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DREGS FROM THE KEG

October 2011



A New BJCP class and Oktoberfest

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Foam at the Top

Chris Voisey, Strand President

Happy Oktoberfest everyone! Unfortunately if you are like me, you missed what sounds like a great event over in Germany. Jay Ankeney has contributed a fantastic column this month detailing his visit with an old chum that nicely had him there for Oktoberfest too! Luckily on this side of "the pond" we tend to ignore the traditional dates of Oktoberfest and you can still attend the celebration over at Alpine Village in Torrance. They'll still be celebrating the Bavarian fun until October 23rd. While it may not beat the official celebration, USA Today voted it one of the best in the world. Also don't forget the Annual Strand Brewers Club Oktoberfest as well that is coming up Saturday, October 8th!

Not into Oktoberfest? Well fear not! We are approaching LA Beer week as is pointed out in our events section. Something tells me that the creators of this massive event that is now scattered across Southern California was put together after a few beers myself. The last time I checked, a week has 7 days in it but "LA Beer Week" is going to be from October 10th through the 23rd. There are plenty of South Bay events lined up, just in case you didn't want to leave the bubble! Head on over to their website and check it out!

And just in case these are still not enough, there's also the Beer, Art and Music Festival on Sunday, October the 8th in Santa Monica. Details can be found on that here: <http://18thstreet.org/blog/bam-fest-2011>

Otherwise, on our own club front we have had a lot going on in the past month. Rives has been at GABF in Denver (and hopefully made it home with his liver intact) and we are hoping to see a nice write-up on that in next month's dregs!

As we come close to a year end we start thinking about next year as a club too. Have you thought about running for one of the officer positions? Both Rob Proffitt and I conclude our second terms as Treasurer and President, respectively. That leaves a couple of spots open that we will probably even see the existing club officers shuffle around into as well. Do you have ideas for the club? We'll start our nominations at the November meeting! Now is the time to start thinking about it.

Otherwise, on the brewing front we have a number of our own beers coming up to taste at the club events too. The "Summer Solstice" clone that Glenn helped me brew at the August club brew is ready to go, including the addition of real vanilla beans into the keg! We've also got a few surprises for the Oktoberfest party! Don't miss your next opportunity to try the club brewed Sour that has been aging since early this year!

I look forward to seeing you all at one of the many next events and/or meeting! October is going to be a tough month on our livers! Luckily we have November to give our livers a rest and then start the holiday season! Prost!

What's Brewing?

Esther Tung, Strand Events Director

October Meeting

This month we'll meet on **October 12 at 7 p.m.**



1311 POST AVE TORRANCE, CA 90501

Club Events

Oktoberfest Party

Saturday, October 8, 6:30 p.m.

1615 W 220th Street, Torrance 90501

Jeff Sander's will be hosting this year's Oktoberfest Party. We will also be celebrating his new home so please come join in the housewarming! We will have a

roast and some typical German fare but please bring a side dish or some homebrew.

Final Friday

Friday, October 28

Library Alehouse

2911 Main Street, Santa Monica 90405

It's a little outside of our South Bay comfort zone but they have an awesome tap list and great food. Those of you interested and want to carpool, please email me: esthertung@hotmail.com

Other Events

LA Beer Week

LA Beer Week starts Monday, October 10 and Naja's will host the kickoff event once again. This year it will be a ticketed event so please check their website for presale ticket information.

As for the rest of the week, there are way too many awesome events to list so please see the official event website: <http://labeerweek.com/> for all upcoming events.



Prost! The Real Oktoberfest

By Jay Ankeney

Editor's note. **Congratulations to Jay for his most excellent mead making abilities and his 2011 PBC 1st runner up BOS award.** Also, if this article isn't formatted quite the way Jay intended it's all on me. My PC put up a mighty struggle listening to Jay's Mac.

I missed this year's Pacific Brewers Cup because of a trip to Munich to visit friends and attend the real Oktoberfest "auf der Wies'n" as the locals refer to this largest beer festival in the world. This wasn't really a quest for beer, but more a journey to enjoy Germany while visiting my school chum from student days at the University of Munich more than a few decades ago, Ulf Reissberg, and his wife Elli.



I've been to Oktoberfest before, but this year I wanted to experience the opening day and the parade of the beer wagons.

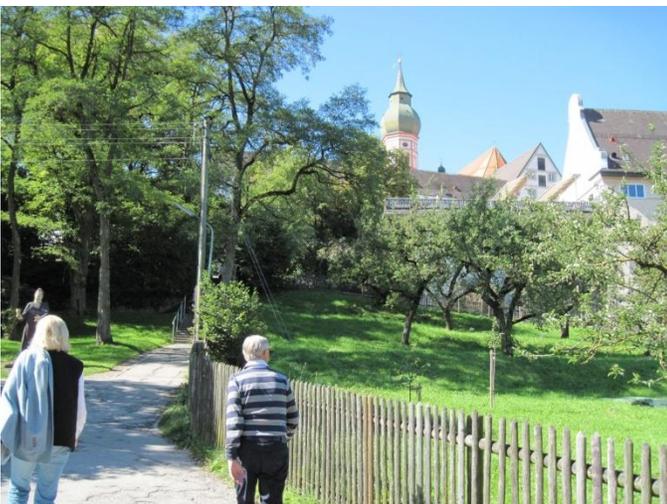


To clear up a few myths about the Munich Oktoberfest, it mostly takes place in September thanks to the usually lousy weather during its namesake month. Only the last weekend or so is actually in October. And they don't serve what we would classify as a true Oktoberfest beer (Märzen), having evolved a more popular Festbier style that is pretty close to a Helles.



For my friend Ulf, however, nothing beats racing through the foothills of the Alps in his cherished-out, completely restored '64 Mustang convertible—unencumbered by speed limits on Bavarian highways—while listening to 1950's American rockabilly music.

But it's one heck of a party. Thanks in part to some efficient but unobtrusive security and crowd control. Despite the 6.5 million visitors over a two week run, it's also relatively peaceful. The beer in the Oktoberfest "tents" is definitely delicious, but for many the best brew is found in rural monasteries such as Kloster Andechs, about 60 km outside of Munich, which this non-Theist considers heaven on earth.



The beer, bread and sausage, still made by real monks, is incomparable.



We capped the final day of my trip with a visit to the Weihenstephan Brewery, claimed to be the oldest in the world.



There's a word in German that epitomizes the spirit of the Oktoberfest for which no proper English translation exists: "Gemütlichkeit". Maybe we ought to make one up.



Then much to my surprise, right at the Munich airport I discovered a darned fine craft brewery, Airbräu. Who'd a guessed it?



Ken Schramm, Meadmaking: Basic to Advanced

Report from the 2011 NHC

By Jay Ankeney

I never argue about making mead since there are so many approaches to it and I am constantly learning from others. That's one reason I was eager to attend Ken Schramm's session at the 2011 National Homebrewers Convention on "Meadmaking: Basic to Advanced". Ken's 2003 book *The Complete Meadmaker*, [typo note: yes, there's an extra "a" in "Complete"]} has become a significant reference work for many of us who love fermented honey, and he is currently producing small "Signature" batches of mead under contract for the B. Nektar Meadery in Michigan.



trees with the dictum “The best time to plant a fruit tree is 15 years ago. The second best time is now.”

Ken is big on acidity in his meads, boosting it with fruits selected for their tartness. He also likes concentrated flavor and adds 20 lbs of peaches to a 5 gallon batch of mead while claiming that it was still not enough.

But it was his section on “process” that exercised Ken’s creativity and humor, again going from Basic (a spoon), to Intermediate (a mixmaster) to a more Advanced sort of tool like a Waring WSB50 variable speed 750 watt immersion blender.

Ken began by passing out a ginger mead to the packed room and began his presentation by comparing mead making to the art of wine, emphasizing that just as great wine comes from premium grapes great mead comes from great honey. “You can screw it up,” he said, “but you can’t really make it better.”



Great Mead?

So where does this leave us?

- Phenomenal Ingredients
- Solid Technique
- Get the Hell Out of the Way

Ken’s description of mead’s ingredients ranged from Basic (store-bought honey) to Intermediate (honey from a Farmer’s Market) to Advanced (honey direct from the hive). In choosing varietal honey, he referred to “typicity” and reminded us that “It’s what’s not sweet in the honey that stays in the glass” when evaluating a honey’s flavor.

Actually, Ken’s best advice was to “Find and support a local beekeeper” which may be easier in forested Michigan than desert California. Ken also devoted some of his presentation to the fruit he uses to make melomels (fruit-flavored mead), again recommending that we support local growers or plant our own fruit

“The real key to meads that are going to win in competitions is balance and essence,” he said, “and the best way to learn about these factors is to study wine. Wines and meads have similar flavor profiles.”

Ken introduced a couple of fellow meadmakers like Michael Fairbother of Moonlight Meadery and Curt Stock who passed out a high-acidity northern grape LaCrescent Pyment, but the impact would be lost if you weren’t actually there. However, here are a few of the tips they passed along during the session.

Use dry yeast like Lavalin 71B at about 1 to 2 grams per gallon, but rehydrate it in Pyrex cake pans for 20 minutes before pitching. Add yeast nutrients like GoFerm in stages over the first few days. Make small batches and experiment with various spices in each. Keep your fermentation around 62 degrees, and let it work for about 3 months.

Just for the record, I do none of this. But--different strokes. I'll be inviting all Strand Brewers to a stovetop mead making session in November where those interested can see my approach. But Ken Schramm is widely recognized as a national guru of mead making, and all his sessions at the NHC 2011 were justly standing room only.

The PowerPoint of Ken's presentation is available on the AHA's Web site [here](#).

"If you're not enjoying your company,
it's time for a mead.
If that doesn't work,
it's time to go fishing."

Ken Schramm
2011

Spent Grains

[Rob Proffitt](#), Strand Treasurer

The meeting at the South Bay Brewing Supply shop last month was great, not just because of the location, or the visit by Tyler from The Bruery. We also welcomed four new members to the club, Mikael Ohlsson, Brian Reeves, Calen Lopata and Brock Ritchey. That brings us to 48 paid members this year, including 18 new members.

The club now has about \$2088 in the bank. The current projection estimates we will end the year with around \$1400, but I'm sure there are expenses out there that have not been reimbursed yet, so that will eat into the final number. Please contact me and let me know if you have reimbursable expenses so I can update my projections and arrange to get you a check.

Dues are current members are \$25 for individual members, and \$10 for spouse members. If you're not a

member yet, you can join for the rest of the year at a discounted rate of \$15. 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.

The Boiling Pot

[Jim Wilson](#), Dregs Editor

Aperitifs

Congratulations to Jim Hilbing, Kurt Rump and Mike Truman for their 2011 PBC BOS winning Wee Heavy. WooHoo!!!

[8 beers Americans no longer drink](#)

According to our younger son this [blog](#) is from a major beer head.

[Confessions](#) of ... an Oktoberfest waiter

In the UK, [which Bud's for you?](#)

Bacon beer? [9 wild brews worth trying](#)

Nine members brought home brew to the Sept meeting and Jeff Sanders' sweet stout won the award for most popular. We'll try to publicize participants and winners going forward. Bring homebrew to meetings!!!

Going forward, Dregs will prioritize brewing articles, an Iron Brewer friendly competition concept and experimental club brews. Hopefully, this will encourage more brewing. There will still be parties and events; the goal is to give brewing the respect it deserves.

As the cover pic shows, Strand's 2011 BJCP exam prep class got off to a good start last month. 19 of the 20 expected students attended and the one MIA did let me know prior to the session that he had a conflict. The students look interested and animated and are busy learning the Style descriptions to start.

Competition Calendar

[Rives Borland](#), Strand 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>

November/December 2011 (bring entries to Oct. or Nov. SBC meeting)

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 BLSteuerwald@aol.com.

January/February 2012

Dark Lagers

Entries are due TBD and judging will be held TBD.

Hosted by the [Silverado Homebrew Club of St. Charles, IL](#), this competition covers BJCP category 4.

For more information, contact Robert Keck at keckbobb@netscape.net.

March/April 2012

Stout it Out Loud!

Entries are due March 17, 2012 and judging will be held March 24, 2012.

Hosted by Kelly Kruegel and the [Rock Hoppers club of Parker, CO](#), this competition covers BJCP category 13.

For more information, contact Kelly Kruegel at kruegel.kelly@gmail.com.

Local Competitions: in order of entry deadline

11/05/2011 [California State Homebrew Competition](#)

San Francisco, CA

Contact: [Bryan Gros](#)

Phone: (510) 336-3377

Entry Fee: \$8

Entry Deadline: **10/15/2011**

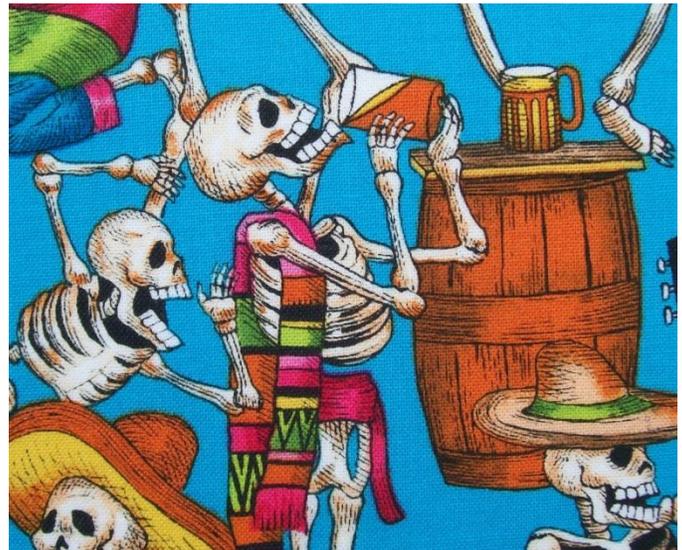
For a complete list of BJCP competitions, go [here](#).

Year Look-Ahead

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
September	Pacific Brewers Cup



September's Final Friday was celebrated at 1321 in downtown Torrance. Thanks to Steve Fafard for this pic. The family and I had plans to join but wound up at Hudson House. It's a long story.



Time to get ready for Día de los Muertos.

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