

DREGS FROM THE KEG

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DECEMBER 2014



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

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Foam at the Top

[Ryan Penrod](#), Strand President

I was very impressed by all the delicious King Harbor Monster Brew beers at the November club meeting. It was hard to pick a favorite: Dan Parker's Pumpkin beer; Steve Fafard's Vanilla and Oaked brew; Jason Light's Bourbon Oaked beer; and a few others. All were impressive interpretations of the Monster Brew wort.



The King Harbor Monster Brew was all about that wort,
[bout that wort....](#)

Strand Brewers Club Holiday Party



December 6th
Steve Fafard's House
22 Rollingwood Drive
Rolling Hills Estates
Starting at 6PM

I hope to have a chance to taste these beers again at the Strand Brewers Club Holiday Party on December 6th at Steve Fafard's house. Steve and his wife have hosted the holiday party for as long as I have been a member, and it is always a great time. Bring kegs or bottles of homebrew. The club bar will be set up and we will have an optional White Elephant Gift Exchange at the party. Jay Ankeney reminded everyone that we have a history of rain at the party, so be prepared!

At the November meeting we held officer elections. Congratulations to the 2015 officers.

President: Ryan Penrod
Vice President: Rich Thornton
Treasurer: Chris Remensperger
Secretary: David Eaves
Activities Director: Bob Wilson
Dregs Editor: Rick Wirsing

Rick has served as Dregs Editor for two years and David's recent family addition (a son) mean both are looking for replacements. If you are interested in either of these roles, please let us know. Being a club officer is a rewarding experience.

I'm looking forward to the 2015 year with another three rounds of the Iron Brewer Challenge competition, more single variable ingredient tastings, and the Southern California

Homebrewers Festival at Vail Lake. We will also be hosting the 2015 Pacific Brewers Cup. So expect a busy and educational year. I hope to increase our competition entries in 2015 and put together another Homebrew Club of the Year entry highlighting why the Strand Brewers Club is the best Homebrew Club in California.



Holiday Gift Idea: Beer Jelly Beans!

Spent Grains

[Rick Wirsing](#), Dregs Editor

The end of 2014 is fast approaching. You know what that means. The time to renew your Strand Brewers Club membership is fast approaching too. Fortunately, it has gotten a lot easier to pay your membership dues. The [Strand Brewers Club webpage](#) enables payment using PayPal. Dues for 2015 are \$35 for an individual membership and \$45 for you and your spouse/partner. You also have the option of paying the old fashioned way, by check or cash to our new Treasurer, Chris Remensperger.

What's On Tap

[Bob Wilson](#), Strand Activities Director

[Rick Wirsing](#), Dregs Editor

COMPETITIONS

[Pints and Knights Homebrew Competition](#)

Santa Fe Springs, CA

Entries due December 5th.

Judging December 13th. Entry fee \$7.

Contact: [Enrique Piceno](#)

Phone: 310-331-1409

[Temecula Valley Annual Homebrew Competition](#)

Temecula, CA

Entries due December 7th.

Judging December 13th. Entry fee \$6.

Contact: [John Ryti](#)

Phone: 951-541-3774

[2015 Doug King Memorial Homebrew Competition](#)

Woodland Hills, CA

Entries due January 10th.

Judging January 24th. Entry fee \$9.

Contact: [Ed Kochanowski](#)

Phone: 818-917-2467

[Romancing the Beer](#)

Thousand Oaks, CA

Entries due January 31st.

Judging February 22nd. Entry fee \$7.

Contact: [Courtney Morrow](#)

Phone: 805-870-5109

[Hop Courage Great American Homebrew Contest](#)

Los Angeles, CA **Register by March 10th.**

Entries due March 18th.

Judging March 21st. Entry fee \$30.

Contact: [Chris Thomas](#)

Phone: 615-525-7058

[2015 Napa Homebrewers Classic](#)

Napa, CA

Entries due April 11th.

Judging May 2nd. Entry fee \$9.

Contact: [Mike Riddle](#)

Phone: 707-337-8088

[Link to the Calendar for Homebrew Competitions.](#)



Holiday Gift Idea: Beer Bottle Lederhosen!

[Link to the Calendar for Strand Brewers Club Events.](#)



Holiday Gift Idea: Beer Chillsner!

STRAND BREWERS CLUB EVENTS

December 6th

The **Strand Brewers Club Holiday Party** will be held at Steve Fafard's house, 22 Rollingwood Drive, Rolling Hills Estates. The festivities will begin at 6PM. There will be food and the club bar will be set up. So bring kegs, bring bottles, and as always, bring a designated driver!

This year we are adding a White Elephant Gift Exchange to the holiday party. Think of it as a fancy bottle share. Wrap up a bottle of your favorite home brew or your favorite commercial craft beer. Perhaps even regift your favorite how to home brew book. Or if you're feeling super festive, find a beer related funny item like the ones shown in the pictures above and below (all were found at World Market). But remember there's a \$10 limit :) . . . and yes, all gifts should have a beer theme to them.

And if you don't have wrapping paper, that's cool . . . gift bags, boxes, practically anything works. You can always use newspaper, old work emails, old copies of zymurgy . . . pretty much anything works. Just remember to bring the gift wrapped!

BEER EVENTS

May 2nd

The Southern California Homebrewers Festival is back! The 2015 SCHF will be held at [Vail Lake](#) the weekend of May 2nd. SCHF is a [California Homebrewers Association](#) members-only event. CHA memberships are only available through the CHA website. Tickets for the 2015 SCHF will be available for purchase soon.

2014 Strand Brewer of the Year

[Ryan Penrod](#), Strand President

Here are the current standings for the Strand Brewer of the Year. Report all your point earning activities to [Ryan Penrod](#).

Name	Points
Ryan Penrod	85
Jeff Sanders	65
Rives Borland Bob Wilson	56
Rick Wirsing	40
Steve Gardner	37
Chris Remensperger	27
Jim Wilson	24
Dan Parker	22
Jimmy Gallenbach	16
Nate Federman Doug Toperzer	15
Rob Proffitt	14
Jay Ankeney Jim Hilbing Michelle Neuman	13
Rich Thornton	12
Andrew Maxwell	8
Steve Fafard Mike Haisma	7
Mike Litsey	6
Jeff Mitchell Jon Paulson	5
Adair Johnson Jason Light Christine Sparks	4
Trey Astbury Chad Hazen Alex Schlee	3
Jared Carson David Eaves Rob Palaniuk Jesse Tice	2

Name	Points
Ken Bones Dave Cordrey Todd Harding Kevin Leung Eddie Martinez Rick Pierce Greg Roberts Scott Seipel Justin Vega	1

Yet Another BJCP Exam Cycle Bites the Dust

Jim Wilson

When you read this piece, seven Strand members will be a few days away from taking the BJCP judging exam.

Last year, a critical mass in our club wanted to become beer judges. The current process requires that new candidates first take an online exam that tests their knowledge of beer styles, brewing and troubleshooting. After passing, they are then eligible to demonstrate their ability to judge beer in a contest like setting. Pass that exam and you become a Recognized Judge and BJCP member.



I offered to organize a judging exam and BJCP assigned a date in late 2015, which was two years away at that time. Not long after, changes were implemented to speed up grading and our exam was moved up to December 2014. Twelve Strand members signed up right away and 18 non-members joined after registration was opened to anyone. Since the default judging exam limit is 12 seats, this meant that we were way oversubscribed a year before the target date.

BJCP has a mechanism to enlarge exams and I turned the crank to bump ours up to 20 seats. Ultimately, about 65 showed interest although only about 25 actually qualified to take it by passing the online exam, or by being current BJCP judges.

A whole lot of churning happened between the first 20 signing up and the final 20 who will actually take the exam. The way I see it, if you want to be a judge, commit to the goal and pass the online exam promptly. Most of the folks who signed up in the #20-30 slots on the list could have taken the judging exam if they had just passed the online exam.

Early in 2014 informal beer appreciation get togethers were organized by Bob Wilson and Rick Wirsing. This gave an excellent chance for interested candidates to add to their beer knowledge on a relaxed timeline.

I facilitated four structured classes in October and November. South Bay Brewing Supply allowed us to use the shop after they closed on Sunday afternoons for which Dan earns a big shout out! Surprisingly, while we had room for 20, the highest class attendance was 16 and the average was lower than that. Some of the non attendance reasons were understandable like travel, illness, apartment fires and dead cars. The one I still don't understand was "I don't have time to take a class."

If you missed the bus and still want to be a beer judge, there is a one-time situation coming up that might be attractive. The 2015 AHA National Homebrew Conference will be held in San Diego in mid June. Beer, Mead and possibly Cider exams will be given the day before NHC starts. The beauty of exams at the

NHC is that they have very large entry limits and never (to my knowledge) turn candidates away. You can learn more at <http://www.bjcp.org/examcenter.php> and can apply to the exam with an email to mdhabrat@gmail.com.

Good luck to the super seven on December 6!

Bob and Michelle's Big European Adventure

[Bob Wilson](#), Strand Activities Director

I have long dreamed of attending Munich's Oktoberfest. That dream was realized this year as part of a three week trip through Europe's greatest brewing centers! My girlfriend, Michelle, and I visited Scotland, England, Austria, Germany, Belgium and France on a whirlwind tour.



Bob Wilson discovers that with beer, dreams really do come true.

We flew into London, and took a train to Edinburgh to begin our adventure. We stayed at Melville Castle, an estate with a rich history that has been converted into a hotel. We were there in the days leading up to the referendum that would decide whether Scotland would remain a part of the United Kingdom. The mood was tense!

While Scottish beers traditionally highlight caramelized malt flavors, India Pale Ales have become just as popular there as they have in the U.S. A bar next to the University of Edinburgh campus specializes in Belgian beers. Nonetheless, I was easily able to find some Schilling beers (60/70/80 Schilling) as well as an English mild on cask.

The cask beers I have had before have had low carbonation, and no head, so I was confused when all the cask beers I sampled had a pretty significant and long-lasting foam crown. In Scotland, and in Northern England, casks are fitted with a "sparkler." As the beer comes out of the tap, it hits the sparkler before falling into the glass. This causes the small amount of carbonation present to foam up, giving an attractive head.

Scotland has embraced the culinary gentrification happening stateside as well, with gastropubs and fine dining readily available. In the interest of experiencing traditional cuisine, I sought out some shepherd's pie, treacle pudding, bangers and mash, fish and chips, and even haggis (which was actually pretty good, but not my favorite). And don't get me started on the tea!

We took a train to Harrogate, North Yorkshire, in northern England to stay with my expat ex-roommate, Greg. This region claims to be the cask ale capital of the world! It is also home to Oliver's, purveyors of the finest fish and chips I have ever had, and Betty's tea-room, which markets its teas as Taylors of Harrogate (available at the El Segundo Whole Foods, for example). We sampled ciders, bitters, and brown ales. I wanted to check out a bottle shop, but was surprised to see almost exclusively American beers!



Michelle Neuman at Oktoberfest in Munich.

We flew from nearby Leeds to Munich with Greg and a group of six others. We rented a car and drove to Salzburg for the day. This was the day before Munich's Oktoberfest began, but the Austrians were having their own festival. They even have an Augustiner brewery, completely unrelated to Munich's most popular beer.

We stayed in Garmisch, a small town south of Munich nestled in the shadow of the Zugspitze, Germany's highest mountain. It was easy to take a train into Munich, and I was grateful to be staying away from the craziness of the festival. Oktoberfest itself was... disappointing, at least from a beer perspective. The style of beer served at Oktoberfest has changed over the years. According to the Oxford Companion to Beer, the style we think of as Märzen was served at Oktoberfest from 1872 to 1990. It seems the brewers realized by serving a lighter beer, they could sell more, so the beer now served is more like a Helles. I didn't care for it.

Luckily, the bar in our hotel had a variety of beers, including Munich Dunkel, a style I had never tried, but immediately fell in love with.

Michelle and I parted from the others to continue on to Brussels, with a brief stop in Cologne. The train station had a bar serving authentic Kölsch. Although I had tried Kölsh in the U.S., I better appreciated the light yet nuanced character of these examples.

We arrived in Brussels and ate at a restaurant called La Fin de Siècle, which offered traditional Belgian cuisine, including a beef stew made with Trappist beer called Carbonnade Flamande. Needless to say, the beer was excellent. Even Michelle loved it! The next day, we walked around the area surrounding the Grand Place, the central square of Brussels. It seemed like every store was either a chocolate shop, a waffle shop, or a bottle shop. Truly, this was a paradise. The hot chocolate was thick and rich, mostly melted chocolate with a little cream, instead of how it is served in the U.S. We even found Westvleteren 12 sitting on a shelf, completely without fanfare.

We visited the Delirium Café, which holds the world record for widest beer selection. Although thousands of beers are available in principle, in practice only about fifty beers were actually available. We also visited Moeder Lambic, a bar specializing in the Senne sour. We capped off Brussels with a trip to Cantillon, which was roughly five blocks from our apartment. They had a great self-guided tour, and a few beers available only in the tasting room. I wish we could have stayed longer!

Next we turned to the Flemish city of Ghent, in northern Belgium. This city was one of the few spared by both world wars, so the medieval architecture is well-preserved. St. Baaf's Cathedral is more impressive even than Notre Dame in Paris! We took a boat ride over the canals that wind through the city. Once again, both food and beer were amazing! One particular bar, Het Waterhuis aan de Bierkant, had an especially amazing selection. We visited Gruut, a brewery specializing in beers eschewing hops in favor of other herbs and spices. On my most recent trip to Select Beer, I

noticed a beer from this brewery, so you don't need to go to Ghent to try it!

We left Ghent for Paris. I did not see any Biere de Garde, or really any beer at all that was not made by a conglomerate. The food was pretty good though!

We took a train back to London to conclude our trip. Our last European meal was at the Fuller's pub in King's Cross station. There I sampled one last English beer: Horndean Special Bitter, brewed by George Gale & Company, subsequently bought by Fullers. I couldn't believe how malty it was! Apparently before the brewery was bought by Fuller's, they would blend their ordinary bitter with their Prize Old Ale. I don't know if Fuller's still does this, but this was still one of my favorites from the trip. I think I'll have to brew a version soon!



Every Trip to Brussels should include a visit to Brasserie Cantillon.

Tell Us What You Are Doing

Come on you'all! Don't get all self conscious! We need and want your stories for The Dregs. Upgrade your brewery? Fine tune your brewing? Take a road trip? Do well in a competition? Have recipes to share? Read a good beer book? Write it up! Have club related pictures? Send all that, and anything else you think would be interesting, to [Rick Wirsing](#). Everybody will thank you!

What We Stand For

The objectives of the Strand Brewers Club are to brew beer and share information about the

brewing, presentation, consumption, judging, and history of beer. We promote and encourage homebrewing competition and hope to foster general goodwill through the making and consuming of this noble and most excellent beverage. We aim to brew the best damn beer.

It is our policy to brew and consume beer strictly for fun. Under no circumstances does the Strand Brewers Club support or condone, in any manner, the violation of any law, including the sale or barter of homebrewed beer, the operation of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol by a member or a participant in any club event, or the provision of alcohol to minors.

2014 Club Officers

President	Ryan Penrod	310-971-6757	penrod 25@yahoo.com
Vice-President	Rich Thornton	310-xxx-xxxx	rich.one@earthlink.net
Treasurer	Doug Toperzer	310-697-6611	doug.toperzer@gmail.com
Activities	Bob Wilson	310-849-8154	millstadt@gmail.com
Administrator	David Eaves	310-806-2772	david.eaves@yahoo.com
Dregs Editor	Rick Wirsing	310-872-9915	rmwirsing@gmail.com

Mentors

The following members have volunteered to answer your brewing questions and to help beginning brewers learn the craft. You should take advantage of their expertise.

Bill Krouss	310-831-6352 bkrouss@cox.net	Rancho Palos Verdes
Dave Peterson	310-530-3168 diablo390@aol.com	Torrance
Jay Ankeney	310-545-3983 jayankeney@mac.com	Manhattan Beach
Jim Hilbing	310-798-0911 james@hilbing.us	Redondo Beach
Jim Wilson	310-316-2374 jim7258@gmail.com	Redondo Beach
Steve Fafard	310-373-1724 sfafard@cox.net	Rolling Hills Estates

TRUVE



I DON'T FIND
CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
TO BE VERY
STRESSFUL.

I MUST JUST BE A
VERY GOOD
SHOPPER.

CHEERS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!