



# DREGS FROM THE KEG

**July 2011**



**News from the  
NHC and the Thunderpipe**

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## **Foam at the Top**

Chris Voisey, Strand President

I can't believe it is already July! (or soon will be, depending on when you read this article.) Luckily that means the summer party is upon us and true to our annual tradition, Kenny Biller and family have graciously offered their home and garden for this event once again. Be sure to come out and enjoy it again this year!

One thing that is back on my mind these days is beer and food pairing. It truly amazes me how well some of these combinations can really complement each other. For example, I was up at a restaurant in Culver City a few weeks ago and enjoying a fresh fruit garden salad with a Strand 24th Street Pale Ale. After biting into one of the sweet strawberries I happened to take a sip of my beer. I couldn't believe the combination! The flavors complimented each other so well. That got me back on my old subject of beer and food pairings in general. Ironically the next day I was just catching up on some of my backlogged personal email (which many of you know seems to constantly be that way) and began reading the May edition of the CraftBeer.com Newsletter. Once again I was reminded by some other great combinations. Food really can pair nicely with beer!

On that note, I would really like to get a club event where we have some focus on this. Home brews should be no exception, in fact the ones we do in our club are so amazing that I would be surprised if you couldn't find some sort of unique combination. Although it is probably too late for the summer party (July 9th!!) I would like to encourage anyone that has some extra ambition perhaps try to bring a small plate that matches their beer. Maybe we can even set a bigger and

broader goal for the Octoberfest party to include this in our event!

In the meantime, try checking out the regular beer dinners that are offered throughout the South Bay. I know Pinkie's does their incredible pairing with the help of Dave @ Stone on the last Monday of the month and Silvio's does theirs on the second Monday. I even heard that Simmzy's sister restaurant, the Tin Roof Bistro conducted their first beer dinner early June and have another one scheduled for July 26th. Ironically Dave from Stone has helped all these restaurants in their preparations. Be sure to check them out.

One thing you may have noticed is the change in notifications on the club website. I have been working with our provider and found out they finally admitted a problem with the old system and rather than let it continue to be problematic have changed the system to only allow notifications to posts that you have done through the forums or that we send as administrators of the site. There is hope that they will once again add an enhancement to the site to allow you to subscribe to topics on a regular basis but unfortunately this has (hopefully only temporarily) been suspended. In the meantime I will try to work with the Club Officers to help get some better updates sent out to the group. This is a highly desired function by many of you and I apologize for the change in its availability.

One final note that I came across the other day as it relates to enjoying our favorite beverage ... Don't quote me as any Doctor (I'm far from it!) but it seems that beer when consumed in proper portions can actually help increase the levels of good cholesterol (HDL.) A study conducted over thirty+ years showed the association of moderated beer consumption really can be health! So I guess my practice of a good working out followed by the appropriate après beverage is really a good thing for me! (NOTE: Please seek proper medical advice before engaging in this practice for yourself :) )

I look forward to seeing everyone at the summer party on the 9th and then that following meeting at our monthly meeting, which don't forget is at Rock'n Brews in El Segundo. We'll have a few tables set aside for us in a corner I hear and hopefully some discounts on food and/or drink. If you haven't been there, they have a good selection of beers (even if Anheuser-Busch is behind a lot of them) and a great pizza!

## Member profiles

There were no profiles contributed this month. Has the well run dry already?

## Dregs Through the Ages

(or at least the last few years)

By [Jeff Sanders](#), Strand Administrator

In preparation for July's Dregs I decided to go through the July Dregs from previous years to see what was in them, what magic they might hold, what pearls of wisdom they might have. Jim Wilson did an amazing job loading all the Dregs from previous years, a rolling history of the club from day one and so my curiosity piqued, I took a stroll through July Dregs of the past, and here are a few of my favorite posts.

2009 - Pictures from club brew at Alex's on the Strand. Come on, brewing, drinking, beach. Reminded me how fun club brews can be.

2008 - Description of some aspects of that years BJCP exam. Everyone who is taking the BJCP class this year with Jim should check this out.

2007 - Review of *Fearless Brewer* by Brian Kunath. I'm Always looking for good brewing books to check out.

2006 - Brian McGovney's chipotle mead recipe. Enough said.

2005 - Great refractometer article by Jim Hilbing.

2004 - A hop history lesson.

2003 - Some modern laws dealing with home brewing, just in case you're wondering.

2002 - Cheap counterflow chiller build.

2001 - Breakdown of English beer styles and commercial examples, all from a member's trip to the Isles, must have been a great trip.

2000 - Carbonating beer for competition from kegs to bottles and member chili recipes.

1999 - Pep talk from Dave Cordrey for when you're lagging in your brewing. If you haven't brewed in a while, this post is for you!

1998 - A primer on fruit lambics and more member chili recipes.

1997 - Counter pressure bottle filling.

1994 - Scottish Ale recipe that won 1<sup>st</sup> place that year at the Americas Finest City Homebrewing Competition in San Diego.

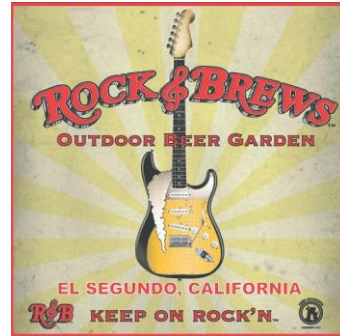
I highly recommend everyone take a trip through the Dregs through the ages, you never know what you might find!

## What's Brewing?

[Esther Tung](#), Strand Events Director

### July Meeting

This month we'll meet on July 13 at 7 p.m.



**143 MAIN ST  
EL SEGUNDO, CA 90245**

### Other Beer Events:

Summer Party at Kenny Miller's

Saturday, July 9, 1:00 p.m.

Kenny will kindly be hosting the summer party once again. Come celebrate with your fellow brewers! This will be a potluck so please bring your favorite dish and let us know if you'd like to contribute a keg. We'll send his address in a separate reminder for the event.

Final Friday

Friday, July 29

The Rockefeller

422 Pier Avenue

Hermosa Beach

Strand Brewers Club Fundraiser

One of our goals for the end of this year is to build a club brew system. Glenn has offered to store the equipment at the shop where we will have a convenient place for communal use and future club brews. We are gladly accepting donations from members who have used equipment that they no longer need. Rives will also be hosting a fundraiser event so we can raise money to purchase additional equipment. There will be plenty of food, music, and homebrew. We just ask that you bring a \$10 donation. Thanks for all your support!

Saturday, July 30 1:30 p.m.

640 Monterey Blvd, Apt 4

Hermosa Beach, CA 90254



## San Diego Bus Trip

Saturday, August 27, All day event (we will meet at 9:00 a.m.)

We will be visiting some of the best breweries in San Diego County. So far we have plans to visit Port Brewing, Alesmith, Alpine, Ballast Point, and Taps. The bus company we are using is very flexible so we will be able to add or change stops on the way. The cost will be \$45/person and must be prepaid to reserve a spot. Space is LIMITED so please let me know if you would like to purchase a seat. The cost includes breakfast and snacks on the way and brewery tastings. Other meals are not included (we'll probably stop for food at Taps or Hamilton's) so please prepare for meals and any purchases you would like to make at the breweries. Contact Esther for more info.

## Reflections on the 2011 AHA National Convention

Jay Ankeney

Editor's note. Jay took all the NHC photos in this issue. He contributed the cover photo and generously allowed the use of his pics to illustrate my Highlights article which was really helpful. I've published both his and my articles as they were written, just reformatting to fit the Dregs. No thoughts were lost in the process.

I always walk away from AHA National Conventions with a warm glow, reflecting on the pleasure of spending time with like-minded people who share a passion for the wonder of homebrewing.



This was my 8<sup>th</sup> NHC, and one of the best. Since it was held at the beautiful Town & Country Resort and Convention Center we were not faced with being stuck in a single hotel as some of the past events have been.



The abundance of professional brewers from the San Diego area who gave presentation and served up their beers was especially gratifying since all of them made a point of saluting the hobby that gave them their start. It's a kick getting a Russian River brew poured by Vinny Cilurzo himself.





I decided not to judge in the final round of the national competition this year because I really wanted to attend the sessions that filled the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday daytime schedule.



It was great getting samples from the pros during Thursday evening's Pro Brewers Night.



Which was sparked by the surprising appearance of a talented bagpipe band.



Then there were even more intriguing offerings from fellow homebrewers like our Pacific Gravity buds during Friday evening's Club Night.



Can you believe this 7 Randall bar set up by the Maltose Falcons? Five of them held different hops, the others blackberries and cherries.





And the boisterous levity during Saturday night's Grand Banquet gives you a feeling of community with homebrewers from across the country.



The beers that our contingent of Strand Brewers poured during our Saturday afternoon stint at the Hospitality Suite were well received.



Which this year featured an impressive beer-based dinner cooked up by chef Sean Paxton.



And I'm gratified that my mead also found some acceptance.



My only real complaint with this year's affair was the pretty lame logo printed on the commemorative T-shirt. I didn't see many people buying or wearing them.



Those of us who attended the NHC 2011 will be summarizing several of the informational sessions in this and future issues of the Dregs. But none of this can communicate that warm glow of fellowship from reacquainting old friends and making new ones that makes these events so special.



## Spent Grains

[Rob Proffitt](#), Treasurer

We start June with approximately \$2,000 in the club bank account, and are still on track to finish the year with about \$1,100. Last month I sent a reminder email to 34 members from last year who had not yet renewed for 2011. Unfortunately I only got two responses, so membership numbers did not increase significantly. We currently stand at 44 members, which is still behind last year's numbers. If you got that email last month, please consider renewing. I'll be sending out a second email

this month as part of an effort to find out why people do not renew, and what we can do as a club that will make membership more attractive.

Dues are \$25 for individual members and \$10 for spouse members. Also, if you would like a paper copy of the Dregs mailed to you each month, add an additional \$5 for postage. If you'd like to renew by mail, please mail a check made out to "Strand Brewers Club" to me at 1008 Teri Ave, Torrance, CA 90503.

**Thunderpipe Brewing Co.**  
(a.k.a. Rob's new brewery)

Another Editor's note. **PAY ATTENTION. THIS IS SWEET.**

My brewery started like most others, with a 5 gallon pot on the kitchen stove. Next I moved up to a turkey fryer setup in the garage. I was still doing extract with steeped grains at the time, so that was the extent of my brewing equipment. Then in the mail came the issue of Brew Your Own Magazine that detailed how to do what they called "countertop partial mashing." It's an inexpensive way to get introduced to the world of mashing grains. For about \$20, I was able to do 3 gallon mashes, and I immediately realized I needed to switch to all-grain brewing. The flavor of a partial mash was so much better than extract and I could see the cost savings as well. So I eventually acquired a 10 gallon round cooler mash tun with a false bottom and a 15 gallon pot and burner for an HLT. I also decided to go with a counterflow chiller, so I bought one of the all-copper ones, and a March pump to send the beer from the kettle, through the chiller and into the fermenter. So with that, my all-grain brewery was complete.

But I soon discovered several pain-points in my set-up. First was sanitation of the pump and counterflow chiller. I chose to pump near boiling water through the pump and chiller for 15 minutes to sanitize the cold-side components. This took about 30-45 minutes. Next was getting the hot liquor into the mash tun. I had to fill the mash tun on the ground, then lift it onto a table. I'm strong enough to do that, but I certainly didn't enjoy it. And I had to repeat the process to sparge. Also, I had to fill the boil kettle on the ground and lift it onto the burner. That's a lot of lifting that I was getting tired of. A third annoyance was priming the pump. Sometimes it worked on the first try, and sometimes it didn't. I tried several things to try to get consistent priming, but nothing was 100% effective. Next was chilling the wort to an acceptable temperature. Despite the claims that



counterflow chillers are more efficient, I found that I had to severely restrict the flow of wort through the chiller to get it close to ground water temperature, which meant longer chilling times and more water use. Also, I had to devise some kind of prechiller for the ground water during the summer, when water temperatures were over 75 degrees. The final pain-point was cleaning the chiller and pump. Once again, it required pumping a hot PBW solution through the system for 10-15 minutes. All this, plus dragging out and putting away all this equipment, created 6-8 hour brew days, and started my search for a more efficient brewing system.

This brings me to my current system. The main component is a Blichmann Top Tier brewing stand.



I had been designing plans for building my own brewing stand for many months, but I finally decided the time and effort required to build my own was not worth my time. I chose the Top Tier system for several reasons. First, the cost was much closer to what I could spend on a brewing stand. It's customizable, so I could set up a single, two or three tier system and if I decided I didn't like a certain configuration, I could easily change it. Currently it's configured as a three tier stand, with a

burner on top for the HLT, a shelf in the middle for the mash tun, and a burner on the bottom for the boil kettle. I've come to love the three tier design for one reason: gravity. There's no need for pumps to move liquid from one place to another, so it removes a thing to clean and a potential infection source.

My brewing vessels consist of a 15 gallon HLT, a 10 gallon round cooler mash tun, and a 10 gallon boil kettle. The HLT is an aluminum pot with a valve and combination thermometer/sight glass, all weldless.



I added the sight glass and thermometer when I switched to the three tier stand, so I could see the water level and temperature without having to climb up a ladder. The mash tun is the common round, orange cooler. It has a metal domed screen as a false bottom, and a high temperature hose with a simple clamp for flow control. The boil kettle is a new addition to the system.





I purchased it from Williams Brewing when they were selling slightly damaged equipment at a discount. It makes it much easier to control boil-overs, which was a big problem with my old 7 gallon boil kettle. Because of the problems with counterflow chillers I mentioned above, I have recently switched back to an immersion chiller.



My new chilling system is based on the design Jim Wilson described in the February, 2010 edition of the Dregs. The chiller is a 50' coil of 1/2" copper tube, to which I added brass quick disconnects on both inlet and outlet. I start by pumping ground water through the chiller until the temperature decrease begins to flatten out. Then I switch to a sump pump immersed in a bucket of ice water, and continue recirculation until I reach the desired temperature. The key to efficient use of an immersion chiller is agitation of the wort. Currently I'm manually stirring the wort using a stainless spoon, but I intend to build an electric stirrer similar to Jim's. Using this new chilling system, I have chilled the wort from boiling to 65 F in about 15 minutes, which is a significant improvement over my old counterflow chiller. And the cleanup of an immersion chiller is much simpler and more verifiable than a counterflow, which saves a good chunk of time.



With these additions and changes, I've cut my 6-8 hour brew day down to about 4 hours from start to finish, including setup and cleanup. The biggest time savings were in the switch to a three tier, gravity fed system, and the use of an immersion chiller. Both changes save a large amount of cleaning and sanitation time. Future plans include the motorized wort stirrer mentioned

above, some kind of boil kettle filter to keep hop and break material out of the fermenter, and a method of performing step mashes. But from now on, my first consideration in any brewery changes will be how much cleaning and sanitation time will it add to or save on my brew day.

Last Editor's note. If nothing else, this brew sculpture should be a great place to display Rob's vast stock of Purdue Boilermaker decals.

## **The Boiling Pot**

[Jim Wilson](#), Editor

### **Aperitifs**

[How to taste beer](#)

[Home brewing ala the NY Times](#)

[West Coast is the best coast for beer](#)

[Ancient beer from shipwreck too salty to drink](#)

You may know that I've been a very active BJCP exam grader for the last seven years. Recently, I was appointed an Associate Exam Director. The main task ADs perform is to review the initial grading product to ensure consistency, high quality and fairness. This appointment won't change my participation in the club sponsored prep class this fall or the exam in Jan 2012. So far, my hat size appears not to have changed either.

### **Digestifs**

#### **Highlights of the 2011 San Diego NHC**

In 2001, I went to the NHC at Four Points. I had brewed for some time but Strand and the AHA were new to me so I just wandered willy-nilly through seminars and parties. A great time was had and six of us wrote Dregs articles to share what we'd learned. Jim Hilbing did the heavy lifting and Dave Cordrey, Jason, Steve, Jay, Tom Empey and I also contributed. You can read these reports in the Dregs archives from July 2001 through Jan 2002.

Fast forward to 2011. Jay, Rives, Heather, Mike and I made the drive to San Diego for the June 16-18 NHC that was the largest ever with almost 2000 attendees. I looked forward to meeting brewers I only knew online and was better prepared to learn than ten years earlier; the result of brewing 100 more batches and judging 50 contests.



Here are the guys at the hospitality bar on Sat afternoon when Strand hosted.

We stayed at the Town and Country hotel, which is a huge convention complex with 2500 guest rooms and acres of gardens including award-winning roses. It was a lovely setting to enjoy fine beers.



There were many pre conference events including a BJCP exam on Weds morning, Judge Reception in the afternoon and a pub crawl on nearby 30<sup>th</sup> Street just about all day. 18 pubs in the 30<sup>th</sup> Street neighborhood served the conventioners well.

NHC second round judging and the conference proper started on Thursday. 36 presentations over spread over three days touched on ingredients, process, styles, history and orphans like organizing a club or turning pro. Beer accompanied each discussion and there was a party every night. Survivors developed industrial strength livers if they didn't already have them. The speeches were organized along three parallel tracks



with few repeats which meant that I could only see about half the ones that looked interesting. Bummer.

Below is a picture of one of the sessions. Yellow shirted volunteers were everywhere, serving beer and supporting the speakers. It's a good thing QUAFF is a large club, because I think there were a couple of hundred volunteers. My favorites were the cellar bitches, led by Chad Stevens, who transported beer from a remote location onto the hotel grounds and delivered it to the contest or presentation that needed it, always just in time.



Other overviews and detailed reports from the four of us will be published in Dregs as they're finished. Links to speaker's PowerPoint slides will be included as soon as they are available from AHA.

My favorite sessions were:

- High Oil (flavor and aroma) American Hops by Matt Brynildson of Firestone Walker.
- Contest judging. I did Amber Hybrids in the morning and the signature Conference beer, IPA, in the afternoon.
- Home Brew Planet by Randy Mosher.
- Non-sour Wood Aging by Tomme Arthur of Lost Abbey.
- Brewing Bavarian Hefeweizen by Harold Gulbransen of QUAFF.
- On the Trail of Belgian Ales by Tom Nickle of O'Brien's.
- Sacred Stones, the Ovila story, by Terrence Sullivan of Sierra Nevada.
- Unusual Brewing Ingredients by Ron Jeffries of Jolly Pumpkin. The closest one to normal was spinach.
- BJCP members meeting.

Brewing creativity was a common theme. This could be brewing traditional beers with enhanced characteristics or new ones by adding an original wrinkle. I picked up enough ideas to keep me busy for several years.

Saturday evening's Awards Banquet theme was A Taste of Mexico. Salad was served with an American Amber Ale vinaigrette, the main course was chicken mole on a bed of savory rice pilaf infused with Dead Guy Ale and dessert was a delightful flan with a Cascade hop infused 2-row malted caramel sauce. My favorite was the mole sauce which took three days to cook, reduce and blend. It was the real deal. There was a pre-meal beer, a different one with each course and an Imperial Special Bitter after dessert all sponsored by Rogue. Yum!!!

Much thanks to Jay for sharing his great Convention pictures. He and I also collaborated on a small gift to the club which he will bring to the next meeting. Don't miss it!

## Competition Calendar

[Rives Borland](#), Vice-President

### Club-Only Competitions

Strand Brewers' Club Meeting

Time: 2nd Wednesday of most months 7:00pm.

Best entry at the club meeting will be sent to the judging location.

For more info on club-only competitions, go to <http://www.homebrewersassociation.org/pages/competitions/club-only-competitions>

August 2011 (bring entries to July or August SBC meeting)

*Mead*

Entry deadline is August 20, 2011. Judging will be held August 27, 2011.

Hosted by Susan Ruud and the [Prairie Homebrewing Companions of Fargo, ND](#), this competition covers BJCP categories 24, 25, and 26 styles.

For more information, contact Susan Ruud at [Susan.Ruud@ndsu.edu](mailto:Susan.Ruud@ndsu.edu).

September/October 2011 (bring entries to September SBC meeting)

*Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beers*

Entries are due October 15, 2011 and judging will be held October 29, 2011.

Hosted by David Houseman and the [Brewers United Zany Zymurgists \(BUZZ\)](#) club of West Chester, PA, this competition covers BJCP Category 23.

Entries must specify the experimental nature of the beer (e.g. type of special ingredients used, process utilized or historical style being brewed), or why the beer doesn't fit an established style. Additionally, the entrant may specify an underlying beer style. For historical styles or unusual ingredients/techniques that may not be known to beer judges, the brewer should provide descriptions of the styles, ingredients and/or techniques used.

For more information, contact David Houseman at [david.houseman@verizon.net](mailto:david.houseman@verizon.net).

November/December 2011

*Hail to Hefeweizen*

Entries are due November 25, 2011 and judging will be held December 3, 2011.

Hosted by Brian Steuerwald and the [Foam Blowers of Indiana \(FBI\)](#) club of Indianapolis, IN, this competition covers BJCP categories 15A, 15B, 15C, and 15D.

For more information, contact Brian Steuerwald at [mailto:BLSteuerwald@aol.com](mailto:mailto:BLSteuerwald@aol.com).

Local Competitions: *in order of entry deadline*  
[2011 LA County Fair 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Homebrew Beer Competition](#)

Woodland Hills, CA

Contact: [Bruce Brode](#) Phone: (310) 558-8458  
Entry Fee: \$7.00 Entry Deadline: 07/15/2011

07/30/2011 [24th Annual Southern California Regional Homebrew Championship](#)

Corona, CA

Contact: [Christopher Kinsman](#) Phone: (951) 534-9614  
Entry Fee: \$6.00 Entry Deadline: 07/15/2011

07/30/2011 2nd Annual Schmidy's Brewmaster's Homebrewer's Challenge

Palm Desert, CA

Contact: [Christopher Anderson](#) Phone: (760) 819-2912  
Entry Fee: \$5.00 Entry Deadline: 07/23/2011

07/31/2011 [Ventura County Fair Amateur Beer Contest](#)

Ventura, CA

Contact: [Charlotte Crocker](#) Phone: (805) 532-9973  
Entry Fee: \$0 Entry Deadline: 07/31/2011

09/24/2011 [Pacific Brewers Cup](#)

Los Angeles, CA

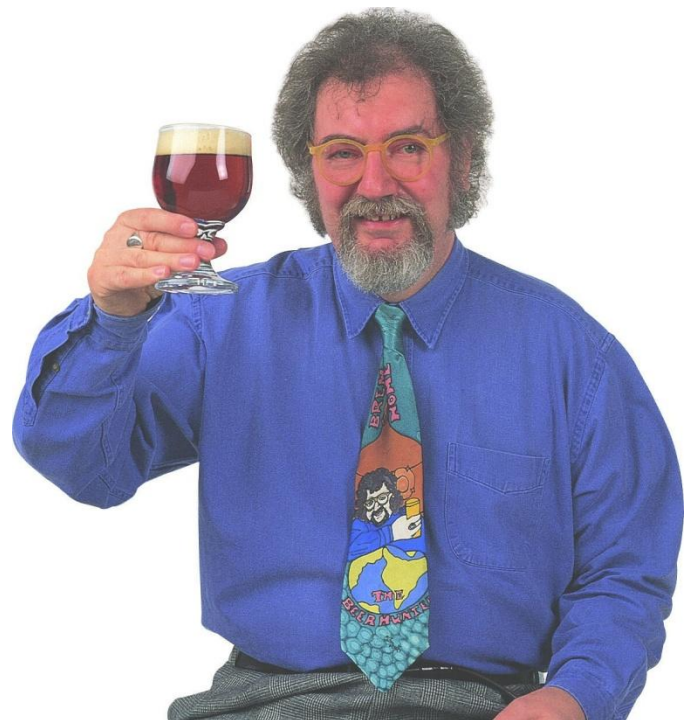
Contact: [Carl Townsend](#) Phone: (310) 391-0900

Entry Fee: \$6.00 Entry Deadline: 09/10/2011

For a complete list of BJCP competitions, go to [http://www.bjcp.org/apps/comp\\_schedule/competition\\_schedule.php](http://www.bjcp.org/apps/comp_schedule/competition_schedule.php)

Year Look-Ahead

July	Los Angeles County Fair
August	COC – Meads
September	Pacific Brewers Cup
September	COC – Specialty/Experimental/Historical Beers
October	California State Homebrew Competition
November	COC – Hefeweizen
January	COC – Dark Lagers
March	COC – Stout
May	COC - Scottish and Irish Ale
May	Mayfaire
July	Los Angeles County Fair
August	COC - Porter





Your stories are welcome in the *Dregs*. Upgrade your brewery? Fine tune your practice? Take a road trip? Do well in a competition? Have recipes to share? Read a good beer book? Have club related pictures, especially for the *Dregs* cover? Send all those, or anything else you think would be interesting to [Jim Wilson](#). Thanks!



The objectives of the Strand Brewers Club are to brew beer and share information about 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 Strand support or condone in any manner the sale or barter of homebrewed beer, the operation of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol by a member or participant in any club event or the provision of alcohol to minors.

#### Strand Brewers Mentor Pool

These members have volunteered to answer brewing questions and to help beginning brewers learn the craft.

Name	Phone	Email	Location
Bill Krouss	310-831-6352	bkrouss (at) cox dot net	Rancho Palos Verdes
Dave Peterson	310-530-3168	diablo390 (at) aol dot com	Torrance
Jay Ankeney	310-545-3983	jayankeney (at) mac dot com	Manhattan Beach
Jim Hilbing	310-798-0911	james (at) hilbing dot us	Redondo Beach
Jim Wilson	310-316-2374	editor (at) strandbrewersclub dot com	Redondo Beach
Steve Fafard	310-373-1724	sfafard (at) cox dot net	Rolling Hills Estates

#### 2011 Club Officers

President:	Chris Voisey	310-941-4810	president (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Vice-President:	Rives Borland	310-469-3634	vp (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Treasurer:	Rob Proffitt	310-787-9511	treasurer (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Activities:	Esther Tung	310-227-1063	activities (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Administrator:	Jeff Sanders	310-292-9301	administrator (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Editor:	Jim Wilson	310-316-2374	editor (at) strandbrewersclub dot com
Webmaster:	James Amezcua	310-683-2260	webmaster (at) strandwbrewersclub dot com