



Next Meeting – January 8

We journey back to Dirty Nellies in Palatine for our first meeting of the 17th year of Club Wort's existence. An AHA contest, Dark Lagers (Style 4), will be held that night assuming we have an entry or two. If you are interested in going on the February 16 Mich-Ind pub crawl, your reservation and \$40 will be due by then. See you at 7:30 PM.

Upcoming Club Events

Saturday, January 19 – Club Wort Brew-in. Randy Drumtra's House.

Tuesday, February 12 – Monthly Meeting, Dirty Nellies. 7:30 PM

The Root of All Evil

How many organizations have our problem – too **much** money in our treasury? At least that is what some people seem to think. In my opinion, what we have is too little imagination. We just need to sit down and figure out how to use it in the most constructive way. I have a number of ideas which I will bring to the meeting, and I hope all of you will do the same. Our dues are not excessive, and we don't make that much profit on our crawls. Let's not do something short-sighted that will hurt us in the future, but improve the Club for the long run.

Christmas Party - 2007

The weather forecast 2 days before our celebration left me wondering whether my wife and I would be the only ones there. Luckily, the predicted ice storm turned into a rain storm, and with the exception of Ralph Schneider and Nick Chernikovich, all who had emailed reservations managed to make it.

El Burrito Loco sparkled as everyone arrived that night. I set-up the boom box to play Christmas carols as members got the beer organized. Some of the malted beverages included the most recently brew-in product, the Positively Porter; a potential Sieben's Bock beer; two growlers of Ram's finest; and a pomegranate beer. Two non-beer beverages were a Saki and Phil's homemade Krupnik.

Dinner began with trays of cheese quesadillas being passed around along with the usual chips and a tangy sauce. At 7:15, the buffet was all ready, and members dug into the Mexican beefsteak, roasted chicken, and the usual side dishes of rice, beans, and lettuce. Tortillas came last to allow everyone to mop up their plates. After everyone had their fill, there was still plenty of food left. Phil walked around the table and poured everyone a shot of Krupnik and we toasted the holiday and Club Wort.

Randy Drumtra limited the meeting to one topic, the Winter Pub Crawl. Paul Lange explained that the Michigan option was the most popular with the members, as they thought Indiana was not doable and Wisconsin was a case of "been there, done that." He made everyone aware that it would be a 3-hour drive to Kalamazoo, and that Bell's would have no food available. The last proposed stop, Three Floyds, had to be dropped because they did

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 AHA/Area Beer Contests/Tastings
- 2 Classified Section
- 2 10 Things You Might Not Know About Beerr
- 3 Big Bucks For Beer
- 3 Christmas Party Pictures

not have the capacity to accommodate 50 people arriving at the same time. The potential replacement was Shoreline in Michigan City. Paul was pricing the Crawl at \$40, which would pay the bus if 40 people agreed to go. If we did over that, then just like the fall trip, we could give back a rebate that night.

The party ended a little earlier than last year, no doubt as a result of the continued rain and fears of icing. I left around 9:40 PM after thanking Miguel for another successful evening.

AHA Beer Contests

March 2008 – Porter (12)

April 2008 – Any beer that had extracts comprising at least 50% of fermentables.

July 2008 – Meads (24, 25, 26)

September 2008 – Imperialized versions of any style.

Note the style guideline numbers and letters after each beer. You can check at www.beertown.org to get the style info.

Classified Section

Nothing for sale at this time.

10 Things You Might Not Know About Beer

1. Why did the Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock instead of Virginia? Well, for one thing, they were nearly out of beer. A Mayflower passenger's diary reads: "We could not now take time for further search or consideration; our victuals being much spent, especially our beere."

2. In the 1600's and 1700's, midwives gave delivering mothers "groaning ale," which was fermented for 7 or 8 months and tapped when contractions began. After the birth, the child might even be bathed in the ale, since it was likely to be more sanitary than the water then available.

3. As president, James Madison proposed creation of a national brewery and appointment of a "secretary of beer." But Congress wouldn't go along.

4. Beer can kill, but not like you think. In 1814, a 3,500-barrel tank ruptured in London, sending a giant wave of beer cascading upon nearby residents. Two houses were demolished and 9 people died.

5. Two Chicago streets, Diversey and Lill, were named after early Chicago brewers Michael Diversey and William Lill.

6. The Chicago Fire devastated the local beer industry, allowing Milwaukee brewers to swoop in and seize market share. They then took advantage of Chicago's railroad hub to purvey their products across the country.

7. The Guinness Book of World Records was begun in 1955 at the suggestion of Guinness's top executive to settle gentlemanly disputes, such as would arise over mugs of beer.

8. Joe Charboneau, a Belvidere, Ill. Native who played for the Cleveland Indians in the 1980's, used to open beer bottles with his eye socket and drink beer through a straw in his nose.

9. Beer goggles are for real. A study at Glasgow University in 2002 confirmed the effect. Topsy students were 25 percent more likely to rate a person as sexually attractive than students who were sober.

10. During Prohibition, only "near beer" (less than 0.5% alcohol) could be sold. Such beer was sometimes illegally turned into "needle beer" by injecting alcohol into the barrel.

Big Bucks for Beer

Forwarded By Phil Piotrowski

Why expensive beers are...expensive.

Buying a case of craft beer for \$28 is not bad these days. Most go for \$8 per six-pack. But at Monk's

Café in Philly you can pay \$28 for a 750-ml bottle of De Dolle Brouwers 20th-anniversary ale.

If you think that's crazy, go to a local restaurant and see what a bottle of an average cabernet-shiraz blend will cost. We've gotten accustomed to paying high prices for wine as we have to paying bottom-dollar prices for beer. But all that is changing as a handful of brewers challenge boundaries of formulation, vision, and marketing – and in the process open up craft beer to new price levels.

Consider the most expensive regularly released beer in the world, Samuel Adams Utopias, with a retail price between \$120 and \$160. The 2007 release of Utopias is also the world's strongest beer, at 27 percent alcohol by volume. It is certainly beer, made mostly from malt, and fermented without distillation or concentration, which would have violated Boston Beer's brewing license. But that's not why it's so pricey. It's a blend of rare and expensive aged beers, some dating back 13 years and most aged in a variety of barrels: bourbon, sherry, port, and scotch. There are, Jim Koch puts it, "a ton of ingredients in there, and it takes time measured in months and years." The bottle's pretty nifty too: It's an individually numbered, copper-toned decanter in the shape of a brew kettle, complete with working doors.

The beer delivers on its promise, comparing favorably with higher priced ports and cognacs. The public appeared to agree – all 12,000 bottles were sold, with complaints about short supplies.

In our neck of the woods, Three Floyds sells their Dark Lord imperial stout for \$15 a 22-oz bottle. Their entire run of 7,000 bottles sold out on the day of issue, April 28th, and they limit people to 6 bottles. "We just want to make sure everyone gets a chance," says brewer Barnaby Struve. Yes, it is expensive, Struve acknowledges, but it includes a lot of expensive specialty malts and hops, and the

tiny brewery doesn't get the bulk discounts that larger brewers get.

Many beer geeks are kind of price sensitive, and there are not enough of them to snap up 12,000 bottles at \$140 a pop. They complain about "other" people buying these beers, saying that they won't appreciate them, and that they only want them in the first place because they're expensive.

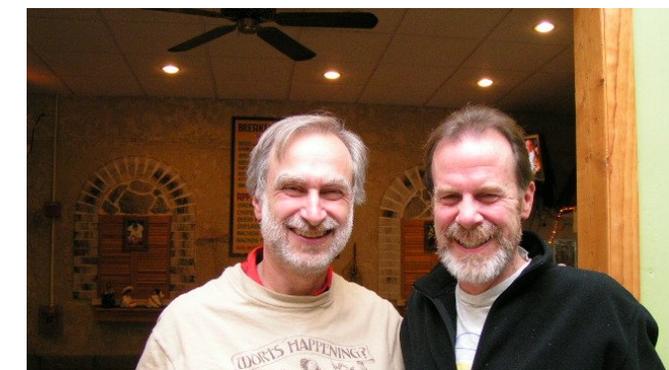
If it's not mainly the beer aficionados who are buying the big-ticket beers, then perhaps expensive beers represent a real breakthrough for craft brewing. Higher prices mean higher perceived quality, and it that gets people to take a sip of a great beer with an open mind, without thinking about brews with hot dogs and pizza, then it could also mean customers looking at the whole range of beer in a new way. And that bodes well for the boom in craft-beer sales.

A while back, the owner of Anchor Brewing, Fritz Maytag, described what small brewers could learn from small winemakers. "How to brew and sell a \$50 bottle of beer," he said. Apparently some brewers were paying attention.

Christmas Party Pictures

Pictures by Elliot Hamilton





Wort's B

