

HEART OF THE VALLEY HOMEBREWERS

**This is the HOTV Brewsletter
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THIS MONTH'S GATHERING

This month, instead of our usual meeting on the third Wednesday of the month, we will have our annual Holiday Party at the home of Sam Holmes, 1875 NE Noble, in Corvallis, Saturday, December 16, at 7:00 p.m. Sam's phone number is 758-3563.

Directions: From Corvallis, take Highway 20 toward Albany. Turn left at Seavy Avenue, then right at Seavy Circle (not Seavy Place!). Turn right on Noble and go to the end of the street. The last house is Sam's.
>From Albany, take Highway 20 toward Corvallis, turn right on Seavy Avenue and proceed as indicated.

For our new members, the Holiday Party features potluck food treats, a wonderful experimental taste pairing of beer and chocolate, a Name That Beer competition, and a ring toss for homebrews and commercial beers. Everyone is invited to participate in all the activities. Please donate beers for the ring toss.

POTLUCK FOOD ASSIGNMENTS

from Mare Goeger

So we can have a variety of dishes at this year's HOTV Holiday Party, here is a suggested guideline to follow:

Last name starting with:

A-F bring and appetizer or snack

G-M bring a main dish

N-T bring a salad, vegetable dish or fruit

U-Z bring a dessert

RSVP is not necessary, but appreciated, so I can get an idea if any of the food categories are lacking or overloaded.

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

by Kendall Staggs

Last month we met at the home of Derek and Sarah Whiteside in Albany. We elected officers for next year, decided on the time and place for our Holiday Party, drank some very good homebrews and commercial beers, and spoke of many things. Our outgoing club president, Scott Caul, gave a moving Farewell Address. A splendid time was had by all. Thanks, Derek and Sarah!

HOTV ELECTIONS

COMMERCIAL BEER REVIEWS

by Kendall Staggs

WINTER SPECIALTY BEERS FROM THE WEST COAST

Have you had any good beers lately? Here are some brief reviews of some of the region's winter specialty brews that I have recently tasted. Many of these have been on the shelves in Corvallis since before Halloween. There seems to be a good crop of these beers this year, so I thought I would review a few.

1 Winter Solstice Ale (Anderson Valley, California) This beer has a beautiful, dark amber color and a chunky white head. My first impression is of an authentic English Old Ale, because it features a very rich, sweet malt profile. Yet this beer is delightfully complex. There are spice notes on the nose, and I cannot tell whether any cinnamon, vanilla, and nutmeg are actually added or whether the aromas come entirely from the fragrant hops. As the beer warms up, the hop flavors also become more citrusy and pronounced. Winter Solstice Ale, like a fresh-baked loaf of homemade bread, is simply delicious. (6.9 percent abv)

2 Jubelale (Deschutes): This is another of the perennial favorites among the area's winter specialties, and this year's version does not disappoint. There is a fabulous chocolate malt aroma and flavor profile and plenty of Pacific Northwest hops. It is well balanced and very drinkable. Jubelale features an especially nice label this year. (6.7 percent abv)

3 Alaskan Winter Ale (Alaskan Brewing, Juneau): This is one of the winter brew season's biggest surprises: a new beer from the brewery that usually treats us to its Smoked Porter this time of year. This brilliant orange-colored beer has a delightful malt flavor, rich and full. The hops are much more subtle than most of the other beers reviewed here. The label says that its brewed with spruce tips, but they are not obvious. (6.4 percent abv)

4 Our Own Special Ale (Anchor, San Francisco): This highly anticipated beer is always a sensory treat. It is a "spiced Porter" with undisclosed spices that usually include nutmeg and ginger. This year's version is definitely good, but the hop flavors and bitterness seemed a bit too high for a good balance. Perhaps it will mellow a bit with age. (alcohol unavailable)

by Kendall Staggs

At our last meeting the following persons were elected, with elaborate ceremony, as the officers of the Heart of the Valley Homebrew Club for the year 2001:

President: Derek Whiteside

Vice President: Scott Leonard

Treasurer: Lee Smith

Newsletter Editor: Kendall Staggs

Festival Chair: Joel Rea

LITTER PICKUP

by Lee Smith

Due to the timing of the holidays and our annual party, the litter pickup date has been set for Saturday, December 9, at 11:00 a.m. For the new members who are interested in helping, we meet in Hyack Park, which is on the river (south) side of Highway 20 and about two miles west of Albany. Look for a little red pickup truck with a black canopy. Dress for the weather. Sturdy shoes and gloves are highly recommended. Refreshments will be served (sorry, no wassail!). If you can be there, please reply so I'll know how much equipment to reserve.

BEER RECIPES

by Helen Smith

BEEF GHOULASH COMPANY DISH, OR FREEZE

Serves 10 to 12VERY EASY

Whether you use sweet or spicy Hungarian paprika, it should be fresh and have a pungent aroma.

1/4 cup unsalted butter
1/4 cup olive oil
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
5 pounds beef chuck, well trimmed, cut into 1-inch cubes
5 pounds yellow onions, chopped
1/4 cup Hungarian paprika
2 cups homemade beef stock, or canned low-sodium beef broth
1 cup Stout, Porter, Brown Ale, or Amber Ale (lightly hopped (for example, Newcastle Brown Ale)

To Serve:

2 pounds broad egg noodles, cooked
Sour cream, for garnish
Chopped chives, for garnish

1. Heat 1 tablespoon butter and 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large, heavy bottomed pot over high heat. Season meat with salt and pepper to taste. Cook meat in batches, being careful not to overcrowd the pot, and adding 1 tablespoon each of butter and oil as needed. Cook each batch of meat until very well browned on all sides, and transfer to a plate while the next batch browns.

2. Reduce heat to low, add onions and cook, stirring occasionally until onions are translucent, about 15 to 20 minutes. Return meat to pot, and add paprika and stock. Stir well to combine. Cook covered over very low heat, stirring occasionally, until meat is tender and the sauce has thickened, about 1.5 to 3 hours, depending on the toughness of meat.

Adjust seasonings. Serve over egg noodles with a dollop of sour cream and a sprinkling of chives. This can be frozen in small batches for your family.....

TREASURER ANNOUNCES NEW SCHEDULE

5 Jingle Ale (Orchard Street, Bellingham, WA): This muddy brown ale tastes a lot like some good versions of a homebrewed holiday ale, complete with lots of honey, cinnamon, and ginger. In fact, when tasting it I was reminded of Mark Kowalski's version of the Charlie Papazian recipe, "Holiday Cheer." (alcohol unavailable)

6 Ebenezer Ale (Bridgeport): This was a solid example of the Pacific Northwest holiday brew, with "more of everything" than the usual brews. Chestnut in color, with a tasty malt profile and hop flavor and bitterness that are pronounced but not overpowering. This is an excellent beer. (6.4 percent abv)

7 Snow Cap Ale (Pyramid): This dark amber beer is another perennial favorite, and this year's version does not disappoint. The hop aromas are outstanding. The malt flavor is great, with hints of chocolate, and the hop flavors and bitterness are also outstanding. For an added bonus, Snow Cap provides that little bit of extra alcohol kick. (7.0 percent abv)

8 Wassail (Full Sail): This dark amber beer is hoppy, hoppy, hoppy. It should appeal to the hopheads among us (you know who you are), but I would have preferred a little more flavorful malt base and better balance. (5.3 percent abv)

9 Winternacht (Widmer Brothers): This light brown brew is advertised as a "rich, roasted ale." I was not impressed. It seemed to be rather shallow on the malt end and the hop flavors and bitterness, though pronounced, were not especially appealing. (7.0 percent abv)

10 Bobby Dazzler Old London Style Ale (Portland Brewing): This is another holiday specialty that seems to be too one-dimensional. In other words, it was almost all hops. It's not bad, but there are better ones available. (6.5 percent abv)

11 Winter Hook (Red Hook, Seattle): This is another "spiced Porter," I suppose. It is dark brown, and has some spicy notes in the aroma and flavors. Once again the hop flavors and bitterness are a bit overpowering, and don't make room for any malt qualities. (alcohol unavailable)

12 Tannen Bomb (Golden Valley, McMinneville): This beer was the biggest disappointment of the season. As Mr. Rogers would say, if he were a beer connoisseur, "Can you say beer with pineapple juice? Sure you can." I was unable to finish it. (8.0 percent abv)

from Lee Smith

In order to accommodate the membership during the holiday season, the treasury will be open 24 hours per day, seven days per week, during December. This is often referred to as 24/7 and, if successful, will be adopted permanently. The effect is that you can pay your 2001 dues at the party on the 16th or by mailing a check for \$12, payable to HOTV, to Lee Smith, 2190 Maier Lane, NW, Albany, OR 97321 (Calling the treasurer at 3:00 a.m. to come pick up your check is not encouraged but I will accommodate you in case of extreme emergency). Happy Holidays.

KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

"We discussed this very important issue yesterday over a beer," said Russian President Vladimir Putin on November 21, referring to the U.S. presidential election at a joint news conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The good news is that we have a lot of good holiday beers from which to choose. The bad news is that they are not always great. But whatever your preferences, you are sure to find some interesting beers out there, in this Winter (Beer) Wonderland.

POSITIVE PUBLICITY

by Kendall Staggs

Some of you may have seen the Oregon State University newspaper, the Barometer, on November 22. The feature story on page one was about Joel Rea's beer making class which he teaches through OSU's Experimental College. While the story generally portrayed Joel and our hobby in a positive light, the reporter (whose last name was Pils!) made a few comic blunders, such as references to "Astonian Porter" (instead of Estonian Porter) and "Bach beer" instead of Bock beer. Let's hope that on balance, the publicity provided by the article was good for Joel.



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