

Worts Of Wisdom Newsletter – March 2001

President's Ruminations - What a Year

March is quite a homebrewing month this year. There is some homebrew event on the calendar for almost every week. And looking ahead is more of the same. Check out the calendar. I hope you have been brewing your brains out.

Don't miss meeting Charlie Papazian on March 29. See the article elsewhere in this newsletter. Also, first round entries for the AHA National Homebrew Competition are due by April 13.

Closer to home, we have a barleywine brew day at the Torgrimsons' on April 1. See the article in this newsletter for details.

The MCAB conference is in Berkeley on April 27 - 29. Check out the article in this newsletter. I encourage everybody to attend this event. It clearly is the most affordable technical homebrewing conference in the USA. You don't have to have entered a beer to attend.

The Mountain View Brew Challenge 2001 is on May 7. See the article in this newsletter. This is a fun event - not a serious competition. The purpose is to get brewers brewing, comparing brewing notes with fellow brewers, and having fun.

If you haven't been brewing, shame on you. Ideally, every homebrewer would have a supply of great homebrewed beer in his larder, just waiting for the next appropriate party, club meeting or competition. Somehow, I have never figured out how to do this. At any given time, I probably don't have ANY beer, or it's not ready, or it is the wrong style, or (DUM de DUM DUM) it's BAD beer. If I were truly organized, I would have beer of all styles in ready supply. Dream on. At least I plan to look over the upcoming style-sensitive events and I'm going to try to brew those styles in time for the events. This may even spur me to brew a style I have never brewed before, or not in a long time. If I pursue this long enough I will be able to say that I have brewed bad beer in every style. How's that for a statement of accomplishment.

As usual, I encourage members to open up their brew sessions to others. These events are an excellent way for club members to learn more about how their peers brew, and to pick up some useful ideas not only from the brewing, but also from the informal discussions of materials, techniques, etc. If you would like to open your brew session to club members, send an email to WOW members with details. Maybe nobody will show up and that is fine; maybe several people will come by and that is fine also. At my last brew day, several members and prospective members stopped by. In addition to brewing two batches of beer with only a few anomalies, we tasted some of my finest, and not-so-finest beer. You can email all the members by sending a message to wow@wortsofwisdom.org.

On the brewing front, last year was a hard year for many of us, with limited opportunities to brew. Already this year, I am brewing more, and I observe that other WOW members also are brewing more. Don't be left behind. Prove you too can make beer either better or worse than fellow club members. Maybe we should have a tasting to select the worst beer at a club meeting. If you DO, by chance, make some bad beer, don't throw all of it away. Give me a few bottles. They always come in handy for BJCP exam study sessions and Dr. Beer clinics.

Now, let's get out there and BREW. DO IT NOW!!

Peter

March Meeting - Belgian Beer

The March meeting will be on Wednesday, March 28, 7:30 PM at David Sanford's house in Los Altos. See the map in this newsletter for directions.

Phil Montalbano will discuss Belgian beer and we will taste some samples. This should be fun and informative.

We will discuss upcoming events such as our barleywine brew day on April 1, and the Mountain View Brew Challenge on May 7.

There will be the usual socializing, comparing brewing notes and tasting of beer.

AHA On The Road Featuring Charlie Papazian

Mark March 29 on your calendar. Charlie Papazian, a founder of the American Homebrewing Association, will be in town. You have two opportunities to meet Charlie, taste some beer, and generally hang out with fellow brewers:

- Fermentation Frenzy - Charlie will be at Phil's store in the afternoon. Stop in to taste some beer with Charlie, and bring some of your own beer if you have some available.
- Tied House in Mountain View - Charlie will be here for dinner. Come by to hang out with fellow brewers and taste some more beer.

Don't miss these opportunities to meet one of homebrewing's legends. In fact, don't miss either opportunity. Come to both Fermentation Frenzy AND the Tied House.

Barrel-Aged Barleywine

Phil Montalbano is making available a barrel of ~13 gallons for aging some barleywine. The general plan is to brew several batches of barleywine and to combine and age them in the barrel. We will need some extra barleywine to top up the barrel. We plan to keg and/or bottle some of the combined batch so we can compare with the barrel-aged batch. We also plan to keg or bottle some of the individual barleywines so we can compare them with the combined batches.

We need a minimum of four brews so we will have enough for the barrel and some left over. Five or six brews would be even better. To get this event going, we are having a brew day at the Torgrimsons' on Sunday, April 1, starting about 10 AM. Bring your equipment and BREW. If brewing away from your regular location is too hard, brew at your house on or about April 1.

Phil has made his cellar available for fermenting the brews. Once fermentation is complete we will start the barrel aging.

Several members have already expressed interest in this project. If I know of your interest, I have already contacted you. If you have not heard from me and are interested, please contact me and get on the roster. DO IT NOW!! If you want to form a team, that is great. Either English-style or American-style barleywine is OK - there are no recipe restrictions, so BREW YOUR BEST. Start planning now so you won't be left behind.

MCAB in April

No, this is not exactly like Paris in April, or is it April in Paris? Anyway, MCAB will be in Berkeley on April 27 - 29. This is not Berkeley, France, but Berkeley, California - right up the road. This is as close to home as we are likely to find the MCAB. DON'T MISS IT.

For those of you who are not sure what I am talking about, MCAB is the abbreviation for Masters Championship of Amateur Brewing. It is a grass roots amateur brewing championship and is the

most serious homebrewing event around. Entering MCAB is not open like most homebrew competitions. To qualify to enter, you must win a first place in one of the MCAB qualifying competitions, of which there are very few. We are lucky in that the World Cup of Beer Competition, sponsored by the Bay Area Mashers, is a qualifying event. If you do win a first place at a qualifying event, that constitutes an invitation to enter a beer of the same style as your first place winner.

You do not have to enter the competition to attend the technical conference. This conference is the best and most serious homebrewing conference anywhere. The highest concentration of well-known (can we say famous?) homebrewers will be at this conference. Some of the speakers and topics are:

- Ray Daniels - Emerging new roles for amateur brewers
- George Fix - Malt flavors explored
- Louis Bonham/Dave Sapsis - Flavor spiking seminar
- Scott Bickham - Beer evaluation mechanics
- Martin Lodahl - TBD - probably a style talk
- Peter Garofalo - The making of a good scoresheet
- John Palmer - Amateur experimentation - lauter flow
- Mike Riddle - Holes in beer flavor space: New style opportunities
- Dave Sapsis - Testing judge effects

The cost of the conference is \$40. Check out the details at www.bayareamashers.org.

Mountain View Brew Challenge 2001

Don't miss the Brew Challenge party at the Tied House in Mountain View on May 7. Bring your Brew Challenge beer(s) or just come to taste the beers that other brewers have made for this event.

The Challenge: Using the specified ingredients, brew your best ale and bring it to the Brew Challenge. Compare brews and brewing notes with fellow homebrewers in a relaxed atmosphere of camaraderie.

Brewing Instructions: Only the following ingredients may be used. Any quantities of these ingredients may be used. The original gravity should be less than 1.064 (16°P.).

- Grain: (For each production method):
 - Extract: Any malt extracts may be used.
 - Extract/Grain: Alexander's Light extract, 60L Crystal Malt and Chocolate Malt may be used. [See Item 2.]
 - All-Grain: Pale Ale Malt, 60L Crystal Malt and Chocolate Malt may be used.
- Hops: Cascade and/or Goldings hops may be used.
- Yeast: Any variety of yeast may be used.
- Other ingredients:
 - Irish Moss or other finings may be used.
 - Malt extract and/or sugar may be used for bottle conditioning.

Donated Ingredients:

- Hops have been donated by Tied House Cafe & Brewery.
- Crystal and Chocolate Malts have been donated by Fermentation Frenzy.

Donated ingredients are distributed through Fermentation Frenzy (650-949-2739) in quantities suitable for a 5-gallon batch (4 oz. of either variety of hops, or 2 oz. each of both varieties; 1 lb. of either grain, or 8 oz. each of both grains).

Restrictions on Recipe: Any beer using only the specified ingredients is eligible for entry into Brew Challenge 2001. Brewers are encouraged to use their creativity.

Multiple Entries: Multiple entries per brewer are encouraged. Donated ingredients are for the first batch only.

Packaging: Brewers are encouraged to package their beer in bottles rather than kegs, for ease of serving. Please bring 12 - 24 bottles of your beer so that everybody can taste it.

Entering Brew Challenge 2001: To enter your beer(s) just bring it to the event. We will register the beer at the door. Please bring the recipe so you and other brewers can compare notes on recipes and results.

For complete details, check out the flyer on www.wortsofwisdom.org or see me for a hardcopy flyer.

Silicon Valley Sudzers Cooperative Events

The Silicon Valley Sudzers, a neighboring homebrew club in south San Jose, has invited us to their summer picnic, June 16. If you are interested, please contact Peter.

The Sudzers also are planning a trip to Chico for a tour of the Sierra Nevada Brewery. They have invited us to go along. They plan to rent a van or bus and make it an overnight event. The current plan is to schedule this event for sometime this next summer or fall. Please contact Peter if you are interested in participating.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 28 - WOW Meeting, David Sanford's house

March 29 - Charlie Papazian at Fermentation Frenzy and Tied House

April 1 - Barleywine brew day - Torgrimsons'

April 13 - AHA National Homebrew Competition - First round entries due

April 25 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

April 27-29 - 3rd Annual MCAB Competition and Technical Conference, Berkeley

May 5 - AHA Big Brew 2001

May 7 - Brew Challenge 2001, Tied House, Mountain View

May 21 - AHA Bockanalia Club-Only Competition - Entries due

May 30 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

June 16 - Silicon Valley Sudzers picnic

June 20-23 - AHA National Homebrewers - 2001 Conference, Los Angeles

June 27 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

July 7-July 21 - Small Brewers Festival - Entries due

July/August - WOW Summer Picnic - Let's pick a date

July 25 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

August - AHA Wit Club-Only Competition - Entries due

August 4 - Finals Judging, Small brewers Festival Amateur Beer Competition

August 11-12 - Small Brewers Festival of California, Mountain View

August 29 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

September/October - WOW English Pub Crawl, York, UK

September 14-16 - Northern California Homebrew Festival, Napa

September 26 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

September 27-29 - Great American Beer Festival, Denver

October - AHA California Common Club-Only Competition - Entries due

October 31 - WOW Meeting, location TBA

November 10 - California State Homebrew Competition, Stern Grove, San Francisco

November 3 - Teach A Friend To Homebrew Day

December 2 - WOW Holiday Party (tentative)

December - AHA Mild Club-Only Competition - Entries due