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Next  
Meeting

Tuesday, June 9  
at 7 pm. At

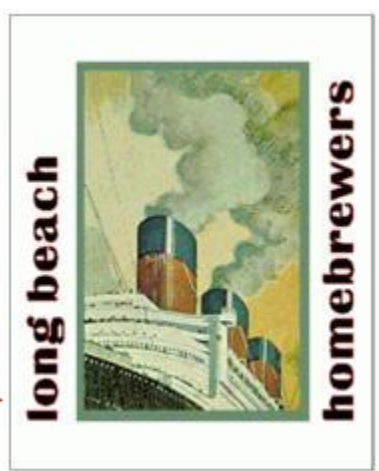
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# The Brews Telegram

The Newsletter of the  
Long Beach Homebrewers



## President's Message

### Greetings fellow Long Beach Homebrewers,

The Homebrewer of the Year competition continues this Month with Fruit Beers. Fruit beers don't particularly light the brewing fire/desire for this homebrewer, but to each their own. In my opinion, the best examples of Fruit beers are where the fruit accentuates the underlying flavor structure of the beer, and doesn't overpower the beer, rather than bad examples where a fruit flavor addition is crow-barred into a recipe, and overpowers any beer flavor. An example of a fruit addition that comes to mind that works well is the use of cherries in an Imperial Stout, for example. Bad examples I've had include an overpowering cloyingly sweet Blueberry American wheat (apologies if anyone is bringing a Blueberry American Wheat!). It will be interesting to see what our competitors bring to the competition.

NHC San Diego! The NHC is only a few days away and the Long Beach Homebrewers will be well represented at Club Night. Beers that will be poured will run the gamut of styles ranging from an Imperial Black India Pale Lager, to Barley Wines, to Belgian Golden Ale, Roggenbier, Amber Ales, Saisons, Porters, ESBs, etc. Many thanks to Gary Sjobakken for letting LBHB use his highly presentable deck cooler with a 6-tap jockey box conversion for club night! Stay tuned for the July newsletter for a recap/post-mortem of the conferences activities.

Last Month's brewing technique demonstration (mash efficiency) at the club meeting was well received and we are looking for other topics that people are interested in. Please forward any technique or equipment demo requests for future club meetings to me. Due to the Homebrewer of the Year competition this month, we won't have a June technique demo, but we'll resume the technique demonstrations in July.

Brewing with a Veteran (experienced brewer): as mentioned in a previous newsletter, one of the new activities approved by the LBHB Board is the open house, brewing with an experienced brewer, brew-day concept.

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The idea is to have an experienced club member open up his brewday for other club members to come and observe their techniques and gear during a typical brewday. Even experienced brewers, for example, can learn something by observing how others brew. Jon Silvertooth will be the first to host an open brewday at his house, in the coming months, as detailed later on in this newsletter. As a reminder, hosts of an open house brewday will have brewing ingredients sponsored by the club (up to 10 gallons, one yeast pack per 5 gallons), with the requirements that the brewer has 1) been a member for two consecutive years, 2) brewday invite is published at least 1 calendar month in advance in this newsletter (or at least two newsletters in advance), 3) with schedule approved by the board (to avoid duplicate brewdays in close proximity, and to keep tabs on overall costs).

Cheers!

Adam

## 2015 Monthly Style Schedule

Here are the styles for each month.

- June:** Fruit Beer (Category 20)\*\*
- July:** American Ale (Category 10)
- August:** Mead (Categories 24, 25, and 26)\*\*
- September:** Sour Ale (Category 17)
- October:** Sweet Stout (Category 13b)\*\*
- November:** Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer (Category 21)
- December:** Standard Cider and Perry (Category 27)

## **Brewing With Mr. Tooth! (AKA: Brewing with a veteran)**

One of the new ideas from our new club president is a “Brew with a veteran” day, which is where club members are invited to come to a brewer’s home to observe his or her brew day. Whether you are a new brewer looking to see how an all-grain batch is brewed or a long-time brewer, you are likely to pick up a tip or two from seeing how someone else goes about their brew day. I’ll be brewing a milk stout, which we’ll all get to sample at the October meeting.

Details:

- Date: 7/25/2015 (Saturday)
- Time: 10am – 4pm
- Location: Silvertooth Brauhaus
  - 1864 Stevely Ave
  - Long Beach, CA 90815
- Techniques used
  - Milling your own grain
  - All grain brewing
  - Batch Sparging
  - Using a pump
  - Using counter flow chiller
  - Temperature controlled fermentation

## **Tastings at the May meeting (SMASH)**

Jon Silvertooth

SMASH Saison

Moises Arteuge

SMASH Pale Ale

Gary Sjobakken

SMASH 6-row

Dave Gansen

Belgian Dubble Aged in Cab Barrel

Alfredo R

Hibiscus Orange Wheat

Adam S

Double IPA

Dick E

EEESB

Jerome C

Apricot Ale

Adam M

IPA

## Spotlight on Mike Geesing

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**Member Since 2008**

**Hi Mike! Thanks for joining us for the LBHB Brewers Spotlight!**

Always a pleasure.

**What is your occupation / what do you do outside of homebrewing?**

By profession I am a mechanical engineer. For over 32 years I have worked for aerospace companies designing tools to fix and repair aircraft.

**When, how and why did you get started in home brewing?**

Homebrewing is the latest of my of fermentation hobbies. When I was 11, my paternal grandmother taught me how to make wine. Because I had wonderful and very tolerant parents they let me make fruit wines. A little reading and practice and I was making better wines than my grandma. Later I expanded my range to include cider and meads, plus a few liqueurs from family recipes. One year my sister decided that I needed to learn how to brew beer, so she bought me a brewing kit as a Christmas present. The first beer was drinkable, but not well carbonated, so I bought Charlie Papazian's *The Complete Joy of Homebrewing* and did a bit of studying. My second brew was the Nutty Brown Ale kit from Stein Fillers. While that batch was fermenting, I joined the Long Beach Homebrewers in hopes of improving my brewing skills. The brown ale came out great and I am happy to report that membership in this club has helped me improve my brewing skills



**How long have you been with Long Beach Home Brewers?**

I joined at the end of 2008. At that time our meetings were much more sparsely attended, with two dozen being a good turnout.

**What have been your favorite experiences in homebrewing?**

My favorite experiences have been the quiet moments of enjoying homebrew with family and friends. But I have to admit that some of the pleasure of homebrewing is the joy of introducing friends to beers that are unlike any macrobrew beer that they have ever tried. Brewing good beers can be a real ego boost, when your friends start asking for your special creations. It is a great feeling when a you hear a friend say: "I don't like beer, but this is really good. What is it?"



**Roughly how many beers/ciders/meads have you brewed?**

According to my log, I've made 88 beers, not counting beers that I helped other people brew. I have no idea how many batches of cider, mead and fruit wines that I made over the last four decades, because I treated it like other cooking and kept recipes, but not a log. When plums are in season, I make plum wine. In fall, when cider and cranberries are on sale it is obviously time to make cranberry apple cider or apfelwein to serve on Thanksgiving. If I find a good deal on honey, I make mead.

With beer you really should keep records, so you can adjust and improve your recipes. The habit of keeping a log of my beers has proven useful enough that I now keep records of my cider and mead making also.

**Any other achievements in homebrewing?**

I've collected a few ribbons from the Orange county Fair for my beers and ciders, plus a bunch of ribbons for my beer label designs. The one thing I truly count as an accomplishment is having taught family members, friends, and coworkers how to brew. In 2013, I was invited

to participate as a speaker on a homebrewing panel and to demonstrate homebrewing and other fermentation hobbies at the annual LA Science Fiction Convention (LosCon). Last year, we repeated the panel with the addition of my lovely wife as a panel member.



**What was your first homebrew system, and what do you have now. Do you plan on expanding?**

I started partial mash brewing using a small stockpot on our kitchen stove. Though I love technology and toys, I have been trying to master brewing with simple equipment instead of accumulating toys. Partly this is because I am a fan of the KISS principle (Keep It Simple Stupid) for many things, including brewing.

We have a larger pot now, a much better stove, a propane burner, a mashing tun, several corny kegs, a small fridge that fits a fermenter or a 5 gallon keg and a three tap jockey box. The stove has a bread dough proofing setting that keeps a nice even temperature perfect for sour mashing or yogurt making. I have not been altogether successful at avoiding brewing toys, partially because people keep offering to sell me their old hardware for insanely low prices. My family bought me a very useful accessory for the propane burner, a stainless steel pan for cooking taco meat.

I have no real plans to expand my system, but if either of the freezers in our garage ever get emptied ...

**What homebrew do you have on tap / in bottles now?**

On tap, I have Russian Imperial Stout, a Citrus Pale Ale, and a Spiced Stout. In fermenters, I have a Peanut Butter Extra Stout and a Cherry Milk Stout. I also have more cases of beers, ciders and meads aging than I want to try counting. One mead that I'm aging is flavored with Chinese Five Spice powder, at 18 months it is fun to drink with Asian foods, but it is going to need several years of aging to mellow the flavors.

**Do you have a "Go-To" recipe / house beer that you brew often? If so, what is it and why is it your Go-To?**

The recipe that I pull out the most often is for a Belgian Wit, but 2/3 of the time I make it with fruit (apricot, peaches or blueberries). The base recipe is based on a Stein Fillers kit, but I've

been fiddling with the spicing and fruit additions. Belgian Wits are pleasant, easy drinking beers that everyone in my family likes so the kegs never last long.

The second beer I brew frequently is sort of an English Brown beer that is another simple easy drinking beer. I carbonate it above the high end of what the BJCP considers appropriate for the style because (1) I like it that way and (2) based on some of bottled Browns that I've had from England the brewers there have never read the BJCP style guide definition of how they are supposed to brew their beers.

**Describe something you created or improved to make a function of the brewing process less complicated for you?**

As I mentioned, I like the KISS principle. The only thing I've created has been a quick kluge for cleaning the chill plate and hoses of my jockey box. Connect a ball lock inlet disconnect, a Carbonator Cap and a 2 liter soda bottle together and you have a quick tool for flushing and sanitizing the system.

**What are your top 3 favorite commercial beers?**

This is a very hard question to answer, mostly because there are so many great beers on the market. Looking at the ratings I've given in Untappd, the top beers are Delirium Tremens (from Brouwerij Huyghe), Trappistes Rochefort 10 (from Abbaye Notre-Dame de Saint-Rémy) and La Folie (from New Belgium Brewing Company). I admit that my rating for Delirium Tremens may have something to do with the fun name and pink elephants on the label.

**Who do you admire in the brewing / homebrewing world?**

John Palmer: Not only did he write one of the best books on brewing *How to Brew*, but he also put the first edition version online as a free resource for homebrewers. That is a truly classy gesture.

**Any tips for someone who is newer at brewing / was there a tip that you once received that you want to pass on that changed your homebrewing?**

Unless you really want to brew perfectly to a "style", you should focus on brewing the best beer that you can. If you like it, that is all that matters. If you aren't satisfied with your brews, we have a lot of great award winning brewers in our club that can give you advice on how to improve your beer whether you want it to be perfectly to "style" or just taste perfect.

I recently read "So You Want to Start a Brewery" by Tony Magee, the founder of the founder/owner of Lagunitas Brewing Company. At one point in the book Tony talks about why Lagunitas beers have seldom done well in competitions, despite their great popularity. The most common comment they receive on score sheets is "Not appropriate for style". The recipe and taste for their IPA has not changed since 1995, but the reasons given by the judges for it not being "appropriate for style" have changed. Originally GABF judges felt that Lagunitas IPA was too hoppy for a proper IPA; more recently the judges claim that it is not hoppy enough. Same beer, but a different perception of what the "perfect" IPA is supposed to taste like. Since Lagunitas first opened, they have been continuously expanding production to keep up with the steadily increasing demand for their beer even though it is "Not appropriate for style". Make beer that you enjoy and have fun doing it.

We certainly had no intention of doing anything but a little rest and relaxation at a cozy little bed & breakfast in the mountains, breathe some fresh mountain air and blend with some friendly local dwellers. But every once in a while when you do this kind of thing, miraculous adventures unexpectedly present themselves.

So we're meandering through the village of Idyllwild on our first afternoon there having just taken a stroll up the banks of Strawberry Creek to get there; just trying to find a little refreshment, an lo and behold, we saw a sign! Some may call it a miracle but it was much closer to something made of cardboard leaning up against an auditorium table on the sidewalk across the street. The sign read, "Paws for Rhythm and Blues, Beer Festival and Home Brewers' Competition", and it was happening the following day. Consider the miraculous adventure presented.



The Paws for Rhythm event was serenely set amongst the mountain pines of the Idyllwild Nature Center

What better way to spend a Saturday afternoon in the mountains than to help our pals at ARF, the



Animal Rescue Friends, an Idyllwild Foundation whose mission is to rescue animals that have been abandoned, lost, or whose owners are no longer able to care for them. Known as "the little rescue with the big heart and home of love and second chances," it was founded in 1994 and is operated entirely by fewer than a dozen volunteers and animal fosters. And this tiny but big hearted operation thought it would be a great idea to raise funds by having a beer fest. Great idea? You better believe it!

We approached the event unaware of the home brewer's competition because the judging had already taken place the previous weekend but the fest was an enjoyable afternoon excursion. The price of admission bought you a pint glass and 10 pour tickets with no less than 100% of ALL proceeds going to help ARF! Among the mainstay stalwarts of Stone and Sam Adams there were also some desert locals to shore up the somewhat sparse grouping of breweries. But the venue was the wonderfully serene Idyllwild Nature Center, so the space was limited. And at two years old, the event still resides in the casual stage, so the 4 ounce pours often crept more than half way up the pint glass. At no time did we ever think there was not enough beer to drink.



Hamming it up for the camera at the "Selfie" booth.

Joining Sam Adams and Stone to round out the bill were Coachella Valley Brewing, Brew Rebellion, Ritual Brewing, Rev Brewing, and La Quinta, which



made an impressive showing for itself as one of the brewers was on hand to describe a yeast strain from Belgium that the brewery owner acquired some 20 years ago along the way that is now the backbone of their house yeast. White Labs made a presence and had on hand a rather delicious Imperial Stout that employed 96 yeast strains in its brewing process. Filling out the beer dance card was the Coachella Valley Homebrew Club with a boiling wort as the center piece of a brewing demonstration.

The barbecue looked great but the line was so long from one single guy busting his hump trying to dish out sausages and pulled pork to the throng. More help is needed there if they want to derail the complaint expressway but the entertainment actually got us up and dancing for a minute or two as Brad Radis was blowing some nasty harp as he and the Super 300 Swing Loaded Blues Band added a nice bluesy background to the event.

It really was a charming event that we would recommend to anyone who happens to be up in Idyllwild at that time of the year, especially having just stumbled upon the event quite by accident!