

BURP NEWS

The Official Newsletter of the
BREWERS UNITED FOR REAL POTABLES

"Wine gentrifies, beer unifies." --
W. Scott Griffiths, *Chefs Cook with Beer*

Check
burp.org for
the latest in
official
information.

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December 2000

10812 Newport Mill Road
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- December 12 *BURP Holiday Banquet, Oxon Hill Jaycees Club*
- January *BURP Elections*
- January 13-14 *Spirit of Belgium, Ballston, VA*
- Early February *AHA Club Competition: Dunkel & Schwarzbier, Hosted by Chris Kaufman and the Derby Brew Club*
- February *Meeting at Peter & Joyce Long's*
- March 17 *Special St. Patrick's Day Meeting in honor of Dan McCoubrey*

BURP's Third Spirit of Belgium January 13-14, 2001

*A Celebration of Belgium and Belgian-Style Beers
Registration Information Inside...*



**December BURP Holiday Meeting
At the Oxon Hill Jaycees' Center
Tuesday, December 12, 2000**

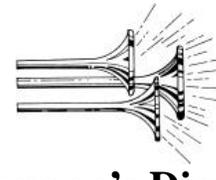
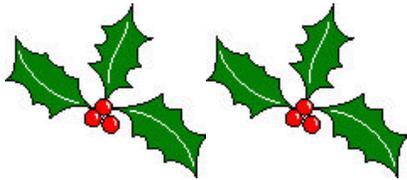
Please Note: No beer competition for December.

Spirit of Belgium Tickets Are Going Fast – Buy Yours NOW!

If you haven't purchased your *Spirit of Belgium Conference* tickets yet, you need to move quickly. Due to overwhelming response to our special early bird offer in November, we are expecting a sellout crowd. Tickets are \$120 for the full conference ticket, and \$75 for Saturday or Sunday only. Do your holiday shopping at <http://burp.org/sob2001> or *Norm's Wine & Beer, Vienna VA*. Hurry. Buy your ticket for this world-class gastronomic, culinary, BelgianBEERcentric event now ... while there is still room.

The *Spirit of Belgium 2001 web page* has been updated to include driving directions and hotel information. We have a block of hotel rooms at the *Ballston Comfort Inn* at a discounted rate for SoB 2001 attendees. The rate is \$59 (plus tax) per room, per night. For rooms at the \$59 rate, call (703) 247-3399 and identify yourself as a registrant of BURP's SoB (group # 1306).

For more information, or if you have questions or comments, please contact: sobinfo@burp.org
or visit the Spirit of Belgium web page:
<http://burp.org/SoB2001>



Ho, Ho, Ho -- Holiday Cheer! Join Us for the Annual Potluck Holiday Banquet on December 12

By *Bill Ridgely*

The December BURP meeting will be our **Annual Potluck Holiday Banquet**. This fabulous feast will be held at the **Oxon Hill Jaycee Center** in Ft Washington, MD on Tuesday, December 12. Doors will open at 5:00 PM for those who wish to cook on site and help decorate. Festivities will begin at 6:00 PM.

As always, volunteers are needed to help with decorating, setup, and post-event cleanup. If you would like to assist in any way, please contact Wendy or me at **301-762-6523** or e-mail us at aaronridge@erols.com

As with previous banquets, everyone should plan to bring a dish of their choice. If you are not sure what to bring, please feel free to contact us for suggestions. In past years, there have been a wide variety of appetizers, soups, salads, main courses, and desserts. We hope this tradition carries on. It has also been a long-standing tradition to use beer in dishes, if at all possible, so be creative. Try to provide enough food for at least 6-8 people. If you prefer to prepare your dish at the Jaycee Center, we have full cooking facilities available on site, including a stove, oven, and microwave (plus a large refrigerator for keeping ingredients fresh).

In addition to great food, the holiday banquet is always a showplace for homebrewed holiday beers, so please bring your best efforts to share around and to celebrate the upcoming start of the new millennium.

This year's banquet will include a Euro-Tour de BURP slide show as well as nominations for BURP officers for the upcoming year (BURP's 20th anniversary!). Please consider becoming more active in your club by running for an officer post in the upcoming year.

The holiday banquet is always one of BURP's premier events and the grand finale to another great year of brewing, learning, and socializing. Hope to see everyone there!

Dittmann's Dispatch

John Dittmann, Fearless Leader

Hard to believe it is December already, but it has, indeed, arrived. As my term as Fearless Leader comes to an end, I want to express my gratitude to all who have made 2000 a successful year for BURP.

Jamie and Paul Langlie deserve a raucous round of cheers for their work on the newsletter. **Good work Langlies!!** **Bruce Bennett** is to be congratulated for running a successful year of competitions. **Wendy Schmidt** earns our thanks for keeping the library in order. **Wendy Aaronson** ran an excellent slate of educational classes and tastings this year - **Hooray for Wendy!** **Ralph Bucca** was a stalwart as our Treasurer. Our newest officer, **Lynn Ashley**, did a tremendous job as Minister of the Web. And then there is **Bill Ridgely**. Bill was a rock as membership maven. However, only calling him "membership maven" leaves a lot of what Bill does for the club unmentioned. Bill is truly one of the indispensable people who keeps this club running year after year.

Thanks to all the people who opened their homes or property for meetings. It is truly great we can still use private homes and not need to meet at public locations all the time. I also want to acknowledge the hard work of those members, who helped with our Club's special events this year, including the Spirit of Free Beer, MASHOut, and Real Ale event as well as those who are currently laboring to produce the Spirit of Belgium.

The BURP year normally ends with the December meeting, but this is not an ordinary year. The Spirit of Belgium is scheduled for January, so there is no regular meeting. This means that current officers will be serving at their posts until the February meeting. We will still have elections in January, but the new slate of sucke, um, officers, will not take office until February. Woo Hoo, I get an extra month on my term. Does that mean my pension will be larger? [Election article follows.]

On a serious note - please come to the December meeting prepared to nominate candidates for the officers' slate.

Speaking of the December meeting, we will once again meet at the Oxon Hill Jaycees Center. There will be no competition and a minimal raffle, but there should be lots of good food and beer. Please remember to bring a Dish prepared with beer. *Each dish should have a sign with the cook, the name of the dish, and the beer used. See you there!*



BURP Elections 2001 on the Horizon

Yes, once again it is time to elect new officers to serve us as leaders of BURP. Please nominate your friends and enemies at the December meeting or on BURPlist. Because of The Spirit of Belgium, there will be no January meeting. However, a ballot and directions about how to vote on the Internet will be included in the January newsletter. Open positions are:

Fearless Leader (President)
Minister of Education
Minister of Culture (Competitions)
Minister of Truth (Newsletter)
Minister of Propaganda (Membership)
Minister of Finance (Treasurer)
Minister of the Web (Web page)
Minister of History (Libeerian)

The new officers will begin their terms beginning with the February meeting at Peter and Joyce Long's home.



Welcome, New Members

Bill Ridgely, Membership

Welcome this month to **Mary Ashton & Walt Hill** from the District and **Herb Rose** from Arlington.

Hope to see you all at upcoming meetings!



The Real (Ale) Thing: November Meeting Report

By Steve Marler

Real Ale Judges Convene

The sun was falling quickly on a Friday night and the temperature was following suit. A fierce, cold wind from the northwest blew through the screens that enclose Bill Ridgely and Wendy Aaronson's back porch in suburban Washington, D.C. Twenty-eight kegs, dropped off at various times during the week, sat on the porch. Other than each one's shape and size, the only thing that distinguished one keg from another was a numbered sticker. Each keg was bundled in blue moving blankets to protect them—and their contents—from the cold.

Inside, the clock read 6:30 p.m., and people slowly started to trickle in. Casual conversation ensued. One hour and six pizzas later, all the 26 people that were expected had fought their way through the local traffic and were assembled. As a bellowing voice rose over the chatter with the familiar call, "Beer-ye, Beer-ye," the crowd became silent and gathered round.

The 4th annual Brewer's United for Real Potables' (BURP) Real Ale competition had officially begun. Tom Cannon, the competition organizer and heart and soul of the event, continued his opening remarks. He explained that the goal of this competition was to select the best real ale. Even though the beers were divided into categories, there was a lot of overlap between them. Tom instructed judges that if, for example, they had a beer that was entered as a best bitter but that tasted more like an ordinary bitter, and if it was a good, real ale, the judges should consider moving it forward. Tom further explained that real ales in England today use more hops, and some are now using American hops. His point was that a beer should not be marked down for having an American hop flavor or aroma, so long as it tasted good. He then thanked all the judges for attending and asked them to take their seats.

Judging Gets Underway

The 16 judges were split among four tables. Those selected to judge were BJCP certified and/or had been to England and had a lot of knowledge of real ales. Two stewards were assigned to each table while two

cellarmen took care of the kegs. Table one judged three ESBs, two 80 shillings, one porter, and one brown ale; table two, seven milds; table three, seven special bitters; and table four, six ordinary bitters, and one mild.

The brass and steel of 17 hand pumps shimmered on the dimly lit porch. The pumps, all owned by BURP members, were fastened to a rail that spanned the outside perimeter of the porch. The stewards gathered on the porch, together with the cellarmen, and were given instructions. With 28 entries and only 17 hand pumps, the cellarmen and stewards had to move beer lines during the competition. They also had to pull enough beer through each time they changed kegs to ensure that the pump was clear of the first so that they were pulling 100% of the intended beer from each keg.

The stewards were running back and forth from the porch to the tables bringing half pints of beer, taking the used glasses and washing them, and going back out to the porch to pull the next beer. This continued for a couple of hours, until all the tables had finished judging their assigned beers. Each table put forward two or three beers for the best-of-show round.

Tom selected the four best-of-show judges whom he felt had the greatest experience in drinking real ale in England, combined with knowledge and understanding of what real ale is, how it is made, and whom also did not have a beer in final round. After much discussion and debate, the judges selected the top three real ales from the ten beers originally on the best of show table.

When the judges were finished, and Tom reviewed the results, he called all those who were still in attendance into Bill and Wendy's living room to announce the winners. In an unusual move, instead of announcing the winners beginning with the third place, he announced the first place winner. Tom did this as a practical joke because, just as he was going to announce the winners, Wendell Ose, the first place winner, had gone to the bathroom. Tom continued and announced that he and his wife Colleen had taken second, and that he, Colleen, and their friend James Harrison, had also taken third. That was quite a coup for Tom and Colleen. Even though they have been dedicated to brewing real ale and educating people about it, they had been shut out of the previous winners' circles for years. When first-place finisher Wendell returned from the bathroom, he was told that he had come in fourth and that he would have to wait to hear whom the winner was along with the rest of the BURP membership the following day at the BURP Real Ale festival.

BURPERs Savor Real Ale

The next day, Saturday November 18, was cold but the wind quieted down. BURP's monthly meeting and Real Ale festival took place at the same site as the Real Ale competition. The event began at noon with Tom Cannon and Andy Anderson conducting an educational seminar, complete with a power point presentation, on what constitutes real ale, how it is made and served, and how to be an educated consumer. It was an excellent seminar.

The meeting and festival started at 1 pm. As with most BURP meetings, the members brought great food in large quantities. The beer in the 28 kegs (19 five-gallon soda kegs, 3 six-gallon soda kegs, 2 Pins, and one Firkin) were tapped for all those in attendance to taste. The first 17 were available from 1 pm till 2:30, the rest available from 2:30 till 4 pm. Andy created an elaborate list that identified when each keg would be on, what type of beer it was, and who brewed it so that everyone trying them would be informed. After 4 pm, people could ask to have whichever beer they wanted put on.

At 2:00, BURP's President, John Dittman, presented the BURP Real Ale Cup and the ribbons to the winners. Wendell Ose was understandably surprised when his name was called as the first place winner. His only comment: "You lied to me. You told me I took fourth place." But once he had the cup in hand he thanked everyone. The festival went well on into the night and people were still there when I left at 8 pm.

Steve Hamburg, who was in town from Chicago and participated as a judge, summed up the event best. When asked his thoughts about the competition and festival, he replied, "*This is great. This is the best pub in the country right now!*"

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Rydlun's Riddler

Rod Rydlun

In addition to BURP, how many other Washington, DC-area local homebrew clubs [PAST AND PRESENT] can you name and locate? (Answer on page 7)



BURP EDUCATION UPDATE

Wendy Aaronson, Minister of Enlightenment

Belgian Beer Evaluation Seminars Prepare Judges for SOB

Over the past several weeks, approximately 15 BURP members have been attending a series of Belgian Beer evaluation seminars in anticipation of Spirit of Belgium 2001. The purpose of the seminars is to do specialty training for our BJCP judges so that they can become experts for the Belgian homebrew competition.

Class members are required to attend the Spirit of Belgium Conference and also to enter at least one beer into the SoB homebrew competition. The class emphasizes brewing these beers as much as evaluating them. Instructors for the classes include several of our "home-grown" BURP Belgian beer authorities, including Colleen Cannon, Andy Anderson, Tom Cannon, Jim Busch, Mike Graham, and Wendy Aaronson.



Euro Tour de BURP Slide Show to Debut at BURP Holiday Banquet

Bill & Wendy & Craig Somers, Cyclemeister

Bill Ridgely will present a slide show of highlights of the first ever Euro Tour de BURP bicycle trip which took place in October. Thirteen intrepid cyclists pedaled about 450 miles in a circular trip through Brussels, Cologne, Dusseldorf, and back to Amsterdam, visiting a

number of breweries and tasting lots of great beers. The grand finale was the "24 Hours of Beer" in Antwerp, Belgium on Oct 15, where the group was joined by several BURPers in Belgium just for the festival.



The Beer Widow

by Cathi Sypkens

I believe it's time to discuss the dilemma of being a "Beer Widow." By this I mean when your partner is a homebrewer and you're not interested in beer or brewing, and you're pretty much doomed to boredom while they perform a nine-hour double decoction mash or traipse off to yet another beer festival.

The dilemma is not in being left alone. It's not the refrigerators full of beer. It's not the pungent odor of hops throughout the house or the siphon hoses knocking glasses over in the dish drainer or even the wort stains on the ceiling. It's the fact that you don't get enough time together. Homebrewing invades your life like a lactobacillus infection in your pale ale.

However, it is possible for both partners to have full-time hobbies and still maintain a perfectly healthy relationship. Look at Hillary and Bill Clinton: she won a Senate seat in New York, and he likes to have sex with.... wait a minute, this is a poor illustration.

Let me cite a better example. People told us that our relationship wouldn't last because Ben is a true beer geek, and my personal opinion is that all beer should be poured down the toilet (except, of course, Lindeman's Kriek Lambic). Nevertheless, we've been together for two and a half years, which is five times as long as any of his previous relationships. Ben may belong to five homebrew clubs and attempt to attend all of their meetings in addition to brewing the legal limit every year, but we still manage to do other things together. For example, I watch him get beaten up during kick-boxing practice, and he has agreed to go horseback riding someday. By the way, when does Hell freeze over?

When one or both partners has an all-consuming hobby, it enables each of them to have "me" time, which is very

important for mental health (especially if you're Ben's girlfriend). Time apart makes you appreciate time together. However, deciding when and how to spend time apart can be difficult. During the past 2 years, Ben and I have perfected this skill. For example:

Cathi: Where are you going?

Ben: To the Maryland Craft Beer Festival.

Cathi: Another festival!?!

Ben: I haven't been to a festival for three months.

Cathi: You just went to one in July!!

Ben: Yes. This is October, that's 3 months. HELLO.

Cathi: But you'll be gone ALL day. <sniffle>

Ben: Yeah, that's the idea.

Cathi: But what am I supposed to do all by myself?

Ben: <sarcastically> Oh, I'm sure there's a nice cake you can bake or something.

Cathi: FINE.

Ben: Uh oh. <thinking fast.> Why don't you go with me?

Cathi: Okay, let's see: stand around, watch you and your friends get smashed, drive your sorry ass home, clean up the car because you got sick halfway home, drag your smelly body into the house, listen to you snore all night and spend Sunday nursing you back to your normal obnoxious self. I don't think so.

Ben: Well, I offered, so don't whine to me about not spending time together.

Cathi: You know, maybe I'll go shopping.

Ben: FINE.

So you see, it is quite possible to successfully balance hobbies and a relationship. I have to admit, I envy the couples who attend beer festivals together, because they are spending quality time with each other and doing something that they both enjoy. Meanwhile I'm forlornly shopping at Ikea emptying our (Ben's) bank account. Oh well.

I look at it this way: you're not going to be interested in everything your partner likes, so you might as well develop interests of your own. Therefore, on beer festival or brewing days, when I am relegated to the rank of designated driver or beer widow, I take comfort in knowing that I'm not the only one alone. Maybe we beer widows should get together and live it up in our own beer-challenged way. Shopping anyone?

[Editor's Note: Do we see a possible sitcom in the making here? Move over, "Home Improvement!"]



For the Good of the Order

A big, personal "Thank You" to Bill Ridgely, who substituted as newsletter editor for the November issue, while Paul and I were busy preparing to leave for China. Great job, Bill, and much-appreciated.

Also, kudos to Colleen Cannon and the rest of the Spirit of Belgium Planning Committee – you're doing a yeoman's job, and we'll all enjoy the results.

Editor's Corner

*Jamie Langlie, Minister of Truth
(and trusty Co-minister, Paul)*

Paul and I returned from our trip to China just in time to pound out this month's newsletter. What a strange and wondrous place China is! I don't have time for a travelogue tonight, so I'll save some stories for next month. We did have a great tour of the original Tsing Tao Brewery, hosted by the Director, who treated us to a marvelous lunch in the company dining room. Tsing Tao at the source was very fresh and clean on the palette.

We also managed to stumble across an actual brewpub ["Fresh Beer Made by Ourselves"] attached to an Italian restaurant on a side street behind the Sheraton Great Wall Hotel (near the Hard Rock Café). There, one had two choices – "dark" and "light." The dark was a rather tasty generic stout, and the light, a somewhat non-descript, ale. On our last night in Beijing, we returned to the place, after a farewell dinner with friends, who toasted us with several "Kampeis." ("Bottoms Up!") Paul then attempted to explain to the bemused, befuddled pub wait staff (whose English was minimal) why he preferred the pub beer to Tsing Tao because Tsing Tao adds rice to their brew and the pub does not.

We're looking forward to sharing holiday cheer with everyone next week at the Holiday Banquet. I hope to include recipes for some of the potluck dishes in the January newsletter.

Please note that articles for January's issue are due no later than Saturday, December 30. Keep those wheels turning.

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Answer to Rydlun's Riddler:

How many other Washington, DC-area local homebrew clubs [PAST AND PRESENT] can you name and locate?

A Partial Consensus Listing includes:

Aleing Sailors - Annapolis, MD
Back Door Brewers - Charlottesville, VA
Backwoods Brewers - Crewe, VA
BANOVA - Woodbridge, VA
Barley House Brewers - Woodbridge, VA
Bay Country Brewers - Forest Hill, MD
Brewers Utilizing Refreshments Normally Toxic (BURNT) - Cockeyville, MD
Chesapeake Real Ale Brewers (CRABS) - Columbia, MD
Cross Street Irregulars - Baltimore, MD
Dulles Regional Brewing Society (DReBS) - Fairfax, VA
Frederick Original Ale Makers (FOAM) - Frederick, MD
Fredericksburg Area Brewing and Tasting Society - VA
Freestate Homebrew Club Guild - A consortium of MD clubs
Gaithersburg Area Brewers Society (GABS) - Gaithersburg, MD
Hampton Roads Brewing & Tasting Society (Virginia Beach Club) - Norfolk, VA
Herndon Hard Times Wort Hogs - Herndon, VA
Hill City Homebrew Club - Lynchburg, VA
Homebrewers Unified Revolutionary League (HURL) - DC
James River Brewers - Richmond, VA
Libation Society of Northern Maryland - Pikesville, MD
Maryland Ale & Lager Technicians (MALT) - Upper Marlboro, MD
Midnight Homebrewers League - Westminster, MD
PALS (Peoples Ale & Lager Society) - Fort Meade, MD
Rappahannock Engineers of Ales and Lagers (REAL) - Locust Grove, VA
Society of Harrisonburg Abc Dogged Yeasters (SHADY) - VA
Southern Maryland Association of Superior Homebrewers (SMASH) - Hollywood, MD
Star City Brewers Guild - Roanoke, VA
St. Arnou Society - Charlottesville, VA

The Killer Ales of Maryland - Catonsville, MD

The Weekend Brewers - Chester, VA

Wort Dogs - Waldorf, MD

Please contact Rod if you have a beer-related trivia question to contribute for future issues.

CHECK IT OUT ...

AHA 2001 Club-Only Competition Schedule, Contact Gary Glass,
gary@aob.org

The MASHOUT 2000 web page is at:
<http://burp.org/mashout2000/>
See photos, competition results, and more.

Spirit of Belgium 2001 web site!
 See <http://burp.org/SoB2001>

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