beers have to be boxed up and shipped to Saint Paul, MN! If you plan on entering, PLEASE let me know ahead of time so we can work out packing of the entries. A note about a rule change this year, you are only required to send 2 bottles not 3 as in years past.

Just in case you're new to the club, or just haven't paid attention to the competition schedule, here is a list of competitions in the Lone Star Circuit and the months they're held. Keep in mind that entry dates are usually about three weeks prior to the competition date. As I get entry deadlines and competition dates, you'll find them filled in at the bottom of each month's article. I will be organizing the pack and ships for each competition as well, usually 2 weeks prior to the entry deadline.

Make sure you are on the Foam Ranger's email list or Facebook page, as I'll broadcast our pack and ship dates there.

LoneStar Circuit Competitions

Competition Name	Location	Entry Deadline	Competition Date	Pack & Ship
Bluebonnet Brew Off	Dallas	Feb 17	March 22	Feb 15
Alamo City-Cerveza Fest	San Antonio	Mar 16	April	Mar 15
Celtic Brew Off	Arlington	April 4	May 4	Mar 15
Big Batch Brew Bash	Houston	May 11	May 19	Due May 10th
Lunar Rendezbrew	Clear Lake	Early July	August	TBD
Limbo Challenge	Dallas	August	September	TBD
Cactus Challenge	Lubbock	Early August	Late September	TBD
O'Zapft Is!	Fort Worth	August 13-31	September	TBD
Dixie Cup	Houston	September 27	October 18	TBD

Non-Lone Star Circuit Competitions

Competition Name	Location	Entry Deadline	Competition Date	Pack & Ship
MCAB	Saint Paul, MN	May 3rd	May 17-18	April 25th
Southern Star Pro-Am	Conroe	June 7th	TBD	TBD
Rogness Pro-Am	Austin	June 9th	TBD	TBD
Flix Brewhouse Pro-Am	Austin	June 9th	TBD	TBD
NXNW Pro-Am	Austin	June 9th	TBD	TBD
Austin Homebrew Inquisition	Austin	July 7th	August 10th	June 21st

Competition Beer Cam

Pictures of Foam Rangers at various competition events





**I WANT TO BE SOMEBODY IN PARTICULAR!
SIGN ME UP TO BECOME A MEMBER OF
THE FOAM RANGERS HOMEBREW CLUB!**



**20
13**

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

MEMBER E-MAIL _____

2ND MEMBER E-MAIL _____ **PHONE** _____

AMOUNT PAID _____ NEW RENEWAL CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Membership Fees: (per year) \$30.00 Individual / \$40.00 Family (Member +1)

Paid between December 1 and December 31	\$25.00 / \$35.00 (Pay early and save!)
Paid between January 1 & March 31	\$30.00 / \$40.00
Paid between April 1 & June 30	\$25.00 / \$35.00
Paid between July 1 & September 30	\$20.00 / \$30.00
Paid between October 1 & November 30	\$30.00 / \$40.00 (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, 9223 Stella Link, Houston, Texas 77025-3902

Detach & Keep!

Welcome to the Foam Rangers! Now get connected!

We have two E-mail lists:

The Foam Rangers Discussion List & the Foam Rangers Announce List.

What's the difference?

The **Foam Rangers Discussion** list is where people can interact and reply to the posts of other Foam Ranger list members. The **Foam Rangers Announce** list is where the Grand Wazoo posts club announcements and is **not** a discussion list. Anything posted to the Announce list will also be posted to the Discussion list, so you don't have to subscribe to both.

To subscribe to the **Discussion** list, send an e-mail to:

foam-rangers-join@foamrangers.com

To subscribe to the **Announcement** list, send an e-mail to:

foam-rangers-announce-join@foamrangers.com

You will receive a reply from the server with instructions for confirming your subscription.. Follow the instructions to complete the subscription process.

Once you have successfully subscribed, you will receive a reply with the list guidelines as well as instructions for unsubscribing.