West Coaster

SERVING THE SAN DIEGO CRAFT BEER COMMUNITY



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New San Diego Brewers Guild President Marty Mendiola, with fiancée Virginia Morrison, at Karl Strauss' Beach to Brewery Festival on May 14th

Meet The President

Marty Mendiola Elected to Lead San Diego Brewers Guild Toward New Goals

By Ryan Lamb

an Diego, meet Marty Mendiola, a Senior Brewmaster for Rock Bottom Brewery Restaurants and the incumbent San Diego Brewers Guild President. Elected in mid-July, Marty faces the first big test of his one-year term as San Diego Beer Week, a 10 day county wide festival celebrating craft beer culture, returns November 4-13. Despite the hectic schedule he has inherited from predecessor Adam Carbonell, Mendiola found time to talk with *West Coaster* about his new role within San Diego's craft beer movement.

West Coaster: What was your first order of business as incoming San Diego Brewers Guild (SDBG) President?

Marty Mendiola: Organizing. We just created a Board of Directors this year and we are adding new Brewery Members at a high rate.

WC: What do you hope to accomplish during your term?

MM: I hope to take the Guild from a loosely run, grassroots organization to a professional non-profit guild. We are run by volunteers and we need the help and expertise of all of our members. I also hope to keep the beer standards high as new breweries come on line in San Diego. We are known for high quality beers and I don't want to see a lot of breweries pop up that are riding the wave of San Diego Craft Beer for a quick buck. I would also like to see the

beer festivals around town keep up professional standards, offer food, and not promote drunkfests by limiting hours and numbers of beers. I want people to experience the flavors and nuances of different beer styles and not just drink the strongest beer regardless of style or quality. I would like to see more beer & food pairing events so that the flavors of the beer are appreciated in concert with the food.

WC: By now we all know that Mayor Jerry Sanders is a big fan of craft beer. How does the city plan to help promote San Diego Beer Week (November 4-13, sdbw.org), and craft beer in general?

MM: I think the mayor appreciates and embraces the craft beer industry in San Diego, as he sees that we take it seriously as a business that generates jobs and has a positive economic impact on the region. We don't get money directly from the city, but from the San Diego Tourism Marketing District, a non-profit organization with close ties to the city to develop tourism in San Diego. This year they have raised our amount to \$75,000 to help promote and develop SDBW.

WC: The San Diego Brewers Guild isn't just about San Diego Beer Week. What can San Diegans look forward to from the Guild after the sun sets on SDBW 2011?

MM: The Craft Brewers Conference and World Beer Cup will be held in San Diego next year, and the SDBG will once again have a strong presence through a SDBG pavilion with a large amount of beers. That is for the professional brewers coming into town from around the world. For the general public, I would look for SDBG-sponsored events and more beer & food pairings. We also have a new website on the way, and will be releasing that soon!

To keep up with all the San Diego Beer Week 2011 goings-on, visit sdbw.org. For more information on the San Diego Brewers Guild, visit sandiegobrewersguild.org

More on Marty Mendiola: born in Ohio, where many of his Italian uncles and cousins

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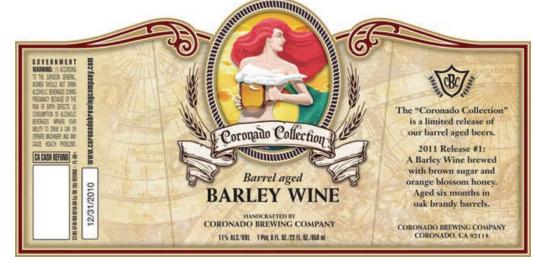
Coronado Collection To Debut At Hamilton's

The Purveyors of Idiot IPA to Release Limited Batches of Barrel Aged Beers

By Ryan Lamb

oronado Brewing Company Brandy Barrel aged Barley Wine, the first in a new line of beers from the peninsular brewpub, will debut late August at Hamilton's Tavern in South Park. The exact date of the event wasn't finalized at press time, but we'll update our online event calendar (westcoastersd. com/event-calendar) as soon as we know.

Brewed with brown sugar and orange blossom honey, batch #1 of this barley wine finishes at a hearty 11% ABV after aging in oak brandy barrels for roughly six months. Around 85% of the 20 barrel batch will be put into 22 oz. bottles with foil wrapping and the



Label for the upcoming Coronado Collection beer

label reproduced below.

The remainder of this limited beer will be distributed in 5 gallon kegs to various accounts around the county; expect 2-3 beers per year released under the Coronado Collection label. Updates on future releases published on our website (westcoastersd.com).



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Letters may be edited for space. Anonymous letters are published at the discretion of the Editor.

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"No beer was wasted in the making of this publication."

Welcome Aboard!

This month we're pleased to announce our newest staff member, Amy T. Granite. Aside from running one of the most entertaining blogs in town (saysgranite.com), Amy brings a set of experienced eyes to look over our copy before we send it to the press. If mistakes in our previous issues have been driving you crazy, I think you'll find a marked improvement with this current issue.

Distribution Snafu

Our sincere apologies for the inconsistent delivery of last month's West Coaster. If you read that issue's Letter From the Editor, you noticed that July was our first month working with Sun Distributing. Long story short, some locations did not get their issues in a timely manner. We're confident this won't happen again, but if you don't see West Coaster issues and it's past the 2nd of the month, please send an email to mike@westcoastersd.com

How Much Is Too Much?

With the high profile failure of a large beer festival last month, there's justifiable skepticism brewing in our community. Indeed, the secret is out that beer festivals can net big bucks... potentially. With several "1st Annual Festivals" occurring in 2011, we encourage our readers to do their homework before buying in. Questions to ask before attending a festival: Who is organizing the festival? What beers are being poured? Will I get my money's worth? Especially for first time festivals, don't be afraid to be critical, but also empathetic. This is a developing community, and even the best festivals (like Stone Brewing Company's 15th Anniversary coming up August 20th) had humble beginnings.

Sincerely,

72MSH

Mike Shess

Executive Editor/ Co-Publisher West Coaster









July At-A-Glance

Last Month's News From Around the San Diego Craft Beer Community

etween our website (westcoastersd.com), our Facebook page (facebook.com/westcoastersd) and our Twitter feed (twitter.com/westcoastersd), we strive to bring you an array of San Diego Beer News. Here are some of July's top stories.

Top Headline

The behemoth, three-day beer and music event America's Finest Beer Festival was canceled 24 hours before its scheduled starting date, July 22nd. Although months in the making, the Rancho San Diego Jamul Chamber of Commerce (the organizers behind the event) claim that financial backing dropped at the last minute. At time of printing, the fallout from this cancellation was still landing. Any new updates will be posted online, simply go to our website, westcoatersd.com and in the search bar to the right, type in "AFBF" for the latest.

Openings/Anniversaries

- In Hillcrest, restaurant Local Habit opened its doors in July. Embracing the

farm to table movement, the restaurant competently serves beer and food from all over California with a strong local emphasis. WC Staffers report that the food is delicious and well proportioned without being outrageously priced.

- Green Flash has officially opened the doors for their new location located in Mira Mesa. If you have not seen this expertly-designed and expansive brewery, get to it. Tasting room hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 3 - 9 p.m., Fridays 3 - 10 p.m., Saturdays 12 - 9 p.m., Sundays 12
- Best Damn Beer Shop celebrated its 2nd anniversary last month with a July 9th tasting event at The Tipsy Crow (who celebrated their "Firstish" anniversary on July 14th).
- Rancho Bernardo gastropub URGE celebrated their 1-Year Anniversary, U+1, July 29th and 30th. The two-day extravaganza featured an anniversary beer from Mother Earth Brew Co. dubbed "Very Bad Things."

.....

- In East County, Manzanita Brewing Co. celebrated one year of being open for business on July 16th while beer bar Main Tap Tavern turned three on July 2nd.

Announcements

Following our report last month, the owners of Blind Lady Ale House announced the name of their new bar, restaurant and eventual brewpub: Tiger! Tiger!. Slated to open sometime this fall on El Cajon Boulevard in North Park, the space also boasts a 20-person patio.

Event Highlights

- San Diego County Fair Homebrew Competition winners were announced in July. The Best of Show award went to local homebrewer Bob MacKay with an English Dark Mild. Read Judge Ronnie Das' account of the day by logging on to westcoastersd.com/author/ronnie-das/
- The recently relocated Mission Brewery held two events titled Pints for Pups on July 9th and 23rd. Packed with panting dogs and their beer-drinking owners, the

first installation of this event's proceeds benefited the New Leash on Life Puppy Club, and the second to the Coastal German Shepherd Rescue Group. The expansive warehouse brewery and bar makes for an ideal event venue. Interested in hosting yours there? Go to missionbrewery.com for more info.

Two for Two: Bottle Releases

San Diego staples Karl Strauss Brewing Company and Stone Brewing Co. have been busy in the special releases department. Off The Rails by Karl Strauss is a hopped-up version of award-hogger Red Trolley Ale, and was released in 22 oz. bottles in early July, and look out for their Boardwalk Black Rye, "a spicy black rye ale with a robust West Coast hop profile," that hits shelves August 1st. Stone Brewing Company released two great 12oz. collaboration beers in July: first, the Baird / Ishii / Stone Japanese Green Tea IPA, a spicy, herbal IPA coming in at 9.2%, is

Continued on Page 12







For one day, in beautiful San Diego the best speakers and the best beers will come together for a glorious celebration of craft beer. This event will fill up fast so make sure to REGISTER Today!



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Beer Wars dvd, T-Shirt Taster Glass, 10 Pours Goodies Bag + more



eeron.com Location: Handlery Hotel Twitter.com/BeerCon Facebook.com/BeerCon

Photo: Kristina Blake

Brandon Hernández hated beer and had never even heard the term "craft beer" until his first trip to O'Brien's Pub in 1999. There, in a dark yet friendly space rife with the foreign smell of cascade and centennial hops, he fell into line with the new school of brew enthusiasts courtesy of a pint-sized one-two punch of Sierra Nevada Bigfoot and Stone Arrogant Bastard Ale. Those quaffs changed his perception of all beer could and should be and he's spent the past decade-plus immersing himself in the local beer culture -- living, learning, loving and, of course, drinking craft suds. He's since taken up homebrewing and specializes in the creation of beer-centric cuisine. A native San Diegan, Brandon is proud to be contributing to a publication that serves a positive purpose for his hometown and its beer loving inhabitants. In addition to West Coaster, he is the San Diego correspondent for Celebrator Beer News and contributes articles on beer, food, restaurants and other such killer topics to national publications including The Beer Connoisseur, Beer Magazine and Wine Enthusiast as well as local outlets including The San Diego Union-Tribune, San Diego Magazine, The Reader, Riviera Magazine, Pacific San Diego, Edible San Diego, Dining Out San Diego, Rancho Magazine, North County Times and SanDiego.com.



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The Other Other White Meats

Urge American Gastropub's Recipes for Success

By Brandon Hernández

'm not one to hold a grudge. I used to live in Rancho Bernardo or, as I bitterly referred to it, "Beer No Man's Land." I'd muse with anybody unlucky enough to have to listen about how well a beer-and-foodgeared restaurant would do if they'd take a chance on RB. People would smile politely and move on and, eventually, I did too. Not three months after beating a path out of town, what should touch down less than a half-mile from my old place? Urge American Gastropub.

Timing is a cruel mistress. However, if I still lived in RB, I concede that Urge would be a cruel mistress of a different type. The beer selection includes an extensive, quality selection of draft and bottled brews - including one-offs and rare numbers - combined with beer themed cuisine. Chef Marc Liautard has worked with proprietor Grant Tondro to put together a menu that's unlike any of San Diego's beeriest eateries and, quite frankly, unlike many other eateries period (know of any other place using Unibroue Quelque Chose sour cherry ale as the base for their barbecue sauce?). Like many restaurants nowadays, comfort food done well is the name of the game, but Liautard has found ways to make his offerings unique, most obviously and effectively through the use of beer as an ingredient and the utilization of lesser-used proteins like rabbit and wild boar.

Adding to my remorse over Urge's late arrival to my old 'hood is the fact that rabbit, a meat that I greatly enjoy, is at the forefront of not one, but two dishes. The first is the Mac Rabbit, a hunk of mac 'n' cheese that's tossed in the deep fryer, then topped with a rich beer cheese soup and served with



The wild boar burger at Urge pairs well with many different styles of beer

rabbit sausage. Enough to give Bugs a heart attack (he'd go with a smile), this is my preferred bunny option, but I'm in the minority.

Most Urge regulars have fallen hard for the Hassenpfeffer Hopper, a burger made from ground rabbit that incorporates fresh herbs in place of grease to provide a flavor profile that's completely different from any beef burger (just to be clear, I have absolutely nothing against the fulfilling flavor of rich animal fat). Thanks to these herbs there's a downright garden freshness to this burger that makes it a great change of pace to traditional pub grub, if nothing else.

The bottom line is that it takes guts to lead with a set of rabbit ears and Liautard should be commended for not only being different and taking a risk, but for creating widespread interest in something most would find outlandish via a delicious dish.

Unfortunately, the supply of rabbit has become a bit scarce for Urge's distributors, meaning they are currently not able to offer it as a full-time menu item. But rather than go the all-beef route while they tap into another source for Grade A thumper, Liautard's put a

wild boar burger on the menu in the interim that's topped with Ewephonia sheep's milk Gouda from Holland and dressed with a Rauchbier-infused aioli (smoky mayo, that is). Urge was kind enough to provide us Liautard's recipe for the new burger and aioli, and it is included below for your at-home kitchen pleasure. Liautard and Tondro note T&H Prime Meats in San Marcos as a good place to head to for these rarer types of proteins.

"Both of these meats are great delivery vehicles for a lot of other flavors, and you can really play around with a lot of fresh, garden spices to find a combination that works for you," says Tondro.

Speaking of the garden, be on the lookout for a new "Market" section of the menu, which will debut this month and feature offerings that will change monthly as items come in and out of season.

If the recipes below aren't enough to get you cooking, visit westcoastersd.com (search "Brandon") and you'll find Chef Liautard's recipes for Sculpin mustard (that uses Ballast Point Sculpin IPA as a base), chislic, and chipotle aioli.

Wild Boar Burger

Yield: 2 patties

1 pound wild boar, ground ½ cup panko bread crumbs, roasted until browned

2 Tbsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped Pinch fresh thyme, finely chopped Pinch fresh sage, finely chopped Salt and pepper to taste 2 large artisan hamburger buns
(preferably from Bread & Cie
Bakery), lightly toasted
Ur-Bock Aoili (recipe follows)
2 slices Ewephoria Gouda cheese (or
Gouda to substitute)
4 slices crisp bacon

Combine the boar, bread crumbs, herbs, salt and pepper until they are completely incorporated. Form the mixture into two round patties and cook in a skillet over medium-high heat until the burger reaches the desired level of doneness (recommendation: medium, 4 to 5 minutes on each side). Spread the aioli on both sides of the burger buns. Top the bottom bun slices with burger patties, followed by the cheese and two bacon slices each. Serve immediately.

Ur-Bock Aioli

Yield: 14 ounces

10 ounces mayonnaise3 ounces cultured buttermilk1¼ ounces Ur-Bock Rauchbier (or other smoked beer to substitute)Salt and pepper to taste

Whisk all of the ingredients together in a mixing bowl until they are completely incorporated.

Serve or store, refrigerated, for up to 10 days.





Sam Tierney began his love affair with great

beer while studying and traveling abroad in

Europe during his junior year at UC Santa

Barbara. He began homebrewing shortly after,

and has since won multiple awards. Sam is a

graduate of the Siebel Institute, a professional

brewing school in Chicago, and he's been

working as a brewer at Firestone Walker in

Paso Robles, California since May.



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Why Drink Local?

Because Fresh Beer Always Tastes Best

By Sam Tierney

t West Coaster, we aren't shy about proclaiming our love for homegrown beer, nor the importance of drinking it. Besides having an almost obscene wealth of brewers in a 45 mile radius, beer bar and bottle shop owners are also to thank for San Diego's vibrant community of craft beer fans. By drinking local, we're supporting the movement, and the passionate individuals that make it all possible.

But drinking local goes beyond economic and social spheres; simply put, beer tastes better fresh, and there's no fresher than what's brewed just down the street. Getting beer from breweries to consumers with as little flavor deterioration as possible is a constant struggle, and by drinking at the source, we're able to enjoy the freshest beer possible.

Great tasting beer is dependent on its stability, which is broken down into three categories: microbiological stability, colloidal stability, and flavor stability. Microbiological stability concerns the presence or absence of contamination organisms that have the potential to spoil beer. Colloidal stability is the ability of a beer to remain clear and free from haze formation for a period of time on the shelf. When it comes to beer freshness, flavor stability is a main concern, and oxygen is the single worst enemy of fresh beer. As beer ages, oxygen in the package reacts with compounds to form carbonyls, which manifest themselves as various aromas from dried fruit, bread, and honey, to wet cardboard. Trans-2-nonenal is the culprit for this last, unpleasant aroma, caused by beer oxidation. Hop compounds also react to oxygen by breaking down, which is why IPA aromas fade with age. As time passes, flavors soften, deteriorate and are replaced with carbonyls; off-flavors start to take over after a period of time, resulting in a dull, papery-tasting, stale beer. Replacing that wonderful hop aroma is a harsh, metallic bitterness from the oxidation of hop beta-acids.

Fresh beer starts with good brewing practices and high-quality ingredients. Every step of the process, from mashing to packaging, has the potential to negatively impact its flavor stability. The most overriding concern is the elimination of oxygen from the process. Once fermentation begins, brewers try not to let oxygen come in contact with the beer. Packaging is the most challenging step in the process, especially for small brewers. Kegs provide the best package for fresh beer because they allow the lowest amount of oxygen in, and are typically kept cold from brewery to customer. Initially, cans and bottles contain similar amounts of oxygen, but over time, bottles tend to allow more in.

Once the beer is packaged, storage and handling conditions influence also influence staling rates. For every 10 degree Celsius increase in temperature, oxidation reactions double, so keeping beer cold is one of the best ways to



Fresh local beer serving vessels at Rock Bottom La Jolla

keep it fresh. Constant movement also promotes oxidation reactions, so long-distance truck rides result in less fresh beer,

Light is the last of the main culprits. If you've ever enjoyed a Heineken outside on a sunny day, you know what I'm talking about: skunky beer. Light reacts with the hop iso-alpha-acids that give beer its bitterness, producing a compound that smells remarkably similar to skunk spray. Brown glass is fairly effective at stopping some light that skunks beer, but green or clear glass offer almost no protection. Some beers in clear glass, like Miller High Life, are brewed with chemically modified hop extracts that do not react with light to form off-aromas, but many other brands aren't, and even brown bottles are damaged by prolonged exposure to sunlight.

Artificial light isn't as bad, but several weeks on a store shelf is enough to do noticeable damage. Cans and kegs have an obvious advantage here because they do not allow any light to touch the beer. Hopefully you can see that beer's ideal package is a keg that's kept cold, and moves as little as possible.

While the case to drink local beer is

solid, I don't mean to discount breweries from all over the world. Modern technology has allowed brewers to ship shelfstable beer all over. Pasteurization and sterile filtration guarantee microbiological stability; depth filtration, and colloidal stabilizers like silica gel and PVPP allow for beers that maintain perfect clarity even after months on the shelf. By using the best packaging technology, practically no oxygen gets in and beer doesn't go stale. The proof is in all the awesome varieties of beer found our local stores and pubs that come from around the world in surprisingly good shape, considering what it's been through.

Modern brewing technology really is a marvel, but most small craft brewers have neither the ability nor desire to process their beer to this degree. These operations typically brew using traditional styles, making the product more interesting and flavorful in effect. So it goes, more flavorful beer is inherently less stable, and this is where drinking local comes in. San Diego loves its intensely flavorful beers, hoppy or otherwise, and there is no amount of technology that replicates the experience of drinking a fresh pint straight from a brewery's tap.

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Q&A WITH CERVECERIA INSURGENTE



By Ryan Lamb











fter falling in love with craft beer in San Diego, brothers Ivan and Damian Morales jumped at the opportunity to start brewing their own for the Tijuana market. 18 months later, they're now leading a flavor insurgency south of the border. *West Coaster* found a low-lit, beer-filled table at Hamilton's to ask them more about the boundless thirst for artisanal beer they've helped inspire.

Tell us a little about your philosophy as a brewery.

Our slogan says it all about our attitude - "Sé un Insurgente, toma artesenal" - which is translated as "Be an insurgent, drink craft." We want people to try something different than anything they've ever had, and we want that idea of being a revolutionary beer drinker to go beyond us. Many people in Mexico have never had anything but the macro brews, so we want them to experiment.

When did you start brewing?

We bought our first homebrewing kit in February 2010, and at first we used a plastic bucket instead of a glass carboy for fermentation. The first beer we brewed was an American Amber Ale, which wasn't too good. After that we started doing more research. It was all about getting the beer to a level that met our standards. Our biggest hurdle starting out, really, was satisfying our own palates, and that didn't happen until 6 or 8 months in. We knew our beer would be an extension of the fact that we grew up both in San Diego and in Mexico, and that's why our flagship La Lupulosa has such a West Coast hop profile.

So, when did you decide you wanted to make a business out of it?

A few brews into it, actually. We knew we weren't even that good at brewing yet, but we just saw this gaping hole in the market in Mexico. There's all this amazing craft beer in San Diego, and we wondered, 'Why can't we have this in Mexico?'

Tell us the story behind your name and logo.

We wanted something that represented the philosophy of what we wanted to do with beer. There's a lack of good beer in Mexico, so we decided to become a rebel figure. Achieving that in San Diego would be tough because of how many breweries there are, but in Mexico we're really in uncharted territory. And the owl logo? We wanted a mascot, something visual that represents us. We didn't want something cliché. The owl's a predator with a certain elegance and mysteriousness to it, which is something we want to transmit with our beer.

Speaking of beer, what styles do you produce?

Right now we make three beers. Tiniebla (translated ironically as "Darkness") is our witbier, La Lupulosa (meaning "The Hoppy One") is our IPA, and we also brew an American Brown Ale called Brown. La Lupulosa is the beer that won Best in Show at the Baja Beer Fest, Brown took second place, and we entered a Chocolate Stout that took third. And by category, all four beers we entered won gold. That was really cool because John Palmer was there judging our beers.

Do you get any brewing ingredients from Mexico?

No, we get all our ingredients from the US. You pretty much can't get malt in Mexico because the barley growers have a contract with the two big breweries (Grupo Modelo and Cuauhtémoc-Moctezuma). As for hops, we use mostly American varieties.

We ran into you guys at the National Homebrewers Conference back in June. What were your highlights?

Chad Yakobson gave a talk called "Brewing with Brett" and that was really interesting — we learned a lot about brewing those types of beers that we didn't know before. The keynote address by Vinnie Cilurzo of Russian River was cool, too. It wasn't so informative in terms of showing us how to brew, but it was really motivating because he started the way we're starting now. That drives us because we'd obviously love to be at Vinnie's level some day.

Are there any San Diegans who have inspired you to the degree Vinnie from Russian River has?

We knew we wanted to take some ideas from San Diego because we've been thinking about how we want to expand our operation down in Tijuana. After finding out Hess Brewing was using a similar setup when they first started, we went and checked it out. Turns out they share some of the same concepts and ideas on what it is to be a nanobrewery. Their sales manager Mike Skubic showed us their whole process and that was very helpful. Also we'd like to give a shoutout to Jeff Hammett of San Diego Beer Blog and Randy Clemens & Denise Ratfield from Stone, too. They visited us on a bus tour of Tijuana's breweries and bars and gave us lots of inspirational feedback.

San Diego's beer scene is known for its collaboration efforts. Do you see this happening in Mexico?

Definitely. We've talked about collaborating with other brewers and even local artists. There's so much freedom of expression down in TJ right now, and we're able to use San Diego as a reference point.

So, where can your beer be found?

We have four accounts in Tijuana right now — Tasca de la Sexta, Tasca Boutique, Via Gourmet and Cazaclub Taberna. You can find links to all their pages through our website. We hope that in the next year or two we can start bringing our beer to the San Diego market, because we know it could do especially well in places with a high Mexican population, like the South Bay. And since we're already registered down here as an exporter, we'd just have to jump through the hoops of finding an importer.

Ever thought of moving operations to San Diego entirely?

Yes. We'd like to some day open a brewery here. But first we have to get our beer here.

So, how about one word to sum up the vibe of Mexico's craft beer scene?

Informal.

A few sentences?

The beer revolution in Mexico is being driven by the nanobreweries. It's hard to distinguish who's a homebrewer and who's not because most of us are. We all have our own image and logo, but we're all homebrewers in the end.

Now for the hard question. Your "Beers of the Moment"?

Red Barn and Framboise de Amorosa from The Lost Abbey. So I guess if there were a "Brewery of the Moment" question, it'd be The Lost Abbey.

What about the "Brewery You'd Love To Collaborate With Most" question?

It'd have to be The Lost Abbey again. They make amazing Brett beers, which is something we're going to focus on down the line. That, and sour beers, too. Stay tuned.

Page 8 top and bottom photos by Kristina Yamamoto and Tim Stahl (thanks for having us, Tim!). Page 8 middle photos courtesy of Cerveceria Insurgente. Page 9 photos are from the 2010 and 2011 TJ Beer Fests. Read about those events, plus WC staffer Jeff Hammett's day on the Turista Libre beer bus tour of TJ, by visiting westcoastersd. com and searching "TJ"





















Jeff Hammett first noticed craft beer early in college when a friend introduced him to Stone Brewing Co.'s Pale Ale. After graduating from UCSD with a degree in Philosophy, he moved to Santa Cruz where he frequented Santa Cruz Mountain Brewing and Seabright Brewery. Jeff would journey up to San Francisco to visit Magnolia and Toronado every chance he got. He started blogging about beer in early 2009 while living in Durango, Colorado. For a town of only 20,000 people, Durango boasts an impressive four breweries. Jeff quickly became a part of the brewing scene, and in January 2010 was invited to work with Ska Brewing Co.'s Head Brewer Thomas Larsen to formulate a recipe and brew on Ska's pilot system. In addition to his love of craft beer, Mr. Hammett is an avid cyclist and can be seen riding on the road or trails most weekends.



Habit-Forming

Local Habit Shines in Hillcrest

By Jeff Hammett

hen Pizza Fusion closed its doors last February, craft beer options in Hillcrest became even more sparse; thankfully, it only took a few short months before a comparable replacement debuted. Pizza Fusion franchise co-owner Barry Braden and his new partners Adam Hiner and Nick Brune of Eco Caters opened Local Habit, a restaurant that at first glance appears quite similar to its predecessor. While the menu still boasts pizzas, salads and sandwiches, a closer look reveals that Local Habit is in fact distinctively different.

The redesign of the space, which includes sky lights and an expanded bar made from recycled wood, came from the least likely of interior designers: Chef Nick Brune. Braden describes the space as having a more "rustic, comfortable, and inviting" atmosphere. With the help of Bottlehood, a local company that repurposes beer, wine and other types of bottles, light fixtures were made out of three-liter Arrogant Bastard bottles, and more varieties from Allagash Brewing Company.

Seated at the new bar, it's easy to see the craft beer offerings on the chalkboard have close to doubled at the new restaurant. Featuring ten direct-draw taps and a slightly longer bottle list, all craft beers are either local, or from California. On Fridays, Local Habit plans to put their beer engine to use for cask conditioned ales.

As for the menu, Local Habit takes the cue from its name, too. Some items note the local farm where the food came from, all part of Local Habit's plan to offer items that are seasonally available in San Diego. In addition to locally sourced produce, several menu



Local Habit Co-owner Barry Braden, right, cleaning glassware for the next beer order

items are made in house. Brune cures his own meats, bread is baked from scratch; Hiner makes the kombucha, root beer, and ginger ale. Braden is big on providing dietary information, and alternatives for those with restrictions. As with Pizza Fusion, Local Habit offers many vegan, vegetarian and glutenfree options.

All three founders are environmentalists, looking to reduce waste at their restaurant whenever possible. Unused bread made for sandwiches finds its way into the bread salad, and on grand opening weekend Brune was spotted repurposing Iron Fist Hired Hand Saison with Chocolate Mint and Peppercorns left in the cask from the day before, no longer fit to drink by the pint, but perfect for cooking.

So how did Braden, who is a vet-

eran of the tech industry, the previous co-owner of an Australian winery and currently the board chair of the Endangered Species Coalition, a Washington DC based group working to protect disappearing wild life and wild places, get involved in the restaurant industry? In 2008 he became a partner in Hillcrest's Pizza Fusion franchise, and realized the restaurant industry is in need of change. "Factory farming, pesticides, unhealthy additives and preservatives, Styrofoamjust about everything in the supply chain is bad for our health and the environment," Braden says. Don't expect anything of the like at Local Habit.

With time, Braden didn't feel Pizza Fusion was the ideal model change, and Local Habit was born. "The reality is a restaurant like Local Habit and the other great 'farm to table' places in San Diego have more of an impact and leave a smaller footprint than a large chain ever could."

As for the already solid craft beer selection at Local Habit, expect more in the near future. "I had never given much thought to beer choices until I came down to San Diego," Braden says. "I am still a relative beginner when it comes to beer, but there's no better place to learn than the present time in San Diego."

Aside from West Coaster, Jeff also writes for San Diego Beer Blog at sandiegobeerblog.com, and you can follow him on twitter @SDBeer



THE NAMELESS BEERMAID

Beer Geek in the Making

Our New Nameless Beermaid Signs On

In the up and coming, ever-rising, limitless, transient...well, let's be real here... In the hoppy, malty, bitter, smooth, sweet, oak-aged world of the craft beer industry, an army is forming: the Beer Geeks. However, life before discovering these minions was simple for a girl like me. I cared about Slurpees, Hot Cheetos, summer days, bedtimes (and how to avoid them), and riding my bike. I do remember the mysterious tours with my Pops as a kid, staring at these giant silvery things that made noise and smelled funny. Little did I know these machines would later be 98% of what I see on a day-to-day basis working for Alpine Beer Company. Looking back, I know that my Dad, as amazing as he is, would have completely disowned me had I not stepped up to the plate and shared his love for beer.

In my recent experience of becoming an industry member, I stumbled upon what are known as Beer Geeks. You know them. In fact, you may be one of them. The chances of this are very high. Sometimes they're alone, sometimes with others of the sort, writing things in small, often leather-bound notebooks that look like they were passed down several generations.



Beer geeks will easily recognize this view en-route to Alpine Beer Company

As a bartender, I see this often, and can't help but be curious as to what's written down. I commonly see Beer Geeks place "ratings" on a scale of 1-5, and sometimes resort to ol' fashioned smiley or sad faces instead. Or are they writing about how great of a bartender I am, or perhaps a poem about Aunt Gertrude's fluffy Pomeranian? These, my friends, are the scientists, and possible homebrewers, too. If in fact this last part is true, they're probably leaving the pub for their chemistry sets, complete with Einstein-like wigs and Zeppelin playing in the background. Beer Geeks never leave the bar without making a friend or two, because in addition to studying their own beers, they know how to spot their own. They're usually the most friendly and polite people in the bar, building their army. Slowly, one by one, they are taking over, and I'm ready to follow.

Now, don't get me wrong here. I may not sit at the bar with a notebook, I may not be a homebrewer, but I know a thing or 12 about some damn good beer, and humble about the fact that I'm very much a rookie. So, in turn, hats off to the Beer Geeks. There are days I work at the brewery and panic because I can't answer certain questions. I may not be a rocket scientist, or know why people don't turn their blinkers on, but I'm fairly happy knowing what I know about beer at this point in time. Two complete strangers can walk into a bar, yet leave with the knowledge of another person's life story because beer has brought them together. My love for craft beer sets me apart from many in my own age group, and gender. We ladies have to stick together in fighting the good ol' classic question I receive daily: "Do you like beer? Really? You don't look like you would!" When I'm standing behind the bar of one of the best breweries in the world? Confucius says, "Love thy bartender!" Okay, maybe he didn't really say that. Though if he did, I'm sure he would say it while drinking a West Coast style IPA, leather-bound beer notebook in hand.



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Meet the President

Continued from Page 1

continue to make homemade wine, Mendiola moved to San Diego with his family at the age of 12. In 1993, he purchased his first homebrewing equipment from Home Brew Mart and never looked back. After attending the Master Brewer's Program at UC Davis, Mendiola worked for two years as an assistant brewer at Rock Bottom in South Denver before coming to Rock Bottom La Jolla as Head Brewer in 1999. Winning six awards at the Great American Beer Festival, five at the World Beer Cup and numerous accolades from local and state fairs, Mendiola has found success in the San Diego Beer Community. He notes that most people are surprised to learn that Rock Bottom brewers are able to brew

their own recipes, and that every Rock Bottom only serves the beer produced at that particular location. Thus, part of Mendiola's duties as a Senior Brewmaster include traveling to oversee the brewers in Downtown San Diego, San Jose, Downtown Denver and the Chop-House Denver.

Brews in the News

Continued from Page 3

expected to raise at least \$50,000 for the Japanese Red Cross Society. The second collaboration, named Jason Fields & Kevin Sheppard / Troegs / Stone Cherry Chocolate Stout, was brewed from the winning recipe of this year's Stone March Madness Homebrew Competition.

I Fought the Law...

The state Senate approved legislation on July 14th that will relax regulations imposed on local brewery tasting rooms, and the bill has been sent to Governor Jerry Brown's desk. Currently, breweries are subject to the same strict health and safety codes that govern restaurants and food production facilities, while winery tasting rooms are exempt. Just last April, two local breweries were hit with cease & desist orders after unknowing failure to comply with demands from the San Diego Department of Environmental Health. Now, there is light at the end of the tunnel as Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher pushed AB 1014 through the Legistature, prompted by a conversation with Mike Hess of Hess Brewing. Do your part by writing your own letter of support to: Office of Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher, Attn: Nick Pappas, P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0075

DATE

Legislative Affairs Governor Edmund G. Brown State Capitol, Suite 1173 Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1014 (Fletcher) - Request for Signature

Dear Governor Brown,

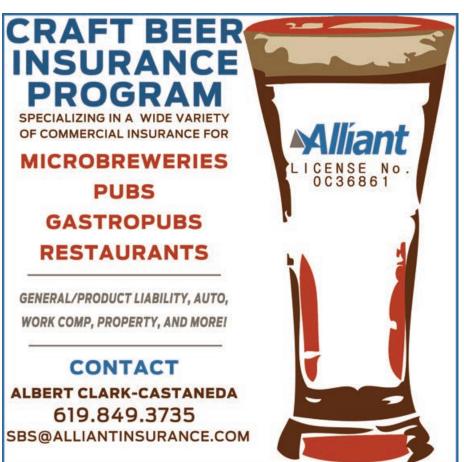
On behalf of California Craft Beer Drinkers, I write to express our strong support for your signature on Assembly Bill 1014, which would greatly improve the regulatory oversight of craft brewery tasting rooms.

I would appreciate this important effort from the legislature to align beer tasting safety regulations with those for wine tasting. Current law requires breweries to expend significant resources to be compliant with regulations written for restaurants and food preparation facilities, regulations that have no relation to the health and safety of customers in a tasting room. Assembly Bill 1014 aligns beer tasting regulations with those for wine tasting, improving customer safety while lowering costs for local breweries.

This bill will greatly help my local breweries and California's burgeoning microbrewery industry continue to provide great products, jobs, and tourism opportunities across the state. I, as a local consumer, strongly support these legislative efforts and urge a signature for Assembly Bill 1014.

Sincerely,

NAME







On The Trail of Belgian Ales

By Tom Nickel

ithout a doubt, San Diego's craft beer culture is flourishing. Over the past 10 years, breweries, pubs and beer-focused events have emerged with speed and force, pointing to a young, still developing scene. A lack of brewing tradition, compared to areas of the world like Belgium, makes our craft beer culture what it is: progressive, flavorful, and exciting.

Besides flavorful and exciting commonalities, Belgium is the opposite of San Diego in terms of its long-standing brewing culture. A land whose history is inextricably linked with brewing and drinking beer, on July 21st, Belgium celebrated its independence, and is considered young by European standards (1830). Despite its youth, much of the culture and customs have changed little over the years; take for instance Cantillon, one of the oldest traditional breweries in operation, which doubles as the Museum of Geuze for sour ale enthusiasts.



Beer is poured at the 33rd NHC while Tom Nickel, right. ground, orates his Belgian experiences

Belgium hosts a number of beer festivals each year. The biggest and most well known is the Zythos 24 Hour Beer Festival. Zythos is the country's beer consumer union, akin to Camra in Britain. The festival runs for two 12 hour days and features more than 160 beers, including some Trappist and Lambic beers. There are two very dangerous aspects to the Zythos festival, thoughvery few beers there are under 6% alcohol, and tasting glasses are about 9 ounces, filled to the top. There is a line at 15 cl, which is supposed to be the pour size (roughly 5-6 ounces), but somehow my glass always seemed to get a little more full than that.

The Zythos festival has traditionally been the first week of March for the last few years. However, the festival has a new home in Leuven with a much larger venue and it will now take place on the 28th and 29th of April in 2012. If you can only go to one Belgian beer festival, this is certainly the one not to miss. Coming up this fall is the Poperinge Beer and Hop Fest, September 16th-18th. This festival celebrates the hop harvest that happens once every 3 years. This year it coincides with a Beer, Bread and Cheese Festival, all the more reason to hop on a plane to Belgium.

Every December the town of Essen puts on a Christmas beer festival, or Kerst. This year's falls on December 17th and 18th and will showcase more than 150 Belgian Christmas ales. This is the one beer festival that I have not been to that I truly long to go to. I love Belgian Christmas beers and I can't imagine having 150 of them from which to choose.

Other noteworthy beer festivals happening in 2012 include the Alvinne Craft Beer Festival the first weekend in March. For the first time next year it will take place at the new Alvinne brewery, featuring an eclectic mix of some of the smaller, newer producers in Belgium. The festival in 2012 is the same weekend as the Nacht van de Grote Dorst.

The beautiful medieval city of Bruges hosts a beer festival on the first weekend of February. And though I have never been to this one, it comes highly recommended by Tommy van Outsel of Zythos. If you're invested in San Diego's brewing culture, a trip to Belgium offers a worldly comparison, and not to mention a good time.

Editor's note: Tom Nickel is the owner of O'Brien's Pub and former brewer at Oggi's Pizza and Pizza Port. Interested in going to any of the festivals? Well, a regular at O'Brien's named Bill Snider (aka "Belgian Bill") puts together fantastic "beercation" packages that feature the festivals mentioned above. Visit ciaotravel.com for more information.

NORTH PARK'S PREMIER CRAFT BEER BAR



We're one with the beer.



We're celebrating our first year of brewing.

First things first—thank you! Thanks to those of you in the craft brew community (you know who you are) who helped us get going and keep going. Thank you to everyone who came by to talk beer, drink beer and generally made us feel loved.

We invite you to join us for some rather special festivities

August 13, 12-6pm. 3 bands, great food, and lots of beer, including our

special 1st anniversary ale, Anno Unum. Mark your calendars now!



7955 Silverton Ave. #1201 • San Diego, CA Off Miramar Road hess brewing.com



To view more, or submit your own, visit westcoastersd.com/event-calendar

Manzanita Beer Dinner @ Sea Rocket Bistro

Thursday, August 11th 5PM - close Chef Chad White will be pairing 5 Manzanita beers with 5 one-night-only dishes at North Park's hip hang out. Pairings that include 6 oz. pours are available separately, or altogether for \$50 (12% savings). Courses include: Kaffir Lime Tofu Ceviche paired with Lazy Saison (\$10), Baja Grouper Balls paired with Riverwalk Blonde (\$12), Manzanita Wood Smoked Chicken Confit Ravioli paired with Rustic Horizon Red Ale (\$12), Santa Maria-Style BBQ Beef Tongue paired with Double IPA (\$12), and the Sea Rocket Beer Sundae paired with Gillespie Brown Ale (\$10). For more information, or to make online reservations, visit searocketbistro.com.

Hess Brewing 1st Anniversary Celebration: Anno Unum

Saturday, August 13th Noon - 6PM
The little nano-brewery that could is throwing a big bash to celebrate its 1st birthday, complete with three live bands, grub from Ranchwood Deli and The Gooch Truck, and a special tapping of Anniversary Ale. Although the style of the beer is still under wraps, our sources revealed

it's 9.2% ABV and somehow incorporates oak. Limited bottles of Anniversary Ale are available for purchase, as well as other varieties on a first-come, first-served basis.

Rare OAW cask @ Main Tap Tavern

Wednesday, August 17th 3PM - close
San Diego's South and East Counties don't
see too many Oceanside Ale Works' beers,
but when we do, they're epic. Main Tap Tavern
will be tapping a stainless steel firkin of OAW
Oaked Dude IPA. Dubbed simply as "Dude,"
this beer is loaded with hops and is surprisingly
refreshing at 9.4% ABV. This particular batch
was brewed in July 2010, prior to its oak
bourbon barrel for aging. Main Tap's been
waiting a year for this delicious concoction to
arrive, but thankfully you don't have to.

Stone Brewing Co. 15th Anniversary Celebration & Invitational Beer Festival

Friday, August 19th 6PM - 9PM
Saturday, August 20 11AM - 2PM
(Session A) and 3PM - 6PM (Session B)
Stone will celebrate their 15th Anniversary
beginning with a Brewers Reception on Friday,
August 19. The next day, two sessions of the
15th Anniversary Celebration will take place
from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., and 3 p.m.- 6 p.m. A
\$40 ticket gets you 10 tasters only and 100%
of the proceeds will benefit the Boys and Girls

Club of San Marcos, the Surfrider Foundation, the Palomar YMCA, and Fight ALD. In recent years, this has been one of the top festivals in the county. If you are interested in this event DO NOT HESITATE to buy your tickets now. At the time of press, the VIP All Access Pass & Rare Beer Selection tickets were sold out. For tickets and more info at stonebrew.com/anniv

Pizza Port OB Beer Dinner

Saturday, August 27th 5:30PM

Ever wanted to dine on the rooftop of OB's renowned brewpub? Well here's your chance! Local chef nomad Nate Soroko (of Toronado, Pizza Port OB & Carlsbad) and the Pizza Port OB crew have put together a fantastic beer dinner highlighting three local breweries. Courses and pairings include: Amuse-bouche of Port Salut on a baguette with black olives, fried sardines and a lemon-caper rosemary sauce, paired with Cava and Ballast Point Calico. First course of fried green tomatoes and grilled beets with citrus, paired with Pizza Port OB Hawaiian Hef. Second course of Pad Krapow with chinese eggplant and zucchini ribbons, paired with Pizza Port OB While The Wife's Away IPA. Third course (by guest chef Kyle Bergman) of grilled octopus, local shell beans and paprika tomato broth, paired with Alpine New Millenium. Fourth course of pan-seared, citrus-marinated Jidori chicken thigh (or a breaded mushrooms vegetarian option), rosemary and rye confit purple potato, and garlic haricot verts with a fried lemon garnish, paired with Alpine Nelson. For dessert, a raspberry and Nutella cake trifle,

paired with Ballast Point Sea Monster Stout. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased on pizzaport.com.

WEEKLY EVENTS

The work week is tough. Post 5PM, cool off with these weekly specials.

- •Mondays \$3 local pints @ Toronado & all Pizza Port locations. \$3 all pints @ Bar Eleven.
- •Tuesdays Local casks tapped @ The Tipsy Crow 7PM. Aug. 2nd: AleSmith IPA; Aug. 9th: Lightning Amber Ale ESB; Aug. 16th: Iron Fist Velvet Glove w/ vanilla beans, nutmeg and allspice; Aug. 23rd: Coronado Stupid Stout w/ chocolate, mint and vanilla beans; Aug. 30th: Ballast Point mystery cask with head brewer Yuseff Cherney.
- Wednesdays \$3 local pints @ Breakwater Brewing Co.
- •Thursdays THIRSTday @ all Pizza Port locations: select pints are \$3.
- Fridays Local casks tapped at noon @ Local Habit.
- •Monday Friday 2 for 1 local beers at Neighborhood Ale House from 4-7PM

*Does your bar/restaurant hold weekly craft beer events? Let us know by submitting your event @ westcoastersd. com/event-calendar



