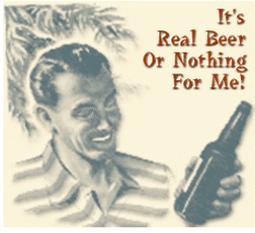


# LIVIN' THE BREWS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH TEXAS HOME BREWERS ASSOCIATION



## Prez Sez

By Fred David

Here it is February 28<sup>th</sup> and I am sitting here in my room at a bed and breakfast in Napa, California listening to the wind and rain. Every year Sue and I come here to celebrate our wedding anniversary by getting away from the madness of the big city and kicking back for awhile. In our ventures around the valleys of Napa, Sonoma, and Russian river I have begun to see a commonality between the vintners, craft brewers and us homebrewers. We are all in search of the perfect drink! I have asked both wine and beer makers what makes them tick and I keep getting the same

answer. "We just like doing what we do". I pushed a little further and asked them why they compete and they typically gave me one of two answers. It was either that they want the recognition of their peers or they want to continually improve on their product and feel that their peers can better judge their product than anyone else. It gives me a great comfort to know that the big boys in the world of both

c r a f t  
b r e w i n g  
a n d  
w i n e  
m a k i n g  
a r e  
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j u s t  
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a r e

and for the same reasons. As the Bluebonnet approaches I hope that all of us have entered at least on beer, cider or mead in this competition and get a great and helpful set of score sheets and possibly an award or two. Away from the competition side of things is Bluebonnet Brewoff, the party. I hope that most of you have de-



### Announcements

- Mar. 12 Last day for March COC entries
- Mar. 13 Club meeting at BJ's in Addison
- Mar. 23-24 Bluebonnet weekend at Clarion Hotel, DFW
- Apr. 7 Brewday at Fred David's
- May 20 Big Batch Brew Bash in Houston

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## What's Brewin? By Walter Hodges

Ok, we've had ice at the January brew day, a dust storm at the February brew day; I am afraid what April's brew day will bring. The wind and dust made for an interesting afternoon of brewing out doors. Curtis Martin hosted February's brew day where he brewed a

dopplebock. Also joining in on the brewing action with their systems, were Ernest and Lane. Ernest brought some of his awesome BBQ to share for lunch. In addition to the BBQ, we also had some great home brew and samples of commercial dopplebocks. In addition to the brewing, Ken gave a demon-

stration on kegging.

Next up on the party calendar is the Bluebonnet. We will start setting up the room on Friday afternoon. If you want to take off from work a bit early and help, I would appreciate a hand. Friday evening's activities start with the dinner then we

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head off to the commercial tasting followed up by the room crawl. Saturday is busy, starting with the tech talk and second round judging in the morning. There is just enough time for a quick nap and then we load up the buses up for the pub crawl, getting back in time for the awards banquet. If you have never been to a Bluebonnet, you are really missing out on some great times and great beer.

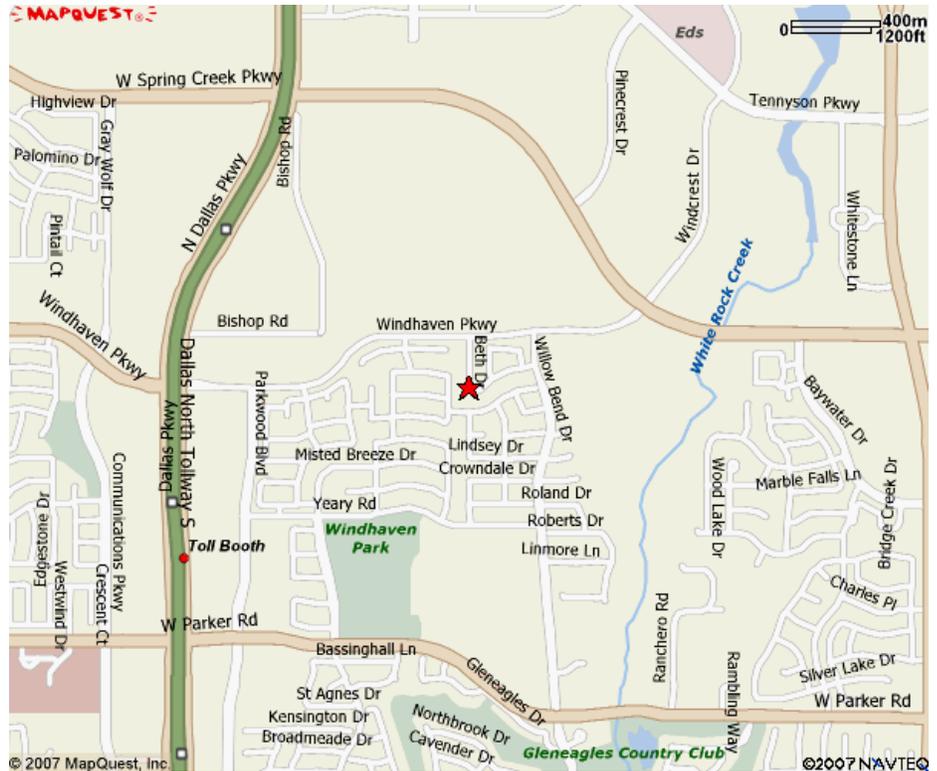
On a completely different note, long time member Rett Blankenship is the "Hottest" Fire Cook in America. Rett cooked his way to a trip to New York and a grand prize of \$10,000 in Tabasco's Cook and Ladder competition. The winnings will be split between renovations around Rett's home and to set up a web site for his firehouse. Rett is hosting the October brew day, so maybe he will cook up something special for us. Read more about Rett on the web by following the link in the discussion forum at NTHBA.org.

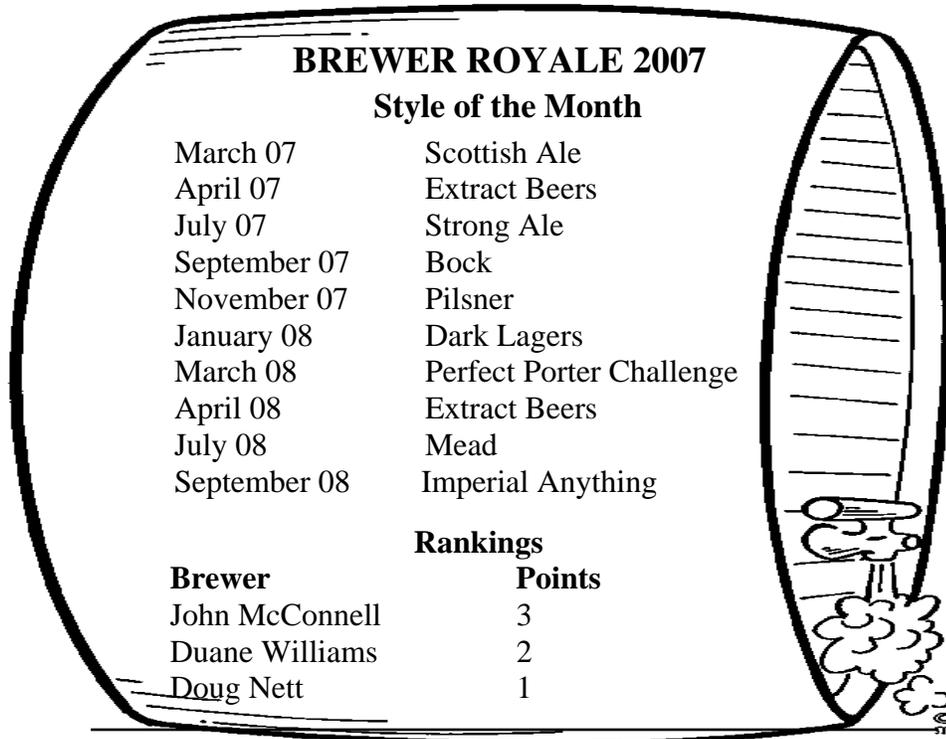
Party On,

Walter

## April Brewday

The April 7 Brewday will be at Fred David's house at 5905 Beth Dr., Plano, 75095





## March Club-Only Competition

Well we are a bit behind schedule for our next club only event. Due to logistic issues we ask that you drop you Scot-tish Ale off at the Home Brew HQ in Richardson before the judging starts. We will be judging at the Home Brew HQ on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> between 5:00pm-6:00pm.

We ask that you have all ales tagged with the BJCP bottle ID labels  
 BJCP bottle ID labels: [http://www.bjcp.org/BJCP\\_BottleID.pdf](http://www.bjcp.org/BJCP_BottleID.pdf)

## Lone Star Circuit Update

By Michael Heniff

President, Lone Star Circuit

Well, the Lone Star Circuit has reached the ripe old age of one! And what a first year it was! The circuit was quickly organized last January by the clubs of the former Gulf Coast Circuit after the Central Florida club announced that they would not be holding the Sunshine Challenge in favor of hosting the AHA National Homebrew Competition. All six competitions in the new circuit went extremely well and there was a lot of participation among all clubs. Our award winners were as follows:

- Homebrewer of the Year:  
Richard Dobson, Red River Brewers
- Homebrew Team of the Year:  
Jeff Reilly and Jimmy Paige, Foam Rangers
- Homebrew Club of the Year:  
Foam Rangers

Complete results can be found at [www.lonestarcircuit.com](http://www.lonestarcircuit.com)

For 2007, the format is still the same but with a slightly new line-up. For one, the Cactus Challenge in Lubbock has decided not to remain in the circuit this year due to a number of changes (and challenges) within their club. But, be sure to still support the Ale-ians when they hold their competition in September. I attended last year and it was a great time (and I still want that Best of Show award - a big ol' Texas-style belt buckle!).

We have two new competitions in

the circuit, both second year events: the Alamo City Cerveza Fest in San Antonio and the Limbo Challenge in the DFW area. The ACCF was held last August at the Blue Star Brewing Company and featured categories 1-19 with a special category of pepper beers. The Limbo Challenge, held the same month, focused on lower gravity beers (less than an original gravity of 1.050). Be sure to support both of these new competitions with both your entries and your attendance.

Here is the full line-up for 2007:

- Bluebonnet Brew-off, March, [www.bluebonnetbrewoff.com](http://www.bluebonnetbrewoff.com)
- Celtic Brew-off, May <http://hbd.org/kobb/>
- Big Batch Brew Bash [www.thekgb.org](http://www.thekgb.org), May
- Lunar Rendezbrew, July [www.mashtronauts.com/lr/](http://www.mashtronauts.com/lr/)
- Alamo City Cerveza Fest, August, [www.bexarbrewers.org](http://www.bexarbrewers.org)
- Limbo Challenge, August, [www.nthba.org/limbo](http://www.nthba.org/limbo)
- Dixie Cup, October, [www.crunchyfrog.net/dixiecup](http://www.crunchyfrog.net/dixiecup)

Be sure to get out and support each of our Texas clubs and competitions with both your entries and your attendance. Best of luck to all in each of these competitions and happy brewing!

*(Prez Sez, Continued from page 1)*

cided to attend the Bluebonnet and have reserved a room for at least Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and hopefully Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> also. Between the opening banquet, the commercial tasting and the room crawl you will be a hazard to everyone on the road including yourself should you try to drive. You will most definitely be easy prey for the local police should you even get in your car. Please come and please book a room!!! On Saturday, we have second round judging and a technical seminar in the morning and one of three pub crawls to choose from in the afternoon should you decide to go. The evening's main event is the award ceremony where I hope we will be the most called upon club for awards. After the awards ceremony comes another visit to the club rooms that I like to call roomcrawl 2. It's much more fun than Halloween 2 or Nightmare on Elm Street 2 and the only thing scary about it might be not remembering where your room is. I personally will be in and out all weekend because I have dual commitments that I cannot get out from under but I will be there and I hope you will too!

## Tech Corner

By Ken Woodson

Is water important in brewing? Considering the fact that beer is around 90% water, we cannot ignore the impact that water has on our brews. Conventional wisdom says, if you can drink the water, then it is probably OK to brew with it. However, there are certain aspects of water treatment you should know. Most municipal areas treat their water supply with chlorine to reduce bacterial growth. Chlorine can interact with wort to produce chlorophenols which can impart a plastic taste to beer. So, chlorine should be removed from your brewing water. To remove chlorine you can use a charcoal water filter.

The local water supply contains many ions of varying concentrations. Ions are electrically charged groups of atoms and come in two flavors, positively charged ions called cations and negatively charged ions called anions. If you could examine water at the atomic level, you would see H<sub>2</sub>O molecules and some dissociated hydrogen H<sup>+</sup> ions and hydroxide (OH<sup>-</sup>) ions. The pH, or potential hydrogen, is a measure of the relative concentrations of these two ions. For pure water, the two ions have equal concentrations, which translate to a pH of 7. Solutions with a higher concentration of H<sup>+</sup>, have a pH less than 7 and are acidic, while solutions with a higher concentration of (OH<sup>-</sup>) have a pH greater than 7 and are basic. pH is important in brewing because enzymes that

break down starches during mashing work best over a pH range of 5.2 – 5.5. Also, during sparging if the pH rises above 6.0 then tannins can leak into the wort and cause harsh flavors in beer.

Typically, the local treated water supply has a pH around 8.0. So, to achieve the correct pH during mashing or sparging the brewing water pH should be reduced. This reduction can be achieved naturally through the interaction of dark malts with your local water or you can directly alter the pH of your brewing water by adding very small amounts of mineral salts or food grade acid.

For brewing, the most important cation is Calcium (Ca<sup>+2</sup>). Calcium can lower pH in the mash and during wort boiling by combining with malt phosphates. Also, Calcium helps protein coagulation during the hot and cold breaks. Bicarbonate (HCO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>-</sup> is the most important anion for brewing. Bicarbonate neutralizes acids in dark malts, and it acts as a pH buffer in the mash.

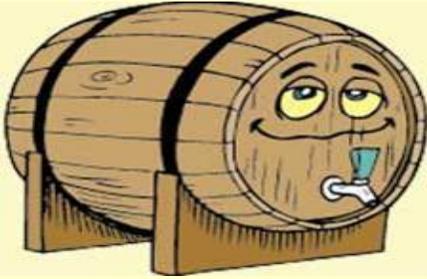
As a final note, you can treat your local water with mineral salts to closely replicate the water used in



famous brewing cities. For example, Burton upon Trent is famous for pale ales. The high sulfate level of the water at Burton accents the hop bitterness. If you are considering the addition of mineral salts to your water supply, you should ask your water supplier for an analysis of the minerals in the water. Many suburbs around Dallas receive their water supply from the North Texas Municipal Water District. Their website contains a monthly analysis of their water, see [www.ntmwd.com/WaterQuality.html](http://www.ntmwd.com/WaterQuality.html).

If you would like to read more about water treatment *New Brewing Lager Beer*, by Gregory J. Noonan, is another good source.

# The Brewing Equipment Trading Post



## HELP WANTED

Homebrew Headquarters is looking for a knowledgeable person in beer and wine making. Help is needed for full or part time. OK money, excellent employee discounts. Contact Kelly Harris @972-234-4411 or [brewmaster@homebrewhq.com](mailto:brewmaster@homebrewhq.com)

## FOR SALE

To list your equipment, include the following information -

- 1 - Description of items
- 2 - Whether it is "For Sale", "Will Trade For \_?\_" or "Free, Come & Get It"
- 3 - Your name
- 4 - How and when to contact you.

Email Sean at [news@nthba.org](mailto:news@nthba.org)

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## **Club Brewmeisters**

Club Brewmeisters are members who are experienced brewers and have volunteered to help other brewers, new and old, with brewing problems. Give them a call with your questions! Just don't call too late, too early, or during Cow-boy games!

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## **North Texas Home Brewers Association**

The North Texas Home Brewers Assoc. is a group with an interest in beer in general and home brewing in particular. We meet once a month on the second Tuesday at various locations in the area. Visitors are welcome! "Livin' the Brews" is our newsletter and is published about once a month. We do accept advertising, although the NTHBA, its officers, assignees, and editors are not liable for losses or damages resulting from mistakes or misprints, or any other consequences of advertising in this or any other publication. Ads are \$30 for a 1/3 page and \$50 for a full page, subject to change without notice. Readers are encouraged to submit articles. The deadline for ads and articles each month is 14 days prior to the club meeting.



Visit the NTHBA Website at  
[www.nthba.org](http://www.nthba.org)

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