

The WIZARDS Newsletter

October - December, 2003

[Upcoming Events](#) | [Club Business](#) | [Recent Events](#) | [Hints & Ideas](#) | [Feature Sites](#)

WIZARD's Upcoming Events

Upcoming Club Meetings

Club meetings this quarter will be October 21, November 18 and December 15, all at Deja Brew in Shrewsbury. Check our web page, call Strange Brew or call Deja Brew for directions.

Upcoming Trips & Outings

Activities	Club Meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• October - Fall Brew Day??• December - Holiday Party• March/April - Homebrew Competition• April - Pub Crawl• May - National Homebrew Day Brew Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• October Meeting - Octoberfest• December Meeting - Wee Heavy

Upcoming club activities are always posted on the club's website at <http://www.brewbeer.org/wizupcoming.htm>. Additional details will be published in the newsletter as they become available and provided via email to the club's egroups email list.

Get Ready For October

The club's annual Octoberfest Tasting will be here before you know it! Now is the time to bottle up your 2003 entry and bring it to the October meeting. We'll have our tasting and judging pitting our club against the best the commercial world has to offer! No homebrews ready? Then stop by the packy and pick up a bottle or two of your favorite festbier and join the party.

WIZARD's Club Business

New Direction for the Club

There has been much discussion over the last few months about how to improve the club. The suggestions being made all have the following goals in mind:

- Increasing membership and regular attendance at meetings, and

- Increasing participation in club activities, such as meetings, the annual homebrew competition and the pub crawl.

Before going into any of the specific suggestions being discussed, let me offer my own personal views on why a change is necessary. Clearly these are both admirable goals. Sure we're starting to get a good turn out at our club meetings, but now that people are coming we have to find a way to get them actively involved with the club. Club activities are a shambles. Attendance is at an all time low! Here is a short list highlighting the types of problems that must be overcome if we are to survive in style:

1. Four members made the last pub crawl.
2. Getting judges for the competition was next to impossible.
3. Only two brewers participated in our last brew day.
4. We rarely have more than one or two homebrews for any given style of the month.
5. No one wants to write a newsletter article.

It is my humble opinion that the way to increase membership involvement is to improve meetings and activities so that people want to keep coming back. But there isn't an easy way to do this. That's why I recommend the "do less, not more" approach.

The following changes were discussed:

- Reduce beer of the month styles to four times per year [Fewer style of the month leads to greater participation - no one can keep up with the current approach]
- Make styles of the month a little more common [Appeal to all Brewers]
- Schedule activities for non-style months [Keep people interested all the time]
- Make January a "new-brewers" meeting for all those who have received brew kits over the holidays [Get new members]
- Target these new brewers with a new flier in all new beer kits sold in the fall [Get new members]
- Update the club brochure to highlight the Strange Brew discount [Get new members]
- Create some point of sale materials to be displayed at beer festivals [Free advertising]
- Conduct the annual competition judging at the April club meeting and have a training session the month before [Solve the problems of the past]

Below is one suggestion as to how we could proceed for the year. Hopefully this will be a topic of discussion for the September meeting. And of course, the only way this will work is everyone takes the time to get involved and help out!

Month	Club Meeting/Activity
January	New Brewer's Night
February	1st Quarter Style - TBD Talk about 2nd Quarter Style
March	Judging Seminar
April	Competition Judging

May	2nd Quarter Style - TBD Talk about 3rd Quarter Style
June	
July	Summer Swill-Off
August	3rd Quarter Style - IPA
September	Cider Talk
October	4th Quarter Style - Oktoberfest
November	Talk about 1st Quarter Style
December	

Dues

Dues for 2003/2004 are now due. Dues are still a bargain at \$12/year and cover most, if not all, of our club activities. Dues pay our nominal expenses like buying the pretzels and cups for meetings. The biggest way your dues are spent is at club functions where the club finds some way to treat everyone in attendance like buying the pizza at our holiday party this past December or buying the appetizers on the annual pub crawl.

Newsletter

As always, articles and suggestions for the newsletter are both welcomed and encouraged and should be sent directly to [Bill](#).

🍺🍺🍺 *WIZARD's Recent Events* 🍺🍺🍺

Festival of Ales

<



An unplanned "meeting" of the club took place this past Saturday at the Festival of Ales held at Higgins Armory in Worcester. In the end, seven club members and their families ended up at the armory for this annual event. We were treated to beers from Concord, Paper City, Wachusett Brewing Companies and Deja-Brew. As always, a good time was had by all.

Club Samplings



Homebrew tastings over the last few months have included Greg and Dave's ESB, Greg's Terrible Triple (his name, not ours), a pair of Dunkelweisses from Bill and Jeremy, Brian's Bock, Damase's Pilsner, Audrey's Belgian Wit, Bill S's chocolate cherry porter, Jeremy's Lobster Claw Barleywine and a pair of Munich Dark's from Tony and Bill S. Commercial tastings included Three Flag's Dreadnaught Imperial IPA (3/5) and Ruddles County Bitter (1.5/5). Note, numbers in parenthesis, where available, show our rating on the five point scale with one being "it stinks" and five being "give me more."

The Other Stuff - Hints & Ideas

Maybe Next Time

Sad to report but there is no feature article available this issue. We are always looking for articles from our members, so who will submit the next one? Perhaps it will be a seasoned old timer with a sad story to tell or perhaps it will be one of our newer members ready to share their experiences with homebrewing and the club?

Feature Sites

Here are this issue's feature web sites! Everyone is encouraged to [recommend](#) a site for future issues.

- <http://www.bluesnbrews.com/> Website for the Blues-n-Brews festival on September 29th at Kimball's Farm in Westford.



Comments, questions or information on the WIZARD's to [Bill](#)