



BURP NEWS

The Official Newsletter of
BREWERS UNITED FOR REAL POTABLES

"He was a wise man who invented beer."
Plato



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April 2010

9510 Bruce Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20901



WHAT'S BREWING

April Meeting / Extract and Praise Hops
College Park, MD
Saturday, 17 April, 2010
1-6 PM

May Meeting-Chili Cook off / Best With Chili
Fairfax, VA
8 May, 2010

Spirit of Free Beer
15 May, 2010
Drop off sites:
Maryland Homebrew (Columbia, MD)
MyLocal Homebrew Shop (Falls Church, VA)
Flying Barrel (Frederick, MD)
(Entries by 8 May, 2010)

June Meeting / Belgian and French Ale
Herndon, VA
Saturday 12 June, 2010

NoVA Brewfest
27-28 June, 2010

Robert's Ramblings

By Robert Stevens, Fearless Leader



I want to thank **Rick Garvin** and **Christine Johnbrier** for hosting the March BURP meeting and allowing us to tramp through their house on a chilly and rainy day. Hopefully we didn't track up their house too much. Of course now that the Monsoons have passed and spring has finally arrived, it is great time to be brewing. Speaking of spring events, why wasn't there a BURP Brewing Peep entry in the Post's Peep contest? I checked out the winners at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/gallery/2010/03/29/GA2010032903934.html?hpid=artslot> but could not find one.

SoFB

The event that defines BURP is only a month away and **Colleen Cannon** and **Wendy Aaronson** are working hard organizing the event. Now is the time for all BURPers to prepare their entries for SOFB! The SOFB is your chance to chance to win BURP fame and fortune (loot). But you can't win if you don't participate so, get your entries ready. In the past SOFB has been one of the largest competitions in the country. Now we are being eclipsed by (lesser) clubs. High time that we're once again recognized for being one of the largest and best run competitions in the country!

Hops, Hops and more Hops

BURP has purchased four mini bales of hops from Hop Union. No English hops were available but we were able to get **Cascade, Columbus, German Tradition and**

Please submit all articles for publication in either plain text or Microsoft Word format to the e-mail address above. Deadline for articles is 2 weeks before each scheduled BURP meeting unless otherwise indicated. Changes to membership records should be sent to membership@burp.org.

Horizon. Five pounds of the Horizon hops will be given to the Praise the Hops teams. (Praise the Hops is a brewing contest which was fermented in the warped minds of your Ministers of Culture.) The purpose of the contest is to showcase a single hop. See Colleen and Wendy, of course, for more information about the contest. The rest of the hops will be available for purchase at the April meeting. Thanks to **Steve Marler** for working with Hop Union to purchase the hops and **Alan Hew** and his crew for preparing the hops for sale.

BURP's Incorporation

As you know, incorporating BURP has been a goal of the club for the last several years. I am pleased to announce that on January 25, 2010 the Virginia State Corporation Commission approved BURP's incorporation application. WE ARE A LEGAL CORPORATION AGAIN! Although there were a number of folks who helped make this happen, I would like to mention a few. First, **Polly Goldman** for creating the BURP Bylaws that BURP still uses. **Rick Garvin** for identifying the applications that needed to be completed and last but not least **Tim Artz** for agreeing to be the Club's initial registered agent. Also a special thanks to **James Hanson** for analyzing the possibility of BURP becoming a nonprofit corporation. Based on the information that Jim and others provided, the BURP officers decided that although it might become advantageous for BURP to become a non-profit corporation in the future, currently the benefits do not justify the costs. See the March Officers Board minutes for more information. The minutes can be viewed at <http://www.burp.org/meetings/2010/officers0310.pdf>

Free State Homebrew Club Guild

The Maryland Guild has invited BURP to be part of their organization. There has always been a perception in BURP that Virginia and DC residents were not eligible to participate in the Free State Guild's activities. According to **Les White**, the Free State Homebrew Club Guild's president, any member from a member club can participate in the Guild's functions regardless of where they live. The BURP officers therefore have accepted the offer to join the Guild. A couple of BURP members will be asked to attend Guild meetings and identify ways that the two clubs can support each other. Check out the Guild's web site, www.mdhomebrewers.org. They are doing some interesting things.

Happy brewing and hope to see you at the BURP meeting on April the 17th

March BURP Meeting

By Kathy Brandt



The weatherman had called for a hard rain all day. While that would have been much better than the back to back blizzards we had in February, the heavy rain held off for a constant spritzing. This did not keep fellow BURP members from attending this spring Stout competition held at the home of **Christine Johnbrier & Rick Garvin** in McLean, VA. Having grown up in the area, I know March in DC is, well, yucky (technical weather term), so I had to ask "why?" Rick said they have hosted meetings for the past few years, so they are familiar with the variable weather and will prepare accordingly. While this year was relatively mild, there was one year they had to squeegee mud out the basement the day after. Many of us were grateful for the tent over the basement patio shielding the kegs. Yes, there was police tape around the patio to keep members from sinking in the quagmire of a back yard.

The officers had met at noon before the meeting; more details on this will be covered by others. As for the Stout competition, with the weather and lack of judging chambers, it had been decided to hold the competition on the following Friday at the Cannon home in Vienna. There were 16 entries to be judged, winners will be announced elsewhere in *BURP News*.

Yours truly was approached to "take notes" at the meeting, I guess I looked like an easy mark and easy to talk to? As usual there was a lot of food and beer. **Scott and Nikki** (UtiliKilt and redhead) provided two crock pots of corned beef and cabbage in honor of St Patrick's Day. There were "real" mashed potatoes, meatballs, various chips and dips, beer bread, soda bread, desserts, etc. One of the more unusual foods was Pickled Hop Shoots; I take pride on my adventurous palate so I tried them, not too bad. I also HAD to try the Spicy Chipotle Brownies. These were moist and fudgy at first, but then the kick of the chipotle powder kicked in and WOAHH! HOT!! (I was told to say that as they were provided by yours truly). Yes, I will share the recipe, but I will add a half teaspoon more of the chipotle power next time.

While mingling and catching up with members I hadn't seen in a while and introducing myself to new members, I spotted our former president sporting a name tag reading "**Tuesday March 16.**" This is the answer to the age-old question I am sure he was tired of answering with "I don't know yet" for the longest time. Yes, this was **Andy Anderson's** last BURP meeting for a while, after long last he is off to England.

The BEER YE, BEER YE was sounded and the meeting announcements were underway:

- The April meeting will be on the 17th at **Jude Wang and Alan Hew's** in College Park, MD. This is an extract competition; there is no reason not to brew an extract as they are easy and quick to brew. Alan has promised "good weather karma" and challenges brewers to "out brew the great **Bill Ridgely**, if possible."
- May 8th is the Chili Cook-off. Additional details will be posted in *BURP News*. Start thinking about your recipes and the best accompaniment beer.
- May 15th is the proposed date for the SOFB competition; I will not jinx it by revealing the possible whereabouts. Volunteers are needed! A prize coordinator is the greatest need at the moment, if you are interested, please let **Steve Marler** or **Trish Koch** know. Stewards are also needed, these are generally "gophers" that are at the judges beck and call. If you are interested in this illustrious duty, please contact **Terri Fischer**, Steward Goddess at fischer.terri@gmail.com.
- The "Hops Pusher" (aka **Steve Marler**) will have various hops available at the April meeting. Cascades, Columbus and German Tradition have been ordered as well. If you are interested, please let Steve know. Horizon hops will also be available, but this is specifically for the Praise the Hop competition to be held in October. For more details on this competition contact **Colleen Cannon**. Teams ARE required for this competition.
- **Bill Ridgely** announced a subscription discount on "Brew Your Own" magazine. We can get it for half price if we get 10 subscribers. If you Google "Brew Your Own" you will get an idea of the magazine itself and no, that isn't Colleen on the cover of the March/April issue. Prices are \$14/year or \$28 for two years. Contact **Bill Ridgely**. There were a few people that signed up after the announcement, but I don't think more than ten is too many.

Since this meeting was held at The **Garvinhaus** with **Bill Madden** in attendance, I had to ask about [Mad Fox Brewery](#). They are scheduled to open in June 2010. In looking at their web site, it looks to be an exciting new venture. If you friend them on Face Book, you can get up-to-the-moment details on the status. The location will be at 444 Broad West Street in Falls Church. They will be dog-friendly (yes, within health code regulations – sigh). Speaking of dogs and being a dog lover, I would be remiss if I did not mention the resident

"furkid" Gus. He is a rescued brindle lab-mix. He is very friendly, will give high fives, but is prone to wandering away.

Andy's European Beer Journal

By Andy Anderson



Nationwide Building Society. Specifically, the Nationwide Building Society office at 21 Old Bond St in Bath. What's that? That's the epicentre of good beer in Bath, England. Before you roll your eyes (again), please let me take a moment to explain both this statement as well as this column.

As some of you may remember, I was previously stationed in England for two years in 1995-96. During that time, I would occasionally write a column about some aspect of European beer for the BURP newsletter. Back in those days, Al Gore's Internet was not nearly as advanced as it is today, so I had to rely on carrier pigeons to send my articles to Bruce & Polly (one of the side-benefits of living in England is being able to turn "off" my sarcasm filter). Anyway, since you the US taxpayer are funding my present stay in England, I thought it only proper to re-start the column. The majority of what I will write about will be English, but once I start travelling again to the continent, I'll have stories from other countries. (I can see it now, "An ode to Stella Artois" ...)

OK, back to the Nationwide Building Society on Old Bond St. 15 years ago, when I last lived in Bath, my favourite pubs in Bath would have been The Pulteney Arms (my local) and The Old Green Tree. Bath was also a bit of a pub waste-land, as the majority of the pubs were fairly dire. (As you might have expected, I visited all 66 pubs of Bath, & wrote a Guide for them.) Now that I have started to re-visit these pubs in 2010, I am pleasantly surprised to see an improvement in Bath pubs. Some of the more unpleasant pubs have either gone out of business or been completely refurbished.

One evening last week, I visited three of the best pubs in Bath. Of those three, two used to be quite poor, but have been completely changed.

The Raven (7 Queen St, & <http://www.theravenofbath.co.uk/>) is a new pub on the site of what used to be a horrid place. A lovely selection of beer, and one of the few pubs in Bath where you can get a meal in the evening. If you are looking for micro-

brewed real ales in Bath, this is probably your best choice to visit.

The Salamander (3 John St, & <http://www.bathales.com/pubs/salamander.html>) is part of the ten pubs associated with Bath Ales. Bath Ales is a brewery that started about 15 years ago. While it may be named "Bath" Ales, it is actually brewed in Bristol, about 15 miles away. The brewery sells a lot more beer than they did 15 years ago, and also supplies some of the local supermarkets with bottled beer. But what Bath Ales has done with The Salamander is quite impressive: a proper pub with good ale.

The Old Green Tree (12 Green St, & <http://www.thegoodpubguide.co.uk/pub/view/Old-Green-Tree-BA1-2JZ>) is still as fine a place as I remembered it. In fact, if you look in a CAMRA Guide (Campaign for Real Ale), The Old Green Tree gets special mention. Drinking a pint of Pitchfork while standing at the main bar of this cozy little 3-room pub is one of life's special pleasures.

A friend once told me that the only change that was worthwhile was 4 quarters for a dollar. Well, I guess he never saw such impressive improvements that change wrought for some of Bath's previously more dire pubs. And while it is nice to see the positive change regarding The Raven & The Salamander, I am also very pleased to see consistency in The Old Green tree (even after a change in the Landlord).

So, once again, what does this have to do with the Nationwide Building Society on Old Bond St? Well, it turns out that all 3 pubs are within two blocks of each other. And, if you had to pick a spot on a map that is the epicentre of those 3 pubs, it would be that Nationwide bank. I wonder if their employees truly understand how special is their work location?

Anyway, that's it for this month. If you have any follow-up questions, you can always reach me via email. Similarly, if you have ideas for columns, please drop me a line. In the meantime, I think it's time for another pint of research ☺

Cheers,
Andy
Andybrews@gmail.com

WTF? A Brewing Tip From Melo

By Mel Thompson



After fielding several questions regarding last month's article on building yeast populations, I think a follow up is needed to make some clarifications and provide some additional information for you inquisitive and "ever striving for excellence" brewers in BURP. Making yeast starters was pretty straight forward. It works and if you have a stir plate, it works even better. A stir plate is a good addition to your brewery, but not absolutely necessary. I, and many other brewers I know, have healthy fermentations without using a stir plate. I use a stir plate now, but brewed successfully for many years without one. Let me become "Mr. Obvious" for a second and remind you that the wort for your starter must be chilled before you pitch that vial of yeast. I make the starter and put it, covered with plastic wrap and aluminum foil, in the freezing compartment of my refrigerator for about an hour and fifteen minutes, or until the wort is about room temperature. If you don't chill the starter, you will be staring at the vessel for a long time (like eternity) waiting for yeast activity. Then I oxygenate by either shaking the crap out of it or use an O2 stone. I usually resort to the shaking method as it is going on the stir plate where it will get more oxygenation (at least that's my theory).

If you let the starter ferment for several days and it appears to be clearing with a substantial yeast cake in the bottom, decant off most of the liquid above the yeast sediment. That will allow you to make a bigger volume starter for the next step-up.

Some of you indicated that you were reluctant to use yeast from your previous fermentation in a new batch. Don't be hesitant. Follow good sanitation practices and you should have no problems. I use loads of Starsan and fire all openings before transferring yeast. My typical method is to sanitize a 2 liter flask and after racking the beer from the primary, I pour the yeast sediment into the flask. I insert an airlock and put it in the refrigerator if I'm not going to use it right away. There will be enough yeast for several new batches of a similar style of beer and certainly enough to share with your brewing buddies. How do I know if the yeast is still good? I simply use the smell and sometimes the taste method before I use it. Just like beer, it should not have any off aromas or flavor characteristics. Maybe I'm easily amused, but I find it thrilling to pitch 500-600 ml of thick slurry into a new wort and see it take off like a rocket in an hour or two.

I have also put a new wort on top of the yeast sediment after I've racked from the primary. It is the easiest way to reuse yeast, however, I worry more about sanitation



though I have not experienced a problem so far. I experimented with some 028 yeast and used it for 8 subsequent generations. The 7th and 8th batches were very sulphury as the yeast appeared to mutate into a yeast with strong lager characteristics. Since then, I limit to 3 or 4 generations before I get new yeast.

The final topic I want to cover before I leave the yeast issue to your own experimentation is that there is an excellent source for acquiring big and healthy yeast slurries for your brewing. That is by befriending your local brewer. We should be doing that anyway and I am not suggesting that you take advantage of someone's good nature, but what a great source for yeast. The only drawback is that the yeast varieties are somewhat limited. Most breweries use from one to at most three separate yeast strains. Generally, that consists of a fairly neutral all purpose ale yeast, a lager yeast and maybe one or two specialty yeasts for seasonals. If you can get some yeast slugs from you local, there is usually enough to share with your friends. This would leave you to purchase only specialty yeasts for your brewing schedule. Oh, and show your appreciation. Take them a bottle of something special.

Fermentingly Yours, Melo

BURP 10 and 20 Years Ago

Compiled By Bill Ridgely

20 Years Ago, Apr 1990

April 1990 was a *very* big month for BURP events, with 3 major gatherings on the agenda. The first was the monthly meeting, held on the 7th at the wonderful country estate of **Peter & Joyce Long** in Clifton, VA. Back in the day, this was one of BURP's favorite cool weather meeting venues, with its large pub room containing a beautiful horseshoe bar and a roaring fire in the fireplace. Peter & Joyce eventually retired to Florida but have kept in touch over the years and are both doing well. Bock Beer was the style of the month, a harbinger of Spring. A commercial tasting of bocks was provided by **Mark Weiner** of *Berose Liquors* (and, as always, Mark provided raffle prizes for the meeting). Following the tasting, homebrewed bocks were judged as BURPers sampled "Straight to Helles Bock", the club's April "Brew of the Month" provided by your humble

compiler. The weather was fine, and many attendees moved to the outside patio to enjoy the springtime sun. Eventually, winners were announced, and the aforementioned Helles Bock took first place. Alas, no meeting report was filed for this event, and the names of the 2nd and 3rd place beers and brewers were not reported.

BURP's 2nd major event of the month was a 2-night (Apr 17-18) homebrew demonstration and tasting held at the famous *Brickskeller* near Dupont Circle. This was the first time BURP had held sway at one of **Bob & Ellie Tupper's** monthly tasting events, and a fine time was had by both club members who brewed for the event and the capacity crowd. The demonstration, as reported in the newsletter by **Jim Dorsch**, was conducted by yours truly along with my erstwhile assistant, Frugal Brewer **John Gardiner**. John, resplendent in a tuxedo, held up beer ingredients and stirred the pot while I gave a history of brewing and discussed the finer points of the homebrewing hobby. John then provided the "schtick" for the event when he changed into his beer keg costume, complete with a working tap at the appropriate level. My role was to play second fiddle to John as he regaled the crowd with stories of his "microbrewery" and "beer nuts" (You get the picture). Over the course of the presentation, 3 excellent homebrews were sampled by those attending - an interpretation of an ancient Sumerian beer brewed by **Erik Henchal** (made from barley malt, date sugar, honey, and no hops), an all-extract Geordie Mild kit brewed by **Tom McGonigle** (which showed how excellent beer could be brewed using simple ingredients and techniques), and a very tasty all-grain Angelica herb beer brewed by **Ralph Bucca** (harking back to an earlier era when beers were flavored with botanicals other than hops). All were very well received by the crowd. For anyone with a masochistic bent, a video tape of both nights of this show is still available in the BURP li-beery.

The final event on the April calendar was a club tour of the recently-opened (Oct 1989) *Wild Goose Brewery* in Cambridge, MD on Apr 28. A good crowd showed up (with homebrew and munchies in hand) to take the tour personally conducted by brewmaster **Alan Pugsley**. Following the tour, Alan provided samples of two fine house brews and stayed to enjoy samples of the homebrews contributed by the club. At the time, *Wild Goose* was distributing 4,500 cases of beer each month to several locations in the District, MD, and VA. The facility eventually burned down (after moving operations to the *Frederick Brewing Co* in Frederick, MD).

Surprisingly, the April 1990 issue of BURP News did not have a single article of, shall we say, a whimsical nature.

The issue was chock full of great info, as usual, but nobody contributed an article befitting the April 1 theme. Where was **John Gardiner** when we needed him? That said, the article on brewing a better Weizenbier using extracts by **Dick Lindstrom** was very interesting (Dick suggested using a regular barley malt extract along with steeped flaked barley and malted wheat). **John Hallberg** contributed a nice review of **Hugh Sisson's** 2nd Homebrew Expo at the Cross Street Market in Baltimore (across the street from the original Sisson's Brewpub). And **George Rivers** continued his Pub Guide Update with a review of the many pubs in the Tyson's Corner, VA area.

10 Years Ago, Apr 2000

The April 2000 BURP meeting was held on Sat, Apr 29 at the nice Potomac riverside property reserved for us by BURPer **Nick Steidl** and (soon to be wife) **Terri McEuen**. This lovely park, with picnic tables and a nice fireplace, was very popular with the club back in the day. Nearly perfect weather graced the occasion this time, with sunny skies and warm temperatures. The meeting theme was Bavarian Weizen beers (plus Berliner Weisse). This was also one of the best meeting sites for food since many BURPers could bring items to grill onsite, and Nick arranged for fresh fish to be prepared and sold onsite by several local fishermen. The bales of hops for the annual BURP hop buy were also delivered at this meeting, giving club brewers a great opportunity to bury their hands (and faces) in mass quantities of fresh whole hops (and taking enough home to last most of the brewing season). While the number of entries and specific styles for the wheat beer competition were not reported, the winners were: 1st place, **Keith Chamberlin**; 2nd place, **Colleen & Tom Cannon**; and 3rd place, **Betsy Kliks & Bob Kepler**. Lots of great photos of the meeting can be seen on the BURP website at <http://burp.org/meetings/200004.htm>.

The combined Apr-May 2000 issue of BURP News comprised a massive (and professionally produced) 22 pages of great writing. There were a lot of highlights in this issue, including a wonderful and fun article by **Cathi Sypkens** on her first brewing experience with boyfriend **Ben Schwalb**, **Bill Newman's** great review of a beer dinner attended by AHA president **Charlie Papazian** at the *Summit Station* brewpub in Gaithersburg, and Culture Minister **Bruce Bennett's** exhaustive overview of both the various wheat beer styles to be featured at the April meeting and the bock beer styles to be featured in May. Oh, and of course, there were the requisite articles in honor of April first, including a review by an anonymous author of BURP's first "lambic taste and aroma identification class", featuring, for the session on "barnyard aromas", a sweaty horse blanket and an

actual goat. The follow-up session on "intestinal and fecal aromas" featured several other donated items whose descriptions are best left to the imagination. On a more upscale side was an announcement of UNESCO bestowing its "World Heritage Site" designation on Popenoe Mountain, site of the annual MASHOUT. The site thereby joined other equally inspiring sites such as the Grand Canyon and the Pyramids of Giza. Finally, rounding out the issue, (and moving away once again from the April 1st theme), brewing scientist extraordinaire **A.J. deLange** provided a thorough examination of beer color. A.J. summarized his research thusly, "Beer color depends on its spectral transmission properties, and these depend on the coloring matter in the beer and on the thickness of the path through which it is observed". Couldn't have said it any better myself.

BURP Prosperity Report

By Mark E. Hogenmiller, Minister of Prosperity



Raffle News – Congratulations to **Mike Horkan** who won the Grand Prize in March which included a \$30 gift certificate to Maryland Homebrew. Each month's Grand Prize will include a gift certificate to MD Homebrew or MyLocal-Home-Brew-Shop to encourage members to make and share their homebrew. And thanks to all those that gave me additional Raffle prizes at the March meeting.

Merchandise News- We still have the following available:

BURP Lapel Pins - \$3

BURP Titanium Bottle Openers (last a lifetime) - \$8.50

BURP Baseball Caps (Blue or Tan) - \$13.50

See me at the next meeting to purchase merchandise.

Due to the sensitive nature of the Treasury reports and the newsletter being in the public domain, Treasury Reports are now posted to the BURP.org website in the Members Only Document section.

BURP members are reminded that all expense submissions must include details. Required details are date, exact amount, detailed item description, any special circumstances and name of person to be reimbursed. Event coordinators should maintain a spreadsheet for their project. Correspondence can be sent to me at treasurer@burp.org

Trivial Beer-Suits

By Charlie Pravitt



I recently learned that the University of Southern California Press recently published *Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages*, written by "biomolecular archaeologist" Patrick E. McGovern. Here I quote the publisher's description of the book in full:

In a lively tour around the world and through the millennia, *Uncorking the Past* tells the compelling story of humanity's ingenious, intoxicating quest for the perfect drink. Following a tantalizing trail of archaeological, chemical, artistic, and textual clues, Patrick E. McGovern, the leading authority on ancient alcoholic beverages, brings us up to date on what we now know about how humans created and enjoyed fermented beverages across cultures. Along the way, he explores a provocative hypothesis about the integral role such libations have played in human evolution. We discover, for example, that the cereal staples of the modern world were probably domesticated for their potential in making quantities of alcoholic beverages. These include the delectable rice wines of China and Japan, the corn beers of the Americas, and the millet and sorghum drinks of Africa. Humans also learned how to make mead from honey and wine from exotic fruits of all kinds—even from the sweet pulp of the cacao (chocolate) fruit in the New World. The perfect drink, it turns out—whether it be mind-altering, medicinal, a religious symbol, a social lubricant, or artistic inspiration—has not only been a profound force in history, but may be fundamental to the human condition itself.

In many recent Beer-Suits I have featured material from Stephen Harrod Buhner's *Sacred and Herbal Healing Beers*. The description of McGovern's book summarizes half of Buhner's argument. The other half concerns the fact that, around the world, cultures explained the genesis of brewing in similar ways. Usually, a significant person, either hero or god, either discovers the alcoholic qualities of an indigenous grain and tells the people about it or dies, is reincarnated into the grain which the people, usually with the help of a different hero or god, learn produces an alcoholic behavior. Further, this occurrence is viewed as a critical turning point in the creation of the people's society. The grain and resulting alcoholic beverage become sacred objects, and the growing of the grain and the brewing and drinking of the beverage sacred practices, as both are seen as fundamentally associated with their culture's creation. Further, the perpetuation of the society hinges upon the proper conduct of annual growing/brewing/drinking

ceremonies. Given their near-universality, we need to take these belief systems seriously rather than write them off as immature products of uncivilized societies. Although I have big problems with some of the things Buhner does throughout this book (such as accept uncritically seemingly every claim for the often miraculous healing properties of alcoholic beverages and the grains/herbs/etc. they are brewed from, plus his uncalled for and ignorant disparagement of standard scientific practice), this line of argument feels right on to me.

With this, I leave this topic behind and move on in my future columns to other matters.

Filled with mingled cream and amber
I will drain that glass again.
Such hilarious visions clamber
Through the chambers of my brain –
Quaintest thoughts – queerest fancies
Come to life and fade away:
What care I how time advances?
I am drinking ale today.

Edgar Allan Poe

From the Ministry of Culture

By Wendy Aaronson and Colleen Cannon,
Co-Ministers of Culture



A purpose of BURP monthly competitions is to encourage a brewer to advance their brewing skills either by improving recipe formulation and technique based on objective feedback from score sheets or by experimenting with styles they have never brewed. A competition promotes education and the availability of great tasting home-brewed beer at meetings.

March Stout Competition Results

Due to weather conditions forcing the March meeting indoors, we took the March competition off-line and held the judging at the home of **Tom and Colleen Cannon**. Many thanks to our judging team of **Tom, Colleen, Polly Goldman, Kathy Koch, Bill Ridgely, Terri Fischer** and our stewards, **Nathan and Wendy**. We judged 16 stouts in all, and getting down to a top three was not an easy task, given the high quality of entries. The following brewers are recognized with one BOTY point each for entering the competition: **Roydon**

Spenser (new brewer), **Bags Howard**, **Team Langlie**, **Wendy Schmidt**, **Scott Wise**, **Mike Horkan**, **Mike McGuire**, **Steve Marler**, **Yancy Bodenstein**, **Howie and Emily Michelsen** (new brewers), **Chris Sowell**, **Mel Thompson**, **Nick Drunasky** and **Team Aaronridge**. Now for the part you've been eagerly awaiting, the results! In third place, with a Sweet Stout, **Michael Horkan**; in Second Place, with an American Stout, **Chris Sowell**; and in First Place, with a Foreign Extra Stout, **Mel Thompson**. Congratulations to the winners, and thanks again to all who participated.

April Competition

In keeping with our goal of enabling BURP to enter beers in the AHA Club Only Competition, the competition for April is Extract Beers. These are beers where the wort is made from prepared malt extract and specialty grains only, and the beer style is the brewer's choice. The competition format will be determined based on the number of entries and different styles we receive, but the goal is to select the best beer to represent BURP in the AHA Club Only Extract Competition in May.

"Praise Hops!" Competition and BURP Hop Buy

We have acquired a supply of Horizon hops to be used in the Praise Hops! Competition to be conducted in October. This is an Open Competition, which means the entries will be judged subjectively, with no scoring guidelines (aka, a beauty contest). The objective of the competition is to showcase the versatility and best features of the Horizon hop. Whichever beer is deemed to make the best use of the Horizon hop for bittering, flavor and/or aroma, will be declared the winner (prizes will be awarded to the top three). The rules are simple: it must be a single hop beer, using the Horizon hops that are provided through the BURP hop buy. Only team entries will be accepted (individuals must team with someone) to encourage mentoring and shared brewing experience. Entries will be keg-only, so they can be judged by the meeting attendees at-large. We have reserved enough Horizon hops to distribute an equal amount to sixteen teams; the remainder will be sold as part of the BURP hop buy. Please let us know ASAP if you plan to enter the competition, hops will be distributed to the brewing teams on a first-come, first-served basis.

May Competition

The May competition is the Beer that Goes Best With Chili judged by the consumers in the same way as the chili, that is, by popular accord measured by secret ballot. So bring a keg or case of whatever you think goes with spicy food.

Brewer of the Year (BOTY)

The latest results leave **Mel Thompson** ahead of the pack with 22 BOTY points. **Mike Horkan** and **Chris Sowell** are tied with 5 points each. **Team Langlie** is leading the team division with 3 points and **Spenser Roydon** and **Howie and Emily Michelsen** are tied in the new brewer division with 1 point.

Spirit of Free Beer (SOFB)

Spirit of Free Beer will be held on May 15 at the Whole Foods in Fairfax (Fair Lakes). We have coordinators for the primary roles, but we need stewards, judges, and others to help with prizes, picking up beers at local homebrew shops, and of course, entries. If interested in helping the coordinators, please contact us. Spread the word and encourage your brewing friends who aren't BURP members to enter. Bring your entries to the BURP meeting on May 8.

Hop Notes from the Li-Beery

By Bill Ridgely, Minister of History



The Brew Your Own half-price subscription drive is coming along nicely. I now have the 10 new subscriptions or renewals required for us to qualify for the special subscription price of \$14 for one year or \$28 for two years. However, there's still room for more BURPers to sign on to this. Brew Your Own is an excellent magazine for homebrewers, certainly on a par with Zymurgy. And you can't go wrong with the price. If you are interested in either purchasing a new subscription or renewing an existing one for ½ the regular cost, please let me know by e-mailing ridgely@burp.org or calling 301-762-6523. The offer is good for just a short while longer.

No new issues of homebrewing magazines have been received by the BURP li-beery this month, but a new issue of the Mid-Atlantic Brewing News (Apr-May 2010) has just been released, featuring a good article on brewery collaborations. The electronic version is not yet available on <http://www.brewingnews.com>, but I'll have hard copies on hand for giveaway at the April BURP meeting.

As always, the contents of the BURP li-beery are available anytime for your perusal at <http://burp.burp.org/Default.aspx?tabid=414>. If you would like a book loaned to you, just let me know, 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. And 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.

Cheers, Bill

Artz's Craft

By Tim Artz, Minister of Enlightenment



Spring is here at last, and it won't be long until the hot days of summer are upon us. Take advantage of the last few cool weeks and get some brewing done! Next up for me at a Belgian Dark Strong Ale and a Kölsch, two ends of the brewing spectrum.

It was great to see the excellent turnout at the March BURP meeting at the Garvinhaus. I tasted quite a few really nice stouts. We also had a nice little mead tasting going on the side. With the warmth of Spring, the bees are taking flight and soon will be filling their hives with honey. I am thinking of doing another bulk honey buy this year. Rather than all of the odd lots from last year, I think I will limit it to gallon increments this year. If you would like to get in on the bulk honey this year, please shoot me a short note with how many gallons you would like. And if you can start setting aside containers to hold your honey, that would also be a great help. A gallon of honey weighs about 12 pounds. Hopefully the source we used last year will still be in operation. Sadly, many of the larger scale honey producers tend to be older and nearing the end of a very physically demanding and typically low-paying occupation. A BURP honey buy is a small, yet significant way to get some great honey and support our local beekeepers.

Next up, at the April BURP meeting, Bill Newman will do a corny keg repair and maintenance session. He will show how to break down a keg into its component parts and discuss what parts are replaceable, how to take things apart and clean and swap parts. If anyone has any keg repair or maintenance questions that they would like to have answered, please let me or Bill know and he will be sure to cover that during the session. I really appreciate getting ideas like this, and I appreciate Bill stepping up to take it on. I am especially grateful since I will be off at another beery event on the day of the April meeting.

Coming up on April 18, we have Lambic Blending with Dave Pyle. The group of attendees is set thanks to a great response to my posting on BURPlist. I think the

final count was 14 folks. I will give a recap in next month's *BURP News*.

Next up is the Sake making team. I have a list of everyone who has expressed interest in this. The team will assemble to first have a discussion on how to make Sake. We're having a little trouble with finding a date that works for everyone, but I remain hopeful we can get it done before the weather warms too much. We don't want rice vinegar! We will discuss the various processes that are out there, and then we will subsequently regroup to make a batch of Sake. The next step will be for each of the participants to make their own Sake. When our products are ready, we will do a tasting to sample each others' wares and discuss what worked and what needs improvement. If all goes well, then we may do a tasting and discussion at a BURP meeting.

I am still looking for someone willing to do a future session on repair and maintenance of beer engines.

Any volunteers??

Due to the success of last year's mead class, there will be another iteration done in late summer. Again, this is for serious meadmakers only, not just folks who want to drink some mead. E-mail me to get your name on the list.

We will also do another cider day at the same venue as last year. I am looking for a volunteer to step into Mark Hogenmiller's big shoes and take the lead. There are lots of folks willing to lend a hand, but we need a top banana get it together. This is an absolutely fantastic event and there will be great interest. **Who will help?**

As always, all ideas for educational opportunities are enthusiastically received! Please think about things you would like to learn or things that helped you improve your brewing skills. We may not get to every idea right away, but I will do my best to pull it off.

Your BURP News

By Larry Koch, Minister of Truth



Special Thanks to **Kathy Brandt** for her excellent Meeting Report, **Mel Thompson** for his passing along of great techniques, **Andy Anderson** for his born again journal, **Charlie Pravitt** for his continuing trivialities and especially to **John Gardiner** for his memories of **Bert Tagge**.

BEER YE! BEER YE! BEER YE! In Memory of Norbert Carroll Tagge

By John Gardiner



"December 7 ... a date which will live in infamy" - Roosevelt

"Go ahead, make my day!" - Eastwood

"Anything that can go wrong will go wrong" - Murphy

"Beer Ye, Beer Ye, Beer Ye" - **Bert Tagge**

These are epigrams, brief, clever, memorable statements. But they are also like eponyms -- from the Greek "eponymous" meaning giving name. Except, they're backwards. Need to coin a new word for that.

What I mean is -- as soon as you hear the words, you know who said them. You know who made them memorable. **Bert Tagge** owns "Beer Ye! Beer Ye! Beer Ye!".

Bert would call out "Beer Ye! Beer Ye! Beer Ye!" to bring a BURP meeting to order. A seemingly impossible

task but one **Bert** could amazingly accomplish. Well, at least sometimes.

Repeatedly on BURPlist, everyone is using Beer Ye! Beer Ye! as their personal memorial to **Bert**. It's now officially deemed "**Bert's** adage."

Bert, of course, was born on December 7, you know, the infamy date. It was a few years later, in 1953, but certainly his "Beer Ye" is equally infamous. He died March 7, 2010. His memorial started at 1 o'clock Saturday March 13, the exact same time as the start of our BURP meeting. That's our **Bert**!

The service, while sad, was also a hoot. **Bert** put the FUN in funereal. It was like a BURP meeting but even bigger. I've heard many eulogies but none like these - people actually brought props!

They brought wonderful inventions **Bert** made for them. They told of shoes, \$50,000 lamps made from bombs, electric window openers, on and on. It was hysterical. Everyone was crying - half from sadness, half from laughter, and as **Bert** might say, the other half from both.

Bert was an eccentric character who traveled in eccentric circles. He only looked like a square. I think the Dilbert character was based on him.

Bert (Are you ready, this is a long list?) worked at some of the most bizarre places - Air Force (he retired as a Major), State Department, ANSER (a beltway bandit), Defense Department, Fire Department. And he did all the weird stuff. He was a husband, father, teacher. Oh my god! He was even a Notary Public and Justice of the Peace. He had a wife, **Marianne**, children **Michael** and **Rachael**, and even a grand kid **Kent**.

Now, on to the eccentric stuff. Most important of course, **Bert** was a homebrewer and a BURPer. He was a ceramic engineer. But he was also a cordwainer (ask me about that later), coffee roaster, ham radio operator (ham is the operative word here, what other kind could he be?), bingo caller, electrician, honorary warlock in a witches coven "Spiral Heart", member of Toastmasters, volunteer fire fighter, motorcyclist, accordionist, slugger, blacksmith's apprentice and a devout but not militant agnostic.

Bert was a thinker, a tinker and a tinkerer. He was a philosopher, masseur, hypnotist, and alternative energy buff. He was an animal rescuer, inventor, Boy Scout leader and EEO at Burke Volunteer Fire Department. If you're pooped just reading this list, imagine what **Bert** made this writer go through!

In January of 1997, **Bert's** fire department AKA Burke Volunteer Fire Department managed to burn itself down. Now this was admittedly before **Bert** started, but still, this has to be embarrassing. However, **Bert** loved the place and people, and they loved him. The entire shift **Bert** worked with attended his memorial. The fire fighters traded shifts in order to be there. **I mean all of them!** They drove their fire trucks in case they were needed. The parking lot looked like a fire scene. If anyone wants to donate to a charity in **Bert's** name, this is the one the family suggests. I understand BURP will be making a donation. Ignore my abuse, they earned it (they earned a donation not my abuse). These folks are a class act.

Alright, back to **Bert**. His wit was both dry and rapier - a rare combination. It was a rapier sword he honed to a double edge. He often suffered from metallurgy. His humor was usually self deprecating. His goal was not to self inflict wounds, only to avoid wounding others.

I met **Bert** over 20 years ago when he hosted a meeting of home brewers. We became great friends. **Bert** took

life seriously - don't misunderstand me. **Bert** considered himself fair game and did not take himself seriously. We used to solve all the "world's parties" together. That was our joke when we would share a beer and discuss how to make a better world in our own small way. We were solving the world's problems. He really enjoyed thinking.

Bert was a genuinely nice person. Most people want to be nice, but it takes too much effort. Please pardon the government word, **Bert** was "proactive" nice - much harder. He worked at it. **Bert** was anti-gravity. Gravity and **Bert** were equally dependable, but gravity keeps you down. **Bert** lifted you up!

So, we're all sad. But if you knew **Bert** -- you were lucky! Give **Bert** a toast and remember him with a smile. He gave you many. When you think of **Bert**, give him one back. Okay?

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<i>BURP Doxology</i>
<p><i>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 Aaaaaaaaaa, Drink!</i></p> <p>Al Lowry, 1994</p>