

2000 California Homebrew Club of the Year

2001 AHA National Homebrew Club of the Year

QUAFF

Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity

Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity, generally known as QUAFF, is San Diego County's first homebrew club, organized in the late 1980s. Although other clubs have sprung up (and a few have folded), QUAFF is still the pre-eminent homebrew club in the San Diego area. In the last year, QUAFF has risen to heights unparalleled in the homebrewing community, not only within California, but nationally as well. The QUAFF web site is located at www.softbrew.com/quaff.

California Homebrew Club of the Year for 2000



QUAFFsters celebrate at Anchor Brewing Company

For the first time in its history, QUAFF won Anchor Brewing's honor as the California Homebrew Club of the Year. This honor was largely won through the efforts of Peter Zien and Harold Gulbrandsen, both of whom won ribbons with each of their four entries in the California State Homebrew Competition last year. QUAFF members celebrated with a vengeance, culminating with the dinner at Anchor on February 10. The dinner represented the largest congregation of QUAFF members ever, even though it was nearly 500 miles from San Diego.

AHA National Homebrew Club of the Year for 2001 (and National Homebrew Competition)

In 2000, QUAFF finished third in the American Homebrewers Association's National Homebrew Club of the Year contest. In April of this year, QUAFF opened an aggressive campaign for the American Homebrewers Association's title of National Homebrew Club of the Year. QUAFF was successful in this campaign, and set a record for most points accumulated in the history of the National Homebrew Competition, and most points and awards in the second round. When all was said and done, QUAFF had earned 173 points, including 40 in the second round. The previous record for point had been 135. QUAFF finished 39 points ahead of the second-place club. In winning, QUAFF returned the trophy back to California for the first time since 1995.



QUAFF Members take the stage to claim the 2001 National Homebrew Club of the Year Trophy

27 members entered the first round of the AHA National Homebrew Competition, and 20 of those earned first round ribbons. Of those 20, 11 went on to win a total of 13 medals in the second round. Bronze medalists included Joe Buchan (Bitter and English Pale Ale), Peter Zien (Smoke-Flavored Beer), and Chris Toth (Fruit Mead). Silver medalists included Antoinette Hodges (India Pale Ale), Mark Densel (English and Scottish Strong Ale **and** Traditional Mead), Richard McLaughlin (Stout), Peter Zien and Harold Gulbransen (Spice/Herb Beer), and Tyce Heldenbrand (Specialty/Historical Beer). Gold medalists included Randy Barnes (American Lager) and Greg and Liz Lorton (European Dark Lager **and** Traditional Mead).

Of the 173 points earned by QUAFF in the National Club of the Year contest, 2 came from Club-Only competitions (two third place finishes by Harold Gulbransen and Greg Lorton), 131 points came from AHA NHC first-round ribbons, and 40 came from AHA NHC second-round medals. In addition to the second-round winners listed above, first-round winners included Chuck West, Jon Peterson, Dion Hollenbeck, Pat McIlhenney, Loren Miraglia, Cher Cunningham, Jim Weiner, Horace Bixby, and Dana Edgell.

American Homebrewers Association National Conference

QUAFF participated as one of the Southern California clubs in organizing the AHA's National Conference – 2001 – A Beer Odyssey. QUAFF's primary role was organizing and running the California regional of the AHA's National Homebrew Competition. Over 500 entries were received and judged, making it the largest region in terms of entries, even though this region was limited only to California entries. Tyce Heldenbrand was the organizer and Greg Lorton was judge coordinator.

For the third year in a row, QUAFF will organize the California first-round regional for the 2002 National Homebrew Conference. Antoinette Hodges will organize the competition on behalf of QUAFF, and Dion Hollenbeck will be the judge coordinator.

America's Finest City Homebrew Competition

In March, QUAFF held the 8th Annual America's Finest City Homebrew Competition. For the fourth straight year, our contest saw 300 or more entries from across the country (327 this year), making it one of the largest AHA-sanctioned competitions in California. QUAFF members ended up with 52 of the 76 medals awarded. QUAFFsters won medals in every category, and swept eight of the categories. Tom Wolf of the Maltose Falcons won Best of Show in the Beer Division, followed by Rich Link and Greg and Liz Lorton of QUAFF. QUAFFsters swept the top three spots in both the Mead Division (Chris Toth for first and second, and Mark Densel for third) and the Cider Division (Harold Gulbransen for first, Chuck West for second, and Peter Zien for third). Peter Zien organized the competition and Randy Barnes was judge coordinator.

Planning is now underway for the 9th Annual AFCHBC in San Diego on March 2 and 3, 2000. Randy Barnes and Bob Mac Kay will be the co-organizers for this competition, and Mark Alfaro the judge coordinator. Our competition website (www.softbrew.com/afchbc) currently presents results from previous competitions, and will be updated soon for the next contest.

Strong Ale Homebrew Competition

QUAFF will host the third Strong Ale Homebrew Competition, scheduled for November 17. This contest is limited to beers with original gravities of 1.080 or higher. The contest is run in conjunction with the San Diego Strong Ale Festival held on the first weekend of December in Carlsbad. Seven categories are contested. Antoinette Hodges is the organizer this year, with Peter Zien as the judge coordinator.

QUAFFsters in Other Competitions

QUAFF members regularly win awards at local and regional homebrew competitions. Of special note, in the Del Mar Fair (the San Diego County Fair) in June, QUAFF members won 35 ribbons, representing 1/3 of all of the ribbons won.

QUAFF Meetings

QUAFF meets monthly (fourth Tuesday of the month) at the Callahan's Pub and Brewery in the Mira Mesa community of San Diego. The meetings usually cover a beer style or a brewing process or technique. During the last five years, QUAFF has placed greater emphasis on developing judging skills and in beer appreciation among the members.

Typically 30 to 50 people attend the monthly meetings. Members are urged to bring their homebrews to sample and to talk about. 8 to 10 homebrews are usually sampled during the course of a meeting. QUAFF is a member of the Michael Jackson World Beer Tour. This allows members to sample classic and rare beers from around the world.

Beer Judge Certification Program

QUAFF sponsored its fourth BJCP class and exam in five years. Peter Zien and Greg Lorton organized a 10-week, 30-hour study course leading up to the BJCP exam that was held on Saturday, September 8. 21 people took the exam, of which 17 were QUAFF members. Of these 17, 7 were taking the exam for the second time. We are awaiting the results of the exam. The majority of the 30+ BJCP judges (recognized level and higher) in San Diego County are active members of QUAFF. The large majority of the BJCP judges participated in QUAFF's BJCP classes over the last four years. All of the National-level judges in San Diego County (6 and counting) are members of QUAFF.

Other QUAFF Events

The two highlight events each year are the Oktoberfest picnic and the Holiday party. The Oktoberfest is held at a local park (on an island in a lake) on a Saturday during the official Oktoberfest period. The picnic includes a BJCP-sanctioned homebrew competition, an extravagant raffle, lots of food and homebrewed beer, and a general good time. This year, Greg and Liz Lorton won Best of Show in the competition with a Belgian framboise.

The Holiday Party caps a year of fun, and takes the place of the December meeting. It is held at AleSmith Brewing Company (sponsored by AleSmith owner and long-time QUAFFster Skip Virgilio). The Holiday Party features a cache of commercial holiday beers, as well as homebrewed holiday beers, and a buffet and potluck dinner and a Chinese gift exchange.

QUAFF is an active participant in the Southern California Homebrewers Festivals held each May in Temecula. Long-time QUAFF members Rich and Teresa Link are on the festival's board, and Rich is now President of the Board. Rich is also a long-time contributor to the Celebrator Beer News, reporting on beer happenings in the San Diego area.

QUAFF also organizes periodic camping trips. The last trip was November 3-5 at Palm Canyon campground in the Anza Borrego desert east of San Diego. The next one will take place on November 2-4 this year. Randy Barnes is the QUAFF camp counselor. Other activities this last year have included a pub crawl and a fishing trip, both organized by Jeff Majors.

QUAFF Notoriety

Based on our California and National Homebrew Club of the Year honors, QUAFF is receiving increased prominence in the local and national community promoting homebrewing and responsible beer enjoyment and appreciation. QUAFF is regular mentioned in "Brewery Rowe", a monthly feature on beer by Peter Rowe, columnist for the San Diego Union-Tribune, San Diego's largest newspaper. Greg Lorton and Peter Zien appeared as guests in October on a radio program about beer on KFMB AM760. Greg Lorton also appeared in October as a guest on Internet radio's "Arrogant Bastard on Beer" show with host Greg Koch of Stone Brewing Company. Archives of the October 10 show can be found at wsradio.ws.

Vital Statistics

83 individuals and couples belong to QUAFF. This is a 32% increase in membership from this time last year. In October, a new Board took over. The Board typically consists of people too slow to decline a nomination by one or more other members. The Board this year is:

Greg Lorton	President
Antoinette Hodges	Vice President
Harold Gulbransen	Treasurer
Richard McLaughlin	Newsletter Guy
Randy Barnes	Activities Chairman
Tyce Heldenbrand	AHA Ambassador
Bob Mac Kay	Membership
Peter Zien	Past President
Chuck West	Member-at-Large
Chris Toth	Member-at-Large
Dion Hollenbeck	Gadget Guy
Harold Gottschalk	Internet Guy

Other active members (and former Board members) include Rich Link (of Celebrator fame), Skip Virgilio (AleSmith brewer and National Beer Judge), Bob Whritner (Zymologist Emeritus and Ambassador to June Lake), and Dr. Chris White (owner of White Labs).

If you have any questions, please call Greg Lorton or Peter Zien at (858) 546-7824.

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