



THE FOAM RANGERS

Brewsletter Urquell

March 2018 / Volume 38, Issue: 3

Can February March? No, but April May!
Just in case you forgot, that's your reminder that I'm still doing the brewsletter.

March should be a great month. St. Patty's Day is the 17th, but don't let that deter you from coming to the meeting and pre-gaming! We'll have cash and prizes (we'll have your cash, you might get prizes during the raffle), beer, and food. "Say no more, say no more."

Upcoming Events

- April 8 / Meeting @ TBD
- April 14 / Pros vs Joes Brew-In @ DeFalco's
- April 20 / Club Meeting @ DeFalco's (Brown, Old & Scotch Ales)
- May 26 / Inner-Loop Pub Crawl / \$30 @ store.foamrangers.com

In case you haven't heard, we're having an inner-loop **PUB CRAWL** on May 26th. Tickets can be purchased online for \$30 (includes a pub crawl t-shirt!!!) at:

www.store.foamrangers.com

If you absolutely can't handle interneting, you can purchase your ticket(s) at the meeting from our Purser, Denise Whitney.



Mallard Reactions

Aware		Bluebonnet Brew-off 32	Awards Ceremony March 24th
Achtung!		Lunar Rendezbrew 25	Entry open now thru 29-Mar Drop off at DeFalcos by 29-Mar
Achtung!		Cactus Challenge 21	Entry open now thru 30-Mar Drop off at DeFalcos by 22-Mar Entries being driven to Bluebonnet
Atari!		Alamo City Cerveza Fest 13	Entry period 29-Apr to 20-May Drop off at DeFalcos by 18-May

Bonus: National Homebrew Competition Entries dropped off at De Falcos by 28-Mar



Out (of) The Wazoo

Paul Smith, Grand Wazoo

Greetings Foam Rangers! Things are starting to get exciting in your homebrew club. Dixie Cup planning is well underway, we hope to revive two Foam Ranger traditions, and maybe we can start a new one.

The Dixie Cup site, theme beer, and slogan has been selected. The theme beer is Wood-Aged beers, so if you haven't brew one yet, you are running out of time. The give-away beer has been brewed and is finishing up. Dixie Cup Coordinator Hank Keller is still looking for a Head Judge, Head Steward, data slave, and maybe some additional assistance with scrounging. There are usually a number of members at the monthly meetings that have done one or more of these roles, so if you would like to help out a little in the months of September and October please step forward. We'll make sure you understand the role and get you the support you need.

The Foam Ranger summer pub crawl is back on. We'll be visiting four inner-loop breweries + one additional 'special' stop for tasting/judging of our April brew-in Pro's vs. Joe's brew-off between GABF medal winning John Holler of Holler Brewing and multi-award winning Foam Ranger brew team Ric Heinz/Kyle Autry.

Another tradition that seems to have been lost to the sands of time (when's the last time you got a soap opera reference in the Brewsletter?) is Foam Improvement. This more formal technical aspect of club meetings has not taken place since I have been involved with the club. I don't know how it went down in the past, but it has been decided that we will have a group discussion on a brewing topic at the front island of Defalco's at 8pm. This month's discussion will be on water chemistry. So if you have an interest in improving your all-grain brewing by treating mash and sparge water with appropriate salts for your grain bill and/or style, make your way up to the front of the store after Homebrew Happy Hour. Oh, and we'll need some experienced brewers in this discussion to make this tradition a lasting one. So a little help?

Finally, to acknowledge Fred Eckhart's legacy with the Foam Rangers we will all be selecting a Fred Beer of the Night immediately prior to club news at this month's meeting. Officers will select three homebrews worthy of recognition. Guidelines can be used, but are not mandatory. The beers just need to be deserving of recognition, whatever that means to the officers. Then, to kick off club announcements we will take a quick voice vote from meeting attendees to award Fred Beer of the Night. No prizes, thanks for sharing your outstanding beer!

Cheers, and happy homebrewing.

I want you...to help at Dixie Cup XXXV

First, I'd like to thank those of you who've already volunteered for a role in this year's 35th annual Dixie Cup.

The Dixie Cup is our most visible effort in the homebrewing community and is regarded as one of the premiere Homebrewing events in the country. I can't think of any competition which has merited an entire chapter in a book ("Travels With Barley" by Ken Wells.), as well as 2 mentions in Randy Mosher's book ("A Year of Beer"). Clearly an event of this scope doesn't happen without a lot of dedicated volunteers. I consider my effort at every Dixie Cup to be what I give back to the club in return for all the fun I get to have throughout the year as a Foam Ranger. What's important to remember about volunteering is that you're going to be responsible for a key aspect of the event and the entire Dixie Cup team as well as the club will be counting on you to follow through, regardless of the temptations of beer and fun that will be thrown your way during the event. It's a two day event, with a three week lead-in. All of these roles require more than the two days of Dixie Cup.



What do we need?

Head Steward - Majority of this effort takes place within a month of Dixie Cup. Is responsible for collecting and storing entries immediately before check-in, responsible for coordinating check-in at Saint Arnold. Ensures judging is set up, judging materials (cups, pitchers, pencils, scoresheets, dump buckets) are present for all judging sessions, also makes sure judges get fed in a timely fashion at judging sessions where necessary. Must be available for all judging sessions and check-in.

Head Judge - Majority of this effort takes place within a month of Dixie Cup. Ensuring judging quality is maintained, corralling judges, running competition database, sorting and preparing scoresheets for return to entrants. Decisions regarding judging questions. You must have experience with BJCP judging protocols and must be available for all judging sessions and check-in.

Front Desk Coordinator - Primarily at Dixie Cup only, some advance work required. Shirt sales, managing front desk coverage, handling cash in coordination with the Purser.

Potluck Coordinator - Primarily at Dixie Cup only, some advance work required. Ensuring that the Thursday Reception Dinner goes off without a hitch. Soliciting volunteers to cook main courses and side-dishes, set up and take down.

Cellarman - Primarily at Dixie Cup only, some advance work required. Handling the numerous kegs that are donated to the event, managing the tap table during the event, ensuring beer is available throughout the event and is properly stored and served. Coordinating with the Fred Tasting coordinator to ensure that beers for that event are saved FOR that event and on tap when required.

Trailer - Primarily at Dixie Cup only, some advance work required. Reserving, picking up, driving and returning the refrigerated truck required for the event. Transporting the beer from Saint Arnold to Dixie Cup hotel.

Clean-Up - Primarily at Dixie Cup only, some advance work required. Coordinating volunteers to ensure our mess is cleaned up and interacting with hotel staff when necessary.

The Dixie Cup may be our high profile event, but it's also a key funding source that allows us to have beer of the month, food at meetings, tee-shirts, pub crawls, badges, glassware and other fun things. The club is there for you throughout the year, I hope you'll be there for the club at this year's Dixie Cup.

If interested, Please contact Hank Keller (P) 302-547-9957; or PM on facebook

Beer of the Month

By Steven Distelhorst (Secondary)

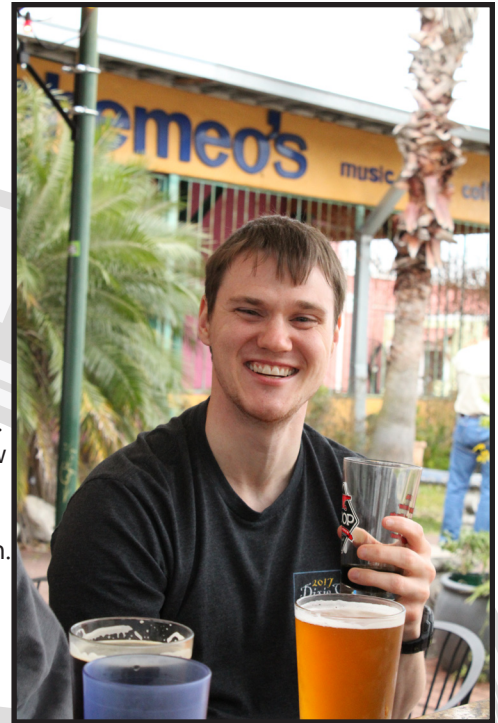
For this month's meeting we drink homage not just to a "style" of beer but rather an entire country: Belgium. Like many other items such as chocolate (or waffles!) the Belgians have and continue to craft some of the best beer in the world. If you walk in to a (good) beer store these days you will almost certainly see some type of beer with the label Belgian style something (blonde, tripel, dubbel, ect). But what is a Belgian or Belgian-style beer (a beer made in Belgium, duh!)? When you think of a Belgian style beer what do you most readily think of, a tripel, witbeer, or perhaps a blonde? The truth is there are so many varieties of Belgian beers that it is nearly impossible to confine them into specific categories. By BJCP standards there are only around 14 Belgian categories but Belgians brew every kind of style from very light and drinkable to robust and complex.

Belgium is and has been a powerhouse and leader in brewing innovation. Brewing and drinking beer is more than just an enjoyable pastime of Belgium but rather is a real part of Belgian culture and society and as such there is an immense and rich history. The beginnings of Belgian beer dates back to at least 1098, around the time of the first crusades, well before Belgium was even a country. From this point and onward brewing and drinking beer became a commonplace in Belgium and continued to grow in popularity. Belgian beers originally began with Christian monks who brewed these delights to drink and give to travellers and the poor but eventually were sold to provide money for charity and to pay for upkeep of their abbeys. As the popularity of these beers grew more abbeys began brewing and selling them and eventually secular breweries emerged to provide more suds to help quench the thirst of the Belgian people. The popularity of beer in Belgium grew so much that by the early 1900s Belgium had more than 3000 breweries. If this number doesn't already astound you let me put this into more perspective; the country of Belgium is approximately the same size as the state of Maryland. So imagine over 3000 breweries all within the borders of a land the size of Maryland, if that does not astound you than I suspect nothing will and you are probably cold and dead inside. Unfortunately, due to both world wars the number of breweries plummeted to less than 750 by the end of WWII and by the late 1970s due to other factors the number of breweries dropped even more. But, fear not, currently more and more Belgian breweries are opening and the numbers are once again on the rise. And that ladies and gentleman is the extremely abridged history of Belgian beer.

As I said previously, there is a huge amount of history surrounding Belgian beer. So much so that there is far more than can be covered in this short article (there have been full books written on the culture and history of Belgian beer), so rather than try to delve into the details of the history lets instead focus on the flavors of Belgian beers. For me, Belgian-style beers, like IPAs, were an acquired taste. The first few times I drank a Belgian-style beer I was not a fan, however, I have since come around and now am a very big fan of these beers. Yet, invariably every time I drink a Belgian beer, even if I am unaware of it being a Belgian-style, I think to myself "this tastes like a Belgian." For those of you who like, or even those who don't like, Belgian-style beers perhaps you have also thought while drinking a beer that it tastes like a Belgian. But seeing as how there is a large variety of Belgian and Belgian-style beers that each have there own flavors and complexities, what does it really mean when a beer "tastes like a Belgian?" While there are probably a multitude of answers to this question, I think one of the prevailing ones is the characteristics imparted by the yeast.

One of the major reasons that I have come to love and respect Belgian beers is for their prominent display of the flavor profile from the yeast (and sometimes bacteria). Any good brewer knows the importance of yeast and the critical role they play in making beer, without them there would be no beer just sweet wort. Despite knowing this, however, we often overlook the role that yeast have in the flavor profile of our beer instead focusing on the malt and hop profiles (and other additives) and thinking only of the yeast as the vehicle with which to convert the wort into beer. Although malt and hops are very important elements of beer and there are many beer styles that show off their array of flavors and characteristics Belgian beers put the yeast at center stage to allow their essence to shine.

Every beer drinker knows that the two major products (which is actually waste) from yeast during fermentation are alcohol and carbon dioxide. But there are also small amounts (in the order of parts per million or billion) of many other products that are produced during the fermentation process as well. The most commonly known types of these products are the esters and phenolic compounds. Often when we think of esters or phenolics we think of off-flavors that we don't want in our beers like nail polish, Band-Aid, or medicinal characteristics, but in the right amount and with the right types



of esters and phenolic compounds the flavor profile of a beer can morph into a wonderful array of complex and delectable flavors. Some of the most popular flavors imparted by these compounds are fruity, spicy, or herbal notes; all of which can be found in different types of Belgian beers.

Just like different people have different personalities so do different strains of yeast. In fact, there are millions of different kinds of yeast strains throughout the world and ever strain is slightly different. Occasionally a home brewer might accidentally get a wild yeast strain in his or her beer and later, upon tasting it, discover that it has certain undesirable flavors. While these "wild" yeast can be problematic for any brewer the fact of the matter is that all yeast used in brewing were at one point and time wild. Similar to the way in which we domesticated cows, horses, and other livestock so too have we domesticated yeast strains. In the earlier days of brewing, before you could go to a local home brew store and buy a specific yeast strain, brewers often only had one or a few different yeast strains to work with and occasionally due to poor sanitation techniques would get a wild strain of yeast in their wort. Not surprisingly, this would change the flavor of their beer. In many cases the new flavors given by this wild yeast were unpleasant and not desired, however, sometimes there were certain flavors or characteristics that altered the profile of the beer in a pleasant and appealing manner. In these cases the brewers would keep these newly (accidentally) discovered yeast strains. To further enhance the beer flavor the brewers would often tweak the recipes or add certain ingredients, such as coriander, orange peel, fruits, etc., to help complement the flavors from these yeasts or sometimes to help hide some of the off-flavors that might have also been coming from this yeast; and because Belgians were not constrained by beer laws (like Germany) or tradition (like Britain) they were free to add whatever ingredient they desired. Over time as these yeast strains were continually used they would change and adapt to the specific beers they were used for in response to the specific components (type of malts, hops, and other ingredients used) found in these beers. While these adaptations were specifically a means for the yeast to better its growth in its environment (aka the wort/beer) they also sometimes resulted in slight changes to the compounds being produced by that yeast strain and very often those changes to the compounds would be complementary to the flavors in the beer that would either accentuate or enhance the profile of the beer.

The result of this active selection of certain yeasts by brewers along with the inherent changes (adaptations) that occur with the yeast over time is what has lead to the domestication of so many different yeast strains that each have very specific flavor profiles. While every beer has some "thumbprint" from the yeast, I think that Belgian yeasts and the flavor profiles they provide (spicy, herbal, fruity, barnyard, bubblegum, and others) to Belgian ales are one of the best examples of how much flavor and complexity yeast can provide to beer. Belgian and Belgain-style beers pay tribute to the yeast and all of the history they, and previous brewers, have gone through for their domestication to provide wonderfully delicious and extreme variety to the world of beer.

So, while you (hopefully) enjoy your next Belgian beer think about the yeast and all it has done and been through to provide you with such a complex and delightful brew. And in conclusion I leave you with this thought: If beer were a theatrical play the wort would be the stage, the hops and adjuncts the props, and the yeast the actors. You can have great props and a really nice stage but if the actors aren't good the play sucks! Cheers!



Foam Rangers Officer Meeting

Minutes by Mike Reed, Scrivener

March 4, 2018 @ Rudyards

In attendance: Paul Smith, Denise Whitney, Steven Distelhorst, Ryann Brzoska, Hank Keller

Discussions:

- Waz discussed the AHA Rally and the surprising number of home brew clubs there are and quite a few are upstarts. A number of the clubs asked about the Holiday Party but felt they would like more frequently. Waz suggested maybe doing something in July. Still have to work out details
- IT – Foam Page (more of the same discussion from February)
 - Discussed adding items to the foam page. Phil and Rich working on web page.
 - Adding the Pub Crawl to the page and cut off dates for registration.
 - Discussion around web domain cost and how to reduce it.
 - Discussion around getting new web page and getting current web page up to date, skills needed to support all IT.
- Finances
 - Food budgets
 - Beer budgets
 - Discussed extra beer and ring toss
- Cub Meetings
 - Rebranding the Happy Hour as a tribute to Fred Eckhart
 - Scott to write something for the Brews letter
 - More discussion about adding a technical aspect to the club meeting, something short. Waz found out from Scott that we use to have something along that line and it was called "Foam Improvement". Waz has been working the issues around discussion topics and how to get it done.
 - Discussion around how to get more people to bring more and better homebrews to the meeting.
 - Have a non completeive judging for the top three beers brought to the meeting. Plan is to state before the general announcements that we will be using officers to select three beers from the ones on table, and then have a voice vote from the club members on which one to the three is best overall.
 - Discussion about having officers meet with people that want to have their beers judged so they can be directed direct them to the right people it judge.
- Discussion around upcoming competitions
- Dixie Cup
 - Hank stated the giveaway beer is almost ready
 - A number of positions have been fill but still need Head Judge and Head Stewart and Data Slave.
 - Discussion about swag and scrounging. Hit in-state breweries around September 1st. Early October start lining up the distributors and the beer.
 - Invite letters to speakers
 - Broadcasting theme beer to other clubs.
 - Discussion around what to do for Friday night. Since we can't do a Fred Tasting.
- Swap Meet
 - Looking around August Brew-in and Foam Rangers to run everything
 - Discussion around details



Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Pictures of People!!!



Taking full advantage of dart date night



No darts, but still date night



What is this? Bowling for ants?!



Photogenic as hell



Social time @ Rudyards after the officer meeting



March Brew-In crowd @ DeFalco's



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



NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

MEMBER E-MAIL _____

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

AMOUNT PAID _____ **NEW** **RENEWAL** **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Membership Fee: \$40.00 Individual / \$60.00 Family (Member +1)

Paid between October 31, 2017 and December 31, 2017: \$35.00 / \$55.00 (Pay early and save!)

All memberships include Dixie Cup admission!

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:



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 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:



The Foam Rangers

foam-rangers-join@foamrangers.com



To subscribe to the **Announce** 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.