



BURP NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the
BREWERS UNITED FOR REAL POTABLES

From man's sweat and God's love, beer came into the world.
– St. Arnoldus



Beth Madden, Editor
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October 2009

4305 Vermont Ave
Alexandria, VA 22304



October Meeting
Sour Ale Competition
Arlington, VA
Saturday, 10 October, 2009
1:00-6:00 PM

November Meeting
Real Ale Competition
Saturday, 7 November 2009
Rockville, MD
12:00-6:00 PM

December Meeting - Holiday Party
Winter Warmer Competition
Arlington, VA
Wednesday, 16 December, 2009
6:00-10:00 PM

Rambling with Andy

By Andy Anderson, Fearless Leader

Bologna!

Although I suppose you could also say "Baloney" (I've never been certain about the correct spelling of a word that has both an Italian and an Americanized "correct" spelling. But I do know that some of the synonyms for the non-sausage definition of the "baloney" spelling get applied to my writing: nonsense, garbage, twaddle, claptrap, bunkum, and hogwash. However, as the Bard might have said, "But I digress ...")

But back to Baloney, I was thinking, for a foodie, with which beer should it be paired to have the ultimate gourmet experience? As Garret Oliver points out, beer may offer a greater range of food-pairing opportunities than even wine. In fact in one of his "Beer Hunter" episodes, didn't Michael Jackson wax eloquent over the ability of Westmalle Tripel to pair with asparagus? (Although I've never tried that pairing, as asparagus is green, and I try to avoid all green food. Hey! If green meat is bad, then aren't green vegetables also bad? Or is that all vegetables ...?)

But back to Bologna, yet again, I can understand the desire to elevate the status of beer to a level comparable to wine by discussing how well it can pair with specific foods. But when you do that, you

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tend to focus only on more “sophisticated” foods. I’m not saying that we really need to know what Trappist elixir best matches pork rinds, but rather what beers best match some of the more traditional American foods. That’s why I’m a big fan of our May contest which is Best Beer to serve with Chili. Anyway, one final note before I (blessedly) end this topic: I’ll be running the Best Of The Fest contest at this year’s Shirlington Oktoberfest. I think I’ll bring a pound of Oscar Meyer’s finest to see which Oktoberfest best pairs with bologna ... I know, I know ... “Baloney!”

On the subject of Oktoberfest, BURP really had a fine one just a couple of weeks ago. For those of you who made it, I think you will agree that it really worked out well for us. While it started to rain a bit around halfway through the meeting, we were under one of the pavilion tops at Seneca Creek State Park in Montgomery County, so we never got wet. There were quite a few kegs of tasty Germanic-themed homebrewed lagers, and **Tim Artz** brought 12 chickens and 75 brats he had smoked the previous day. Add to this the 20 lbs of German Gourmet potato salad, and we were talking about some seriously satisfied bellies ☺

The October meeting will be **at Bud and Helen Hensgen’s** house in Arlington, VA this Saturday. October is turning out to be a very busy beer month with the Shirlington O’Fest on 10/4, the Chesapeake Real Ale Fest on 10/17, and the Northern Virginia Brewfest on 10/24. But make sure you plan time to be at Bud and Helen’s house this Saturday!

In the meantime, go brew a beer!
(And make it a Real Ale) Cheers!

From the Ministry of Culture

*By A.J. deLange and Christine Johnbrier,
Co-Ministers of Culture*

The BURP Oktoberfest was certainly a success in many ways. Unbelievable food and beer, oom pah pah music, and we even got some German weather. The competition was also a success with 13 entries: 2 Viennas, 4 Märzen/Oktoberfest, 1 Maibock, 4 Bocks and 2 Doppelbocks. These were judged in 2 flights by **Yancy Bodenstein** and **Kathy Koch** on the VMOs and **Herb Rose** and

Andy Anderson on the Bocks. We note that Andy and Herb both won big in the raffle using the tickets given to judges as a “thank you” from the club. And along with that, of course, goes a big “Thank You” from your MOC’s.

First place went to **Mel Thompson** for a Bock, Second Place to **Jamie and Paul Langlie** for their Märzen/Oktoberfest and third place to **Mel** for his Märzen/Oktoberfest. The 4 BOTY points Mel garners for his two wins put him out of reach of the honors again this year with 34 points. The closest contender (**Ed Bielaus**) lags by 16 points and so it looks as if Mel has done it again!

At the upcoming meeting at **Bud and Helen’s** we will be judging Sour Ales (BJCP categories 17A – F, a most diverse group of beers ranging from the relatively simple Berliner Weiße (subcategory A) through the immensely complex Gueze’s (E) and Lambics (F). So diverse is this group of beers that we couldn’t do even a skimming discussion of them in the space allotted here. The family seems to have 2 things in common: lactic acid and wheat (with the Flanders ales being an exception with respect to the wheat). The lactic acid may come largely, but not completely, from *Lactobacillus* species and other “bugs” such as enteric bacteria, *Pediococcus* spp. and yeasts other than *Saccharomyces* (notably *Brettanomyces*), which put an incredible spectrum of flavors into these beers without even considering the fruit flavors which infuse the Lambics. The lactic acid tartness renders these beers incredibly refreshing.

Given that the lambics and guezes are brewed with wild flora found only at certain times of year in a small region of Belgium (the Payottenland), it is clear that homebrewers cannot exactly reproduce these beers, and yet so called “pseudo lambics” can be quite good and quite suggestive of their Belgian prototypes.

To enter a beer in this Saturday’s contest, please bring 2 bottles and, as always, if you would like to judge please drop Christine a line or contact her early at the meeting.

Artz's Craft: Enlightenment Update

By Tim Artz, Minister of Enlightenment

This newsletter sure came around fast. It was great to see everyone at the BURP Oktoberfest and to hear from folks about how their ciders are coming along. Mine are coming along nicely too, and we are looking forward to a future tasting to compare results.

October features three BURP educational events.

Sunday October 18th, I will be leading a Meadmaking Workshop. We will get started around 9am. I plan to cover a brief intro on beekeeping and honey production, we will taste some different honeys, discuss some techniques for making meads, make a batch of mead, and taste a few meads. I have several folks signed up already, and there is still room for a couple more. There is a \$5 cost for materials.



Dot Artz extracts honey in the Artz's Twin Mill Brewery.
Photo by **Ben Artz**.

Ty Ming will lead an All-Grain brewing session to help a small group of extract or partial mash brewers make the transition to all-grain. Be on the lookout for Ty's announcement to be a part of this event. He is planning to brew a Mild that will be entered in the upcoming Real Ale Competition.

Next up is a class in Yeast Metabolism by **Wendy Aaronson** and **Tim Pohlhaus**. This class is for the folks who want to learn the science behind brewing. Understanding how yeast works and what can go wrong will help you make better beer! Details on the date, time, location and syllabus are forthcoming.

Announcing the 13th BURP Real Ale Competition

By Tom Cannon

The 2009 BURP Real Ale Festival will be held at the November meeting at **Bill and Wendy's** house on Saturday, 7 November. This is just a heads-up to remind everyone so they can start brewing those yummy Real Ale's for the competition.

The rules are that this is a keg competition only and that you must enter at least two gallons of ale for the event. We will be accepting entries in the following categories: Mild, Ordinary Bitter, Special or Best Bitter, Golden Ale, Strong Bitter or Extra Special Bitter, Northern English Brown Ale, Southern English Brown Ale, Old Ale, Strong Mild, Brown Porter, Dry Stout, Sweet Stout, Oatmeal Stout, Scottish Light 60/-, Scottish Heavy 70/-, Scottish Export 80/-, and Strong Scotch Ale. Style descriptions are on the Real Ale Page of the BURP website.

The entries will be accepted at Bill and Wendy's house starting on Sunday, November 1, though we will continue to accept entries up until the time of the competition on Friday, November 6. It is always a good idea, however, to get your keg there early so it has time to settle and clear. You can trust the team of crack BURP cellermen to care for your entries as if it were their own.

Remember, this is a Cask Conditioned Real Ale event, so please make sure your entries are naturally carbonated, that is, no forced carbonation please.

The entries will be judged the Friday night before the BURP meeting in a closed competition. But don't worry about beer running out as plenty of tasty ale will be available for all at the Saturday BURP meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at Cannon@burp.org. I will be making several trips up to Rockville the week leading up to the competition and I am quite happy to bring Northern Virginia kegs up with me.

NOTE TO BEER ENGINE OWNERS: Expect an e-mail soon to solicit use of your engine. This competition and resulting festival is dependant

upon the use of the BURP beer engines, so we are all grateful for letting the club use your engine.

Good luck to all in this year's Real Ale Festival and don't forget, the November meeting is all about FREE BEER!!!

BURP Oktoberfest Meeting Report

By Bill Ridgely

This was not the first time BURP had held a meeting at the Seneca Creek State Park Buck Pavilion. The first time was in 2006 for the club's 25th anniversary bash (also in September). The weather was a little nicer the first time, but at least the rain held off this year until mid-afternoon. And being under cover with great beer, great food, and great gemutlichkeit made the rain an afterthought anyway.

About 40 people made the trek to Gaithersburg, MD for the event, and while this was a somewhat smaller crowd than usual for a BURP meeting, it made for more abundant beer and food for all present. Several seldom seen (**Howard Michelsen**, **John Sedlander**) and former (**Ken Graham**) BURPers were in attendance. It was great to see these folks again! Longtime member **Ralph Bucca** brought his now-grown son **Keith**. A number of other offspring were in evidence, especially the younger set who seemed to really enjoy playing in the rain.

Many thanks go to the members who helped make this meeting a rousing success, especially Mr. "Free Beer" himself, **Tim Artz**, who prepared enough marinated and smoked chicken and bratwurst to feed a fair sized army. Most of the cooking was done on Tim's famous "porkulator" at home, but the chickens were reheated and crisped on one of the charcoal grills provided at the pavilion. A second grill was used for the brats. In addition, Tim brought about a gallon of his renowned and very delicious homemade sauerkraut. To complete the club-provided fare, **Robert Stevens** procured 20 lbs of delicious German potato salad and some gourmet mustards from the *German Gourmet* in Falls Church. Put this together with the wonderful food contributions of all those attending and the

recorded Gemutlichkeit music provided by **Jamie & Paul Langlie**, and you have one great Oktoberfest. Even the ranger who stopped by to check on us said she was sorry to be on duty and unable to participate because we were having way more fun than anyone else in the park. As is traditional at this event, a number of kegs of German-style beers were contributed by BURPers. Our head chef **Tim Artz** brought a keg of delightful Doppelbock. Oktoberfest beers were provided by **Jamie & Paul Langlie**, **Mel Thompson** and **A.J. deLange** (Alas, most of A.J.'s beer leaked out into the tub holding his keg, which didn't stop several people from scooping out multiple samples - after **Wendy Aaronson** went to great trouble to remove all of the ice). **Ed Bielaus** brought an outstanding Swartzbier. **Ty Ming** contributed a Bock, and the **Aaronridge Brewery (Bill & Wendy)** brought a Maibock. **Bill & Christie Newman** brought a tasty and unique pils brewed with apple, cherry, & oak-smoked malt obtained from the *Copper Fox* distillery in Sperryville, VA. Several of the keg beers were also entered in the German Amber Lager and Bock competition judged at the meeting. Competition winners were **Mel Thompson** (1st for a Bock, 3rd for a Festbier) and **Jamie & Paul Langlie** (2nd for a Festbier). In the non-beer category, there were several meads contributed. **Yancy Bodenstein**, one of BURP's most distinguished meadmakers, brought a delectable Cyser (apple mead), flavored with raisins, dates, and vanilla beans. Other meads available for tasting included **Tim Artz's** Cyser and Kaffir Lime Mead and **John Syms'** Cyser.

Food contributions ran the gamut from German-themed dishes (**Wendy Aaronson's** red cabbage made with festbier, **Howard Michelsen's** delicious spaetzel, **Dona & Woody Lee's** buttered bread with scallions - yes, a Munich biergarten specialty) to two varieties of deviled eggs (from **Ralph Bucca & Alison Skeel**), delicious spicy "backseat beans" (from **Bill & Christie Newman**), some incredibly stinky Limburger cheese (from **Jamie & Paul Langlie**), homemade pretzels (from **Dave & Becky Pyle**), and a wonderful banana walnut chocolate chip cake (from **Ken Graham**). Lots of other cheeses, crackers, dips, and spreads rounded out the fare provided by the hungry masses.

All in all, an excellent time was had by all. Perhaps we should reserve this site again for BURP's gala 30th anniversary celebration in Sep 2011 (if not sooner).

Trivial Beer-Suits

Oct 2009

By *Charlie Pavitt*



With this month's trivialities, I move on to an interesting book by Stephen Harrod Buhner entitled *Sacred and Herbal Healing Beers*. Buhner is apparently interested in alerting readers not only to a history of brewing previous to and independent from commercial interests, but also, as revealed in the title, to the role beer has played in medicinal and religious traditions from around the world. I must admit that I was disappointed by a first chapter in which the author castigates mainstream academic thought for bias against the practices of the "uncivilized." In one particular off-putting paragraph, Buhner claims that "there is an embedded assumption in evolutionary theory that the human race came from some prehuman source and through natural selection is headed someplace incredible, some peak of evolution that is our ultimate destination," resulting in "an inescapable disrespect for the cultures of the past, an inherent though subtle denigration of our present state, and a desire to get where we are going so we can finally be of worth, finally be evolved" (all page 6). Fundamentally false. Evolutionary theory implies that organisms are selected for their ability to prosper given the environmental conditions within which they live, and it follows from the theory that if humanity continues to destroy the planet as we have been doing at an ever increasing rate for the past two centuries, we can easily be brushed aside in favor of other species more attuned to the wreckage. Methinks there is no rock throwing in a glass house; Mr. Buhner has his own biases just assuredly as some of the anthropologists he quotes.

But anyway, on to the show. The second chapter turns our attention to mead, which Buhner claims to be the most ancient fermented drink, appearing independently wherever honey was present in

every major ancient cultural group in the Eastern Hemisphere. Buhner refers to the ancient Norse legend the Edda (misleading according to Wikipedia, which claims that there are many such eddas, either poems or prose accounts of ancient times) in which the hero Kvaser, a man of infinite wisdom produced by the gods in order to settle disputes among them, was murdered by the "dwarves who loved him not." Mixing his blood with honey, the dwarves produced the first mead, which they hoarded for themselves until it was stolen by the giant Suttung, finally ending up with the chief god Odin who, in trying to keep it away from Suttung, spilled a bit down on earth, leading to its discovery by humanity.

Buhner believes that these evil "dwarves" were in actuality a reference to the Picts, the ancient Scottish tribes who probably predated the Celts. They produced a heather mead, which he believes to have included both the plant itself and honey made from it, the latter by adding the entire hive (bees included) into the brewpot. The plant is regularly covered by a moss locally called fogg, which features "mildly narcotic aspects" and is now routinely washed off by brewers using the heather plant. Mead has been long said to both protect against and cure a great variety of diseases, and Buhner puts great effort in explaining why that might well be the case. It is at this point that he loses me. Buhner claims so many health benefits for each "ingredient" in this mead that it reads like an advertisement for patent medicines from 150 years ago. He accepts at face value reported life spans of up to 152 years for people consuming large amounts of honey.

Honey is also credited with increased fertility. One of the supposed Methuselahs supposedly sired a son at age 98. Buhner believes that the term "honeymoon" comes from the practice of newlyweds eating lots of honey during their first married month to increase the odds of a quick pregnancy. Wikipedia isn't so sure, listing several etymologies, but including a parallel one that I have read before, "in many parts of Europe it was traditional to supply a newly married couple with enough mead for a month, ensuring happiness and fertility." I believe this more likely to be correct, given the well-documented association between weddings and brewing in the Middle Ages; the term

"bridal" comes from the "bride's ale" traditionally brewed for the ceremony.

BURP 10 and 20 Years Ago

Compiled By Bill Ridgely

20 Years Ago, Oct 1989

The October BURP meeting was held at the home of **John "Frugal Brewer" Gardiner** and his erstwhile partner **Pat Compton** in Annandale, VA on Oct 28, good timing for the club's annual Halloween Party and "Weird Beer" Competition. This year, a 2nd competition was thrown into the mix to pick BURP's entry in the AHA Club-Only "Best of the Fest" Competition. The winners of the first competition were selected by all present in an informal vote, but the festbier winner was chosen by a panel of BURP's finest beer judges. To make that task easier (and provide great commercial festbier for everyone to enjoy), the *British Brewing Co* in Glen Burnie contributed a keg of their own seasonal festbier. The meeting started at 6:00 PM, later than usual, so John and Pat asked attendees to bring potluck dinner items for a real old fashioned MASHOUT-style supper. They also pulled out all the stops in setting the mood with an extensive array of Halloween-themed decorations. Not surprisingly, many of the costumes worn by club members were beer-themed. The host wore a large Tuborg beer keg costume with a working tap, a costume which would soon gain a measure of infamy at BURP's homebrewing demonstration held at the Brickskeller in April 1990. **Bert Tagge** arrived as a can of beer, **Dick Roepke** as a bottle of beer, and **Bob Wright** as that great patriot, "Nathan Ale". Bob also came up a winner in the Weird Beer competition with his "Yellow Dog Maple Ginger Ale". **Alex Kampf** took 2nd with his "Honey Ginger Ale", and BURP Prez **Tom McGonigle** took 3rd with his "Rye Ale" (At the time, rye was indeed considered a "weird" ingredient, which is not so much the case anymore). Of the 11 weird beers on the table, other notables included **Ken Graham's** "Coffee Beer", **Rick Garvin's** two varieties of "Raspberry Beer", and **Tom McGonigle's** "Drink Like an Egyptian", his attempt to recreate an ancient recipe using barley, wheat, and date sugar (and no hops). BURP News editor **Erik Henchal** won the festbier competition with his "Fest #11".

The Oct 1989 BURP News was the second issue under the editorship of **Erik Henchal**. Erik took over from **Andy Beaulieu**, who was called away from the area on business. As a professional microbiologist, Erik brought a new scientific point of view to the newsletter. His monthly column, "From the Laboratory", highlighted technical solutions to brewing issues in an effort to make us all more knowledgeable about our hobby. October's column, which focused on cleanliness, explained the difference between sanitization and sterilization and gave recommendations on how to achieve each. **Jim Dorsch** was next up with his monthly "Whole BURP Catalog", this time pulling a couple of tidbits from the historical dustbin, including a hot toddy recipe from the Dickens era called "Dog's Nose" consisting of a pint of warmed Guinness, 2 oz of gin, 1 tbsp of brown sugar, and a pinch of nutmeg. Finally, **George Rivers** contributed the latest update to his "BURP Pub Guide", this time focusing on the Northern VA area. He found the largest selection of bottled beer (with 29 brands offered) at the *Vienna Inn* in Vienna (along with excellent prices of under \$3 per bottle even for the most exotic imports). In McLean, George discovered *McKeever's Pub*, a comfortably cramped English-style establishment which possessed "the three essentials for any colonial outpost: Bass, Guinness (both on draft) and darts". The column concluded with descriptions of two sports bars (*Champions* in Falls Church and *Grevey's* in Merrifield) and the *Old Brogue Irish Pub* in Great Falls, reputed to be the hangout of the infamous Reagan-era rogue, Ollie North.

10 Years Ago, Oct 1999

In the "what goes around comes around" BURP tradition, the October 1999 meeting, held on the 30th at the home of **Ken & Sara Graham** in Darnestown, MD, featured the club's annual Halloween Party and Weird Beer Competition. And, as at previous Halloween events, club members were encouraged to come costumed as their favorite beer. In another tie-in to the meeting held ten years earlier, a second competition was also featured, this time the "Brewer's Challenge" initiated by Fearless Leader **Steve Marler**. There were seven entries in the Weird Beer competition, including a "Worcestershire Bock", a "Fennel Seed Mild", and a "Green Tea Weizen". The winners

were: 1st place, **Mike Megown** for his "Smoked Honey Ale"; 2nd place, **Bob Verdon** for his "Spiced Christmas Ale"; and 3rd place, **Andy Anderson** for his "Spiced Christmas Ale" (spices used in the latter two entries were not identified). The Brewers Challenge, in which teams brewed a beer with a standard ingredient set but had the option of adding up to a pound each of any other 3 ingredients, had seven entries (even though nine teams originally agreed to participate). The competition was sponsored by *Hop Union*, and the winners were: 1st place, "Mean Stuff" (**Bud & Dan Hensgen**); 2nd place, the "Bugaboos" (**Andy Anderson, Mario & Lynda DiValentin**); 3rd place, the "Cat Fight Brewery" (**Colleen Cannon, Kathy Obert, & Dave Pyle**). Unfortunately, the base ingredients and unique ingredients in each beer were not identified.

The Oct 1999 issue of BURP News dealt primarily with ongoing and upcoming events. In the former category, the standings for 1999 "Brewer of the Year" were published. **Andy Anderson** remained at the top of the standings with 15 points while **Mike Megown** pressed the challenge with 12. Upcoming events included the Weird Beer competition, with Culture Minister **Andy Anderson** providing descriptions of the two BJCP style categories that seemed to approach "weirdness" - Cat 22 (Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer) and Cat 24 (Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beer). "Real Ale Maven" **Tom Cannon** contributed an announcement and entry information for the upcoming 3rd BURP Real Ale Competition scheduled for November. And Fearless leader **Steve Marler** planted an early seed for the election of BURP's new officer corps, which would take place at the Dec Holiday Banquet.

Hop Notes from the Li-Beery

By Bill Ridgely, Minister of History

The BURP website is up to date as far as what's currently in the li-beery. Please check it out at any time at <http://burp.burp.org/Default.aspx?tabid=414>. If you would like a book loaned to you, simply contact me at ridgely@burp.org (or call 301-762-6523), and it will be delivered to you at the next BURP meeting. And, as always, if there is a book that you

feel should be added to the collection, please contact me at the address above.

If you are planning to brew a specific beer style and need some guidance, I may be able to help you with an appropriate publication. Just contact me at the e-mail address or phone number above.

And thanks, as always, for your support.

Editor's Corner

By Beth Madden, Minister of Truth

Thanks to the BURP membership for their contributions to this newsletter. As always, I invite anyone interested in submitting anything from a feature or general interest articles to travelogues, recipes, etc. to do so. Please send to madfox@comcast.net.

BURP Doxology

*Praise BURP from whom beer blessings flow,
Praise BURP ye brewers here below,
Praise BURP above ye heavenly hosts,
Praise barley, hops and yeast the most
Aaaaaaaaaaaaa, Drink!
(Al Lowry, 1994)*

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