

MARCH 1992

BARON AGENE

A Monthly Publication for the Beer Barons of Milwaukee
"Dedicated to the Education and Enjoyment of Fermented Malt Beverages"

Upcoming Events

March 22 - The Milwaukee Beer Festival
(Blessing of the Bock).
Noon till 6:00 p.m.
St. Casimir Parish
920 E. Clarke Street.

\$10 donation required -- \$5 for homebrewers who bring a six-pack of bock or other specialty beer. All proceeds go to the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project and St. Casimir Parish.

April 4 - International Beer tasting at Mayfair Mall.

7:30 pm - 10:00 pm.

Proceeds go to the Channel 10/36 Friends. If you are a 10/36 member, the cost is \$14. Nonmembers are \$17 per person. Groups of 10 or more are \$12.50 per person. We might try to get a group together at the next meeting. You can reserve your tickets by phone (278-1497) or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and your check to Beer Tasting, Channel 10/36 Friends, Foundation Hall, 700 West State Street, Milwaukee 53233.

T-Shirts

T-shirt orders are not coming in as fast as we had hoped. We're really counting on these early orders to pay for the initial setup costs of the shirts so please send in your orders. If you wait until the shirts are completed, you may not have a good size selection.

Style Groups

The following style groups are currently active. If you have a particular interest in any of the following beer styles and would like to pursue that interest in more depth, contact the leader of the group:

Brown Ale - Larry Krolkowski (545-8509)
Lager - Scott Lord (242-7836)

Help Found

Welcome to our new Treasurer, Gerry Burant. For those who may be new to the club, our other officers are Tom Anderson (President), John Watt (Vice-President), and Scott Lord (Secretary). The club is indebted to these people for the time and effort they devote to the club.

Upcoming Meetings

April 22 - Speaker and beers from Lakefront Brewery

May 27 - Speaker: Dave Norton on judging

June 24 - Homebrew night

September 23 - Octoberfest by the Lager style group

November 18 - Brown Ales by the Brown Ale style group



New Gadget

by John Watt

It's a must for true lager brewers. It will keep your fermentation temperature exactly where you want it. It can also be used to keep your ale fermentations at the ideal 65 degrees Fahrenheit. What is it? A digital programmable refrigerator thermostat, made by Hunter Fan Company, model #42205. Well, the ad says it is a refrigerator thermostat, and it works great for your refrigerator, but it was really made for room air conditioners. But hey, who cares? This thing works great!

To install the digital thermostat, you plug your refrigerator right into this device. All you have to do is turn the refrigerator's built-in thermostat all the way down and let the digital thermostat switch the power to the refrigerator on and off to maintain your desired temperature. There is a small probe that you have to put inside your refrigerator. I just squeezed mine between the refrigerator door and frame on the side that has the hinges - no modifications to your refrigerator are necessary! Then, just plug the digital thermostat into the wall (I needed an extension cord) and it is ready to go.

Now all you have to do is set the temperature. The thermostat's range is 40 - 90 degrees, which is good for all fermentation temperatures (lagers: 50-55, ales: 65-70). Just press the up or down button until the temperature setting is what you want, then press "hold". The thermostat will take over and maintain the temperature within +2 and -1 degrees (a total range of 3 degrees). It is also sensitive to "short cycling" and won't switch your refrigerator on and off over short time periods. If you wanted to get fancy, you could use the programmable features to make the temperature change at different times during the day, but I don't know why any homebrewer would want to do that. Consistent temperatures are what we want.

The one weakness in this product is that you can't set it below 40 degrees. Ideal lagering (aging) temperature is about 32 - 35 degrees. But this isn't a really big deal, because your

refrigerator is made to work well in that range (as compared to 50 degrees for fermenting). I just change the switch on the thermostat to "manual" which gives the refrigerator full control of the temperature again. With my refrigerator's thermostat turned way down, it takes the temperature right where I want it, to about 35 degrees (the digital thermostat always displays the refrigerator temperature). When I am ready to ferment again, I just change the switch to "energy monitor" and the digital thermostat is back in control!

I am incredibly happy with this little device, and I would recommend it to anyone who wants to make real lager beer using a refrigerator. I haven't seen this device in any local stores. I ordered mine from an ad in the back of the Winter 1991 Zymurgy for \$28.50 + 2.50 p/h (American Brewmaster, phone # (919) 850-0095), which is a great deal compared to the \$45.00 non-digital thermostat I was considering buying from a refrigeration company - and I would have had to do some wiring on my refrigerator to make that one work.

Moving On Up

Mark Proell has left Elm Grove Liquor and now works for Spaten in Chicago. We congratulate Mark and wish him good luck in his new job. At the same time, he will be greatly missed by his friends in the Beer Barons. Mark brought his knowledge and enthusiasm for fine beers to all of our meetings. He was also responsible for the superb collection of beers at Elm Grove Liquor. Chicago's gain is Milwaukee's loss.



Seasonal Brewing

by Larry Krolikowski

We're getting towards the end of the lager brewing season so it's time to think about the beers you'll want to be drinking in late summer/early autumn. For many, the perfect beer for cool fall nights is a beer that's thirst-quenching but a little stronger than pilsener. Octoberfest fits the description.

Octoberfest is an amber beer, a strong version of the Vienna style. In Germany prior to refrigeration, beers were brewed in the winter and stored in caves during the summer. Beers brewed at the end of the brewing season (March) would be consumed at the end of the summer (September/October). Octoberfest remains a traditional specialty beer.

Here are some guidelines for an extract Octoberfest (5 gallons):

- 5 to 6 lb. amber malt extract (dry)
- 1/2 pound crystal malt
- 0 to 1/8 pound roasted barley
- 1 to 3 oz. boiling hops
- 1/2 to 1 oz. finishing hops
- 1 pkg. lager yeast

Vary the amounts depending on your own tastes. Crystal malt adds sweetness, body, and a reddish color. Roasted barley adds a roasted bitterness and lots of color. Boiling hops add bitterness and finishing hops add a hop flavor and aroma. You should try to get an original specific gravity of about 1.055.

Although it's hard to get too fired up now about next autumn, when the time comes, you'll wish you made a double batch of Octoberfest.

March Monthly Meeting

The March monthly meeting is at 7:30 pm on March 25 at Clifford's (10418 W. Forest Home Ave, Hales Corners). The speaker and the beers will be from the Boston Brewing Company, makers of Samuel Adams Boston Lager.

AHA Conference

The club continues to gear up for the American Homebrewers Association National Homebrew Conference and Competition, June 10-13 at the Marc Plaza Hotel. For those who are thinking about joining the AHA, here's the scoop. Membership is open to everyone and it includes a subscription to Zymurgy which is published five times a year. The cost is \$25 for one year. Call (303) 447-0816 for credit card orders or write to the AHA at P.O. Box 1510, Boulder, CO 80306-1510.

At our last meeting, Scott Lord enlisted the help of several club members to brew beer for "Homebrew Club Night" at the conference and for the hospitality suite which we will be sharing at the Marc Plaza with other local clubs. We appreciate the efforts of these homebrewers and we especially would like to thank The Purple Foot for donating the ingredients for three 5-gallon batches. Jerry and Mary Uthemann also agreed to lend us several Cornelius kegs to use at the conference.

BARON MIND

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The BARON MIND is published monthly for members of the Beer Barons of Milwaukee thanks to the efforts of Larry Krolikowski, Paul and Denise Arneson, John Barikmo, Ted Wilinski, and other club members who contribute articles.

We welcome any comments or suggestions.



Membership Information

Annual membership dues are five dollars. Basically, this pays for the cost of producing and mailing this newsletter. In addition, we charge fees for the meetings, between \$1 and \$5, depending on the cost of the beer we taste that night. Membership dues can be paid at the monthly meetings or you can send a check for \$5 to Gerry Burant, 2731 N. Downer, Milwaukee 53211.

We mail the newsletter free of charge to prospective members for three months. The date that appears on your newsletter address label is the end of the three month period. If that date is prior to 4/1/92 you will not receive another newsletter unless you pay the annual dues.

For current club members, it is up to you to remember to renew - we do not send out reminders. So check the date on your address label to see if it's time to ante up.

GROW YOUR OWN HOPS

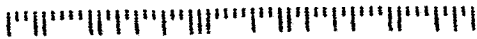
For the freshest beer around, you have to start with the freshest ingredients, and the one area you can control is hops. This year we are offering a limited supply of the the following hop roots.....HALLERTAU, CASCADE, MT. HOOD, CHINOOK, and CLUSTER. Each variety is only \$3.00 per root, plus shipping. We are also offering the perfect companion to your hop roots, a book by David Beach called HOMEGROWN HOPS--102 pages on how to, where to, and when to plant and nurture your hop plants. Chapters include soil maintenance, pest control, and more. Softcover \$8.00.

The two new strains of Wyeast liquid yeast are finally in. The #1214 Belgian Ale, and the #2112 California lager or "Steam beer". \$ 3.99 each.

THE MALT SHOP

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