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QUAFF

Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity

For an unprecedented third straight year, QUAFF, the Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity of San Diego, has proven to be the preeminent homebrew club in California and the rest of the United States.

QUAFF Brings Home the AHA Trophy again in 2003

California Homebrew Club of the Year for 2002

For the third time, QUAFF successfully defended its title as Anchor Brewing's California Homebrew Club of the Year. Ten members brought home 38 ribbons, including Homebrewer of the Year honors for Jamil Zainasheff. Brewing machine Jamil Zainasheff won 21 of the ribbons, entering in most of the categories and subcategories. Other ribbon winners included Jon Peterson, Antoinette Hodges, Chuck West, Greg & Liz Lorton, Loren Miraglia, Randy Barnes, Chad Stevens, Joe Buchan, and Dan Sherman. We happily returned to the dinner at Anchor on February 15. While QUAFF has won three years in a row, no club had ever repeated before.

AHA National Homebrew Club of the Year for 2003

In 2003, QUAFF also successfully defended its title as the American Homebrewers Association's National Homebrew Club of the Year, bringing home the trophy for the third year in a row. In doing so, we set a new record for the most points accumulated in the National Homebrew Competition, breaking in our own record of 192 set last year. This year, we amassed 204 points, 44 points ahead of the second place Urban Knives of Grain homebrew club, one of the hosts of the AHA's Chicago conference. Our friends from up north (LA's Maltose Falcons) finished eighth with 68 points.

In the second round, the medal winners included Jamil Zainasheff, Antoinette Hodges, Jon Peterson, Chuck West, Peter Zien, and Jim Weiner. Chuck took third with an English bitter, Jamil took second with a Scottish ale, Peter took second with a Kölsch, Jon took first with a Scotch ale, Antoinette took first with a framboise lambic and second with a bock, and Jim took second with a fruit beer.

Of the 204 points earned by QUAFF in the National Club of the Year contest, 174 points came from AHA NHC first-round ribbons, and 30 came from AHA NHC second-round medals. In addition to the second-round winners listed above, first-round winners included Randy Barnes (a first and a second), Joe Buchan (two firsts), John Curtis (a second), Mark Densel (a third), Harold Gulbransen (a first, a second, and two thirds), Antoinette Hodges (two thirds), Tom and Matt Kelly (a first), Greg and Liz Lorton (a first and a third), Loren Miraglia (a first), Les Overman (a second), Jon Peterson (two firsts and a third), Jim Weiner (a first and a second), Chuck West (a second and a third), Jamil Zainasheff (four firsts, six seconds, and three thirds), and Peter Zien (two firsts, two seconds, and two thirds).

American Homebrewers Association's National Homebrew Competition

QUAFF once again supported the AHA's National Homebrew Competition by organizing and running the Southwest regional (California and Arizona) of the AHA's National Homebrew Competition. Nearly 600 entries were received and judged, making it the largest region in terms of entries. Antoinette Hodges was the organizer and Dion Hollenbeck was judge coordinator.

For the sixth year in a row, QUAFF will organize the California first-round regional for the 2003 National Homebrew Conference. Antoinette Hodges will again organize the competition on behalf of QUAFF.

American Homebrewers Association Conference

QUAFF is a co-host for the 2004 AHA National Homebrew Conference in Las Vegas. QUAFFster Tyce Heldenbrand is the conference organizer. This promises to be one of the largest homebrew conferences ever.

America's Finest City Homebrew Competition

In March, QUAFF held the 10th Annual America's Finest City Homebrew Competition. This year, we received 227 entries, making it one of the largest AHA-sanctioned competitions in California. QUAFF members ended up with 54 of the 81 medals awarded. QUAFFsters won medals in 26 of 28 categories, and swept seven of the categories. QUAFFster Les Overman won Best of Show in the Beer Division, followed by Harold Gulbransen, Greg and Liz Lorton, and Chuck West, all of QUAFF. Bob MacKay organized the competition and Mark Alfaro was judge coordinator.

Planning is now underway for the 11th Annual AFCHBC in San Diego on February 28 and March 1, 2003. Bob Mac Kay will be the organizer for this competition. Our new website (www.quaff.org) will be updated soon for the next contest.

Strong Ale Homebrew Competition

QUAFF hosted the fourth Strong Ale Homebrew Competition, on November 16, 2002. This contest is limited to beers and meads with original gravities of 1.080 or higher, and was held in conjunction with the San Diego Strong Ale Festival held on the first weekend of December in Carlsbad. Nine categories were contested; QUAFFsters won 15 of the 24 medals. Chuck West of QUAFF took Best of Show for beers with an English Strong Ale. Peter Zien and Antoinette Hodges both won four ribbons, including two firsts each. Chris Kleber took two firsts in the mead categories and won the Best of Show for meads. Jon Peterson and Richard McLaughlin also won ribbons for QUAFF. Richard McLaughlin was the organizer for the contest.

San Diego Mead Festival

Final preparations are on for the first San Diego Mead Festival. This contest will feature five categories – traditional meads, fruit meads (melomels), herb and spice meads (metheglins), braggots, and specialty meads. Greg Lorton is the organizer for this contest, scheduled for November 8.

QUAFFsters in Other Competitions

QUAFF members continue to win awards regularly at local and regional homebrew competitions. Of special note, in the San Diego County Fair (formerly the Del Mar Fair) in June, QUAFF members won 38 ribbons, representing over 1/3 of all of the ribbons won. The San Diego County Fair holds one of the largest homebrew competitions in the country, with well over 600 entries.

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, although we occasionally get crazy and talk about something else. During the last seven years, QUAFF has placed greater emphasis on developing judging skills and in beer appreciation among the members.

Typically 40 to 60 people attend the monthly meetings. Members are urged to bring their homebrews to sample and to talk about. We usually sample 8 to 10 homebrews during the course of a meeting. QUAFF is a member of the Michael Jackson Belgian Beer Tour. This allows members to sample classic and rare beers from Belgium.

Beer Judge Certification Program

Since 1996, QUAFF has held five BJCP preparatory classes and exams. Planning is now underway for the sixth class.

Other QUAFF Events

The two highlight events each year are the Oktoberfest picnic and the Holiday party. This year's Oktoberfest was held on October 11 at a park in Santee. The picnic includes a BJCP-sanctioned homebrew competition, an extravagant raffle, lots of food and homebrewed beer, and a general good time. The contest focused on German beer styles, and Horace "Bix" Bixby took Best of Show with an Oktoberfest.

The Holiday Party wraps up a year of fun, and takes the place of the December meeting. Once again, our party will be held at the home of Richard McLaughlin, QUAFF's newsletter editor. The Holiday Party features a cache of commercial holiday beers (including Our Special Ale!), as well as homebrewed holiday beers, and a buffet and potluck dinner and a Chinese gift exchange.

Bob MacKay organized yet another Padres tailgate party on July 19. Although the Padres were the worst team in the National League this year, they beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 2-0 on QUAFF night. Approximately 40 QUAFFsters and family attended the tailgate party and game.

QUAFF is an active participant in the Southern California Homebrewers Festival held on the first Saturday in May in Temecula. Long-time QUAFF members Rich and Teresa Link are on the festival's board, and Rich is 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 annual camping trips during the Fall. The next one will take place on October 31 to November 2 this year. Bob MacKay is taking over responsibility of the event from our perennial camp counselor, Randy Barnes.

QUAFF Notoriety

Based on our repeats of the California and National Homebrew Club of the Year honors, QUAFF continues to receive publicity 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.

Vital Statistics

Approximately 90 individuals and couples belong to QUAFF, making QUAFF the largest homebrew club in San Diego county, but still only a mid-sized club compared to other clubs in California and the United States. In October, a new Board took over in a bloodless coup. The Board typically consists of people too slow or distracted to decline a nomination by one or more other members. The Board this year is:

Harold Gulbransen	President
Antoinette Hodges	Vice President
Chuck West	Treasurer
Richard McLaughlin	Newsletter Guy
Bob Mac Kay	Activities Chairman
Tyce Heldenbrand	AHA Ambassador
Dave Levonian	Membership
Bill Sobieski	Internet/IT Guy
Greg Lorton	Former Retired Past President Emeritus
Chad Stevens	Member-at-Large
Chris Toth	Member-at-Large
Dion Hollenbeck	Member-at-Large
Joe Buchan	Member-at-Large

Other active members (and former Board members) include Rich Link (of Celebrator fame), Skip Virgilio (former AleSmith owner and National Beer Judge), Peter Zien (AleSmith owner and Master 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 contact:

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Enclosed: October newsletter