Happy Stout Month my fellow OBC members! And what better way to kick off the celebration than with 12 medals at the Stout Bout, an annual celebration of roasty dark homebrew organized by our friends at Portland Brewers Collective. As someone who makes lots of experimental brews myself, I was thrilled to see a Peanut Butter Stout take the top prize! Congratulations to the winners, participants and organizers.

February is also time for the "Festival of Dark Arts" at Ft. George in Astoria. If you are a lover of rich, dark, roasted, savory and sweet ales, this is an event not to miss. Just do not try to drive home after! If the costumes, music, glass blowing and tattoo artists were not enough, there are over 60 unique stouts that you will not find anywhere else. Unfortunately we were late in organizing a group bus trip for the festival but I hope we can pull it off next year.

Having brewed four stouts in as many months, I am now shifting my attention to brewing final batches and blending sours for the National Homebrew Competition (NHC) which opened for registration on January 30th. Some of the region's most experienced judges will be tasting through hundreds of entries at the Seattle first round in March. I would love to see the club sharpen its competitive edge and I am hopeful that we will see more OBC entries advance to the final round in Minneapolis. If you have been curious or intimidated by homebrew competitions, please ask for help! The OBC has dozens of members who can help you learn how to improve your recipes, strategize your entries and join the fun. Just read Don Klover’s story on page 12 about his experience joining the club and learning from others!

With the horrible weather last month, our January meeting turned into an intimate gathering amidst the snow and ice at FH Steinbarts. In addition to meeting half a dozen new members and sampling lots of bottles and growlers, we were joined by Ben Edmunds who shared his knowledge, wisdom and kegs of his award-winning brews with 40 or so attendees. Ben talked about hoppy beers primarily, and left us with tips and tricks that are useful to homebrewers and pro brewers alike, as part of his preparation for a larger presentation this
April at the Craft Brewers Conference in Washington DC. My IPAs have certainly improved by attending sessions like this in the past. Thank you to Dylan Vandetta for summarizing his notes for us on page 10.

As we gear up for the next Pacific Northwest Homebrewers Conference in March, we are looking for members to join the planning committee for club night, which is the closing event of the conference. This was one of the highlights of 2016 for me, as our club took center stage with the biggest, baddest booth display (the "Intergalactic Kegger") and poured many memorable beers and club collaborations. We need to build on our success and crank it up another notch this year! Of course we will also need members to brew beer for the event. Please reach out to our Festival Sean Sanders for more information on how to participate over the next 6 weeks. Active committee members will be eligible for a $100 scholarship towards their conference registration, based on their level of involvement.

Lastly, I would encourage all of you who are interested in becoming a certified BJCP judge, or just improving your knowledge and sensory perception of beer, to signup for our upcoming BJCP class led by Alex Brehm. This is an awesome opportunity to sample and evaluate some great (and a few not so great) examples of the BJCP styles, which have undergone a complete overhaul in 2015. The classes startup on March 27th so look for additional details via Facebook and club emails in the coming weeks.

Until next time, keep your fermenters warm and your bottles cold!

Cheers!

President Jim Thompson

(photo of the 6 board members)
6 of the last 7 OBC Presidents before at the kickoff of 2017 Best of Craft Beer Awards judging in Bend Jeremie Landers, Mark Easton, Chris Hummert, Lee Hedgmon, Will Minderhout and Jim Thompson
Competition Corner

Time to fire up the propane and get brewing! Here’s the latest in competition news:


- SheBrew Homebrew Competition – This is for the ladies! Entries due Feb 18th. The OBC is spearheading this competition, and all proceeds will come to us. We are looking for judges and stewards for Feb 24th and 25th. More info here: http://shebrew.oregonbrewcrew.org/.

And don’t forget the SheBrew Festival on the following weekend, March 4th, from 12-8pm at the Buckman Coffee Company (1105 SE Main St, Portland). Come try some awesome beers (some by your fellow club members) and vote for your favorite! Proceeds benefit the HRC (Human Rights Campaign). More info here: http://www.shebrew.beer/ Tickets available here: https://act.hrc.org/page/5673/event/1


- The Abbey Bar Homebrew Contests (there are two), details here: http://theabbeybar.com/events/. Please check entry rules, as they are a little different than your standard competition. Belgian Beer Styles – due March 6th; European Beer Styles – due April 24th

The OBC’s 5th annual Heart of Cascadia will be coming up in May. If you are interested in serving on a committee for this competition, please let me know at the meeting or contact me at corrie.heath@oregonbrewcrew.org.

- Pouring at the Coast, March 18th, entries can be dropped off at FH Steinbarts prior to that at an undetermined date, check website for updates. http://pouringatthecoast.comatthecoast.com/homebrew-competition/

- Widmer Collaborator, see next months newsletter for more information or check out this link, http://www.oregonbrewcrew.org/page-904182

- COHO 2017 Spring Fling, Judging April 21st, Awards April 24th, Deadline to drop off is April 14th, http://www.cohomebrewers.org/SpringFling
SheBrew National Homebrew Competition

**Deadline:** February 17th (Shipping) or 18th (Drop off)
**Judging:** February 24th and 25th at Zoiglhaus Brewing Company
**Entries:** 2 bottles and $8 per entry

All the other information can be found at [http://shebrew.oregonbrewcrew.org](http://shebrew.oregonbrewcrew.org)

This competition is AHA sanctioned and open to any amateur female homebrewer age 21 or older. It is open to all non-commercial, home brewed beers produced by persons of female identity. Beer produced by or with more than nominal assistance of persons of a non-female identity is not eligible. Participants must design and run their brew day but may have nominal assistance where they require it.
Invitation to Brew at Widmer

by Noel Blake

You stride in to the Widmer innovation brewery in the famed Oregon brewing pioneer’s Russell Street complex. Your beer-stained OBC logo shirt and your favorite dungarees hiked up above your work boots show that you are ready to brew. And you are going to brew your beer recipe. On Widmer’s system.

Your friends and coworkers do not seem to take your homebrewing passion all that seriously. This is now about to change. You are getting “brewed,” like a writer gets published. Your beer will be on tap at the Widmer Gasthaus, at a local beer festival, or at your favorite suds hut. Your friends will never look at you the same way again.

So what does it take to live out this fantasy?

Consider this an invitation to enter your best homebrew recipe in the annual Oregon Brew Crew – Widmer Collaborator beer competition. This is the premier pro-am homebrew collaboration anywhere. Over 50 Oregon Brew Crew-created beers have been selected to be brewed at Widmer since 1998.

This year’s competition will be held in May, 2017. The format will be the same as last year:

- Open exclusively to Oregon Brew Crew members
- Open styles, no BJCP judging guidelines used
- Maximum of two entries per brewer or co-brewer
- Must provide the recipe of each beer entered

It’s February and you are busting out your new beer ideas. Represent the OBC by entering your best recipe in the Collaborator competition of 2017. Complete rules and entry details will be sent to each member and published in the next newsletter.
Club Brews at Pacific Northwest Homebrew Conference

We're forming a committee to help organize our booth at PNWHC Club Brews night, taking place on the evening of Saturday, March 17 in Vancouver, WA. We're looking for volunteers!

What is Club Brews?

Club Brews is a private brewfest centered around homebrew clubs in the Pacific Northwest that happens on Saturday night of the PNWHC. All clubs, big and small, will have booths set up where fellow conference attendees can try their beer and chat with the brewers. This is a chance to represent your club, have fun tasting beer and see what other brewers in the area are doing.

What Do We Need Help With?

- Decorating our booth
- Supplying beer for our booth
- Serving beer at our booth

Requirements

You must be a paid attendee of the PNWHC to volunteer for or otherwise attend Club Brews Night.

Sign Up

Volunteers can help as little or as much as they want, no pressure! Contact Club Brews Committee Chair Sean Sanders if you think you may be able to contribute, and he'll include you in discussions on coordinating our efforts. This is a great way to help the club and earn Member Of the Year (MOY) points.
Don't forget the OBC Pilot System!

Fabulous upgrades to the Pilot System!

This year, we decided to spend the full pilot system budget on much needed upgrades and improvements. A Brobdingnagian thank you to Brian Haslip for ordering the parts and assembling/transfiguring the system! Great job!

Some of the improvements include:

• Added a 2nd, better pump on a new stand
• Improved the existing pump
• Added switches to both pumps
• replaced all of the hoses
• Added a sparge arm
• replaced the thermometers with a digital one
• Added a 3rd burner high BTU (Blichmann stand donated by Jim Thompson), that thing is a massive improvement!

Future improvements will include:

• replacing the other burners with high BTU
• etching of the interior of the keggles
• possible new keggles to expand the system
• Others? Your suggestions requested

In addition to the amazing upgrades and improvements, we are also improving the sign-out process. There are new forms to complete that will allow you to request specific parts instead of the entire thing. This will enable multiple members to utilize the system simultaneously. Look for the new sign-out form online in 2017 to reflect these changes.

Any questions? Send them to bryan.haslip@oregonbrewcrew.org.

Happy brewing!
Education Corner: Homebrew Evaluation
from your Education Chair Alex Brehm

We are all constantly trying to improve our brewing (at least I hope we are). I have had so many conversations with fellow homebrewers in just the last months about what they are adjusting or upgrading in the name of making better beer.

In our quest for improvement, so many brewers focus heavily on the front end of the brewing process: recipe tweaks, equipment upgrades, or process adjustments. Unfortunately, perhaps the most important step in the brewing process often gets overlooked along the way: evaluation.

Let’s take a step back and establish why homebrew evaluation is so important.

• If you are tweaking a recipe, presumably it is because you think the last recipe was wrong in some way.
• If you are upgrading your system, presumably it is because you believe the new toys will produce better beer.
• If you are adjusting your process, presumably it is because you have identified a flaw in the way you used to brew.

All three of these changes presume that something was wrong with the product that you were creating before. But you can only know what is wrong with your homebrew if you can effectively evaluate it.

Homebrewers are often ineffective at evaluating their own brews… and for completely understandable reasons. After you’ve put significant thought into crafting a recipe, worked through a long brew day, and waited weeks (if not months) for your beer to ferment, you want it to be the best beer ever! I remember the incredible pride I felt about the first beer I brewed, despite the fact that it was chunky with yeast and hop particles.

What’s more, the people who are most likely to drink our homebrew – friends and family – are notoriously terrible at objective evaluation. If I had a nickel for every time one of my friends told me to open a brewery after tasting a mediocre beer, I’d have at least a dollar**

So how do I get honest, objective, helpful feedback on my beer?
I’m going to outline three concrete actions that you can take in the name of accurately evaluating your beer, and I sincerely believe that each and every member of our club could benefit from at least one of them:

1. Bring your beer to OBC in-meetings. Your friends might be great with evaluation, but your beer friends are. Our club includes brewing industry professionals, experienced judges, and magical palates (looking at you, Tracy Hensley). Take advantage of the wisdom of the club, and don’t be afraid to bring flawed beer.
2. Enter your beer in competition. One of the greatest benefits of homebrew competitions is that your beer is judged blindly by qualified judges. This means there is no power of suggestion, and your brews will be judged as objectively as possible.

3. Become a BJCP judge! The BJCP (Beer Judge Certification Program) is a tremendous non-profit organization that promotes beer, mead, and cider evaluation and education. I can personally say that nothing has improved my evaluation and brewing as much as preparing for and taking the BJCP tasting exam. If this interests you, we are about to announce our annual BJCP education class, and you should sign up! Look for an email from me on Friday, February 10th for details and how to sign up.

Cheers,
Alex Brehm

**Then I would spend that dollar on hops.**
American Hoppy Beers

At the January general meeting, we had a distinguished guest by the name of Ben Edmunds speak. For those who don't already know him, he's a pretty renowned brewer, having won many awards for his beers at Breakside Brewing. He was kind enough to brave one of the horrible snow/ice storms that shutdown Portland this winter. I am quite glad I braved the storm too!

He provided a handout that listed "Twenty Dos and Don'ts for Making American Hoppy Beers". The topic was apropos for my already scheduled weekend brew day at the Rogue Eastside Pub for the Green Dragon Brew Crew. I was making an Cascadian Double IPA.

He started off talking about the four different primary styles of IPA. "San Diego" which is 7-7.5%, dry, citrusy and tropical. The "Pacific NW" style, made with the Big C hops (Cascade, Centennial, Columbus, and Chinook) and dominated by piney characteristics. The "New England" style which showcases new hops. The Central Mtn style which provides IN YOUR FACE malt & hops.

He then went through the list on the handout pretty thoroughly and answered questions along the way. I found a few tidbits quite useful and modified my recipe a bit to his recommendations. Specifically, I often like to bump up my IBUs to a ridiculous level in an IPA. He suggests staying under 3 digits, so I did! Tip: Late kettle and whirlpool hops add about double the IBUs you think they do.

Also, keep the final gravity a bit higher to bring out the malt and hide the salts. I did this by increasing my mash temperature just a few degrees to increase the un-fermentable sugars. I usually add mid-boil hops, so I didn't modify the hop schedule, but the last change I made was to modify my grain bill. I had more crystal malt and at a higher Lovibond than he recommends. Those kill hops flavors with age.The beer is currently fermenting away and should be available in the next few weeks. So far it is tasting great! Thanks for reading and good luck on your next batch of tasty homebrew!

Cheers!
Dylan VanDetta
Twenty Dos and Don’ts for Making Better American Hoppy Beers
Ben Edmunds, Breakside Brewery

1) Choose the type of hoppy beer you want to make and stay focused
2) It’s not 2003, don’t target triple digits with your BUs
3) Keep OZ out of your beer - move your beer as few times as possible
4) You can’t worry about hops until you have your pH on lock
5) Pitch yeast at .75-1 M/ml per degree Plato and ferment at 66-71
6) Moderately Burtonize your water
7) Watch your BU:GU ratio… stick with 3:4 or 1:1 unless you are building other support
8) Don’t go too dry
9) Residual sugar masks BUs - use this to your advantage!
10) Your late kettle and whirlpool hops will give you more BUs than you think. Lots more.
11) To get classic hop flavors, use classic hops
12) Don’t ignore the mid kettle hop
13) Find a hop schedule you like and stick with it
14) Crystal malt should never be more than 10% of your grain bill and should always be 40L or lower
15) Know the relative intensity of your hops and blend hops wisely
16) A light ester profile goes a long way to enhancing perception of hops
17) Hoppy beers are not easy to make and hops aren’t for “covering up mistakes”
18) If you can’t taste the malt, it’s not a good hoppy beer
19) Shoot for a rich mid palate hop flavor-- it’s almost as important as aroma
20) Dry hop more than you think you need but beware harsh polyphenols
WHY THE CLUB?

Be careful, folks. Recently asked why I joined the club, one of the board members hooked and reeled me in for this article. I guess they'll do just about anything for newsletter content.

Wanting to grow beyond extract and partial mash brewing a couple of years ago, I recalled the OBC and dropped in on a December meeting to see what I could find out about all-grain. Having explained my quest I was soon introduced to one brewer and another until, before the meeting itself even started I had the weekend booked.

That Saturday I found myself out at Brian Haslip’s backyard brew house getting a good look at a fairly mechanized home system while he spent most of the day brewing two consecutive batches. I have to admit it was a little overwhelming with the controls, pumps, gauges, tubes, etc. But some other home brewers dropped by too and we had a good time talking brew, sampling beers and picking up a trick or two at the same time.

The next day I was up early and over to the McPolanders’ for a long triple batch day. Their system was more rudimentary and so a bit easier for me to follow along. I toured their walk-in cooler, taps and CO2 system. In the afternoon a photographer came by to shoot them for the cover of an industry newspaper. And since, for them, three batches of beer aren’t enough for one winter day, Jenn had a batch of cider going in the kitchen.

I was ready to start. The day before at Brian’s I ran into Dylan VanDetta, then club secretary and keeper of the pilot system. We made arrangements to co-brew at his place the next month. I picked a barley wine recipe and together we knocked out a double batch, taking home five gallons each to ferment and finish separately.

I booked the pilot system for myself a couple of months later. Talking about it at the next meeting Corey Heath said she’d like to learn it. So I got to share what I’d learned, we brewed a double batch, and split it to finish separately.

By then I was envisioning my own system, started cruising craigslist for materials expecting to spend a few months or so cobbling something together. Instead I found a whole system in Bend that was going for about a third of what it should have been. I borrowed a friend’s truck and made the trip the next day before he sold it to someone else.

So to recap, I wanted to learn something about all-grain, tapped into the club, and inside of about six months I had my own system and knew something about how to use it. I spent the 18 months since learning the system itself and how best to coax the beer I want out of it. Now that I think about it, I haven’t talked with many brewers about how they got their own start. But I don’t suppose I’d be anywhere near as far along if I hadn’t dropped by that meeting at Steinbart’s that dark and wintry night.

-Don Klover
Cheers to our new members!

November 2016
Jake Freshour
Rob Porton-Jones
Bryan Quinn
Larry Reaney
Alison Smith
Dean Middleton

December 2016
Rory Burke
Ian Robinson
Fernando Freire
John Bishop

January 2017
Will Gifford
Dave O’Hare
Scott Kivitz
Nathaniel Backer
Nick McElmurry
Melinda Malek
Joseph Haggard

New Member Profile - David O’Hare

How long have you been brewing? I began brewing about a year and a half ago with my buddy Will. We both got so addicted we ended up buying a second fermenter so we could brew as much as possible.

What is your favorite beer style to drink/brew? Brewing has helped me truly appreciate the massive variety of styles, and I honestly enjoy most beers. Though I can admit that am still trying to adapt to certain styles, like rauchbiers. My taste buds tend to go in phases based on whatever recipe we are trying to create. My current favorite beer style to brew is Stouts. I love working with full bodied beers, and after focusing on IPA’s for a while it’s nice to shift gears.

What is your typical brew day like? Will and I are all-grain brewers so we purchase our ingredients during the week, and usually get our yeast starter up and running the day before the brew. We tend start at about 9 or 10 am on Sundays and stop anywhere between 3 to 5 pm. We keep it casual and really enjoy listening to music, chatting, and having some beers. Data is beautiful so we take lots of notes, and do lots of tests, during the brew day. Beersmith is awesome so we use the desktop software for recipe building and the app as a guide. There are often moments of intense concentration during critical steps but we mostly assemble, disassemble, clean, repeat, over and over. We spend lots of quality time with our buddies Star San and PBW. It’s fun to mimic large breweries so we are always thinking of ways to improve our setup and constantly adding new pieces. In terms of tech specs we have two fifteen gallon conical fermenters hooked up to a glycol chiller, a large steel structure that keeps the HLT, MLT, and boil kettle safe and sturdy, and lastly pumps, stainless steel fittings, and hoses that allow us to do make easy transfers from each container. We might go a little overboard sometimes but try to maximize our use of space and time.

Do you enter competitions, or plan to? Yes! Most definitely. The first competition we ever entered was the Fall Classic and we are currently participating in the Stout Bout. We have a calendar of
different events and will be planning our brew schedule around them. The feedback we receive is very helpful.

**What do you hope to get from OBC?** I don't have many brewer friends, so when I get excited and begin rambling about something brewing related I am often met by a girlfriend, or friends, with a "deer in the headlights" stare. It's great to meet people that can relate! Aside from that, I want to do everything I can to become a better brewer and the OBC community seemed like the perfect place for me.

**What do you think you bring to the club?** Even though I am a relatively new brewer I feel like I have learned a lot through practice and reading. I would be happy to give any tips or tricks I have learned and I am an easy guy to talk to. Aside from that, I am an artist by trade so if people ever need help with home brew labels, banners, or other fun stuff, I am always happy to help. I pride myself on being a mellow guy who sends out good energy. Cheers!

by Brian Haslip
Hello, everyone! What an icy, snowy beginning to the year. Due to the weather we only had about 40 people at the January meeting, yet the food and beer was still flowing! We thank everyone, including Ben Edmond’s from Breakside Brewing, for braving the roads.

We look forward to seeing you again on February 9th at Steinbart’s for our second meeting of the year. Once again, I will hold a potluck raffle (2 items) to those who bring sober-making treats. (See ticket values below.) I will now also offer bins for glass and recycling, plus hot coffee. ;)

Wishing you a fine February, hope to see you on the 9th!

POTLUCK CONTRIBUTIONS FOR JANUARY

Thank you to: Chuck Macaluso, Brian Haslip, Jason Barker, Sander Hoekstra, Gary Schmirler, and John Lovegrove for bringing chili, spaghetti, potato salad, cake and more!

POTLUCK RAFFLE TICKET VALUES

1 ticket for small items: chips/dip, breads, package of store bought cookies, candy, etc.

3 tickets for medium items: salad, a plate of homemade goodies, a pot of beans, veggies, or a smaller to medium dish of substantial food.

5 tickets for large items (that feed at least a couple dozen people): lasagna, mac and cheese, sandwiches, BBQ or Smoked meats, or a medium dish with obviously expensive ingredients, or generous portion of time used to prepare it.
### 2017 Board of Directors

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Jim Thompson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jim.thompson@oregonbrewcrew.org">jim.thompson@oregonbrewcrew.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education Committee Chair</td>
<td>Alex Brehm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Communications Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Festival Coordinator</td>
<td>Sean Sanders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bürgermeister</td>
<td>Meagan Thompson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:meagan.thompson@oregonbrewcrew.org">meagan.thompson@oregonbrewcrew.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Historian</td>
<td>Jeremie Landers</td>
<td><a href="mailto:historian@oregonbrewcrew.org">historian@oregonbrewcrew.org</a></td>
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### OBC Cup Standings (as of 1/31/17)

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<td>Charles Macaluso</td>
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<td>Jon Campbell</td>
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<td>Jon Larson</td>
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**Important:** The cutoff for 2017 OBC Cup points is midnight, November 30th. All points will be verified and checked prior to the Holiday Party and final awards. December points will rollover to 2018.

If you are willing to write up an article for the newsletter please email me at jon.campbell@oregonbrewcrew.org

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