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Beer Week Retrospect
An Interview with San Diego Brewers Guild Event Chair Neva Parker
By Ryan Lamb

Did you enjoy yourself at this year’s opening and closing San Diego Beer Week events? Meet Neva Parker, Chair of the Events Committee and Secretary for the San Diego Brewers Guild, Head of Laboratory Operations for White Labs, Susan G. Komen 3-Day for the Cure participant, wife and mother. In the wake of SDBW’s packed capitation events, West Coaster sat down with Parker to discuss the festival’s growth, and predictions for what’ll be on tap next year.

Let’s start by talking about Beer Week’s kickoff event — the Guild Fest at Liberty Station. How many attendees were there? The VIP session I know was sold out — that was over 200 tickets and then we sold about 2,300 for general admission. So, close to 3,000 and that’s not including the brewhery members, allied members, vendors, et cetera.

How many general admission tickets were sold at the door? I know that we sold about 1,400 pre-sale online, so a little less than 1,000.

How many people were you expecting? 2,100-2,500. Our conservative estimate was 2,100 and the hope was that we’d get at least 2,500.

Do you know what the numbers were last year? Last year I want to say we sold 1,500 tickets in total. We doubled the capacity this year.

Why wasn’t the VIP section marked off like in 2010? We decided as a committee that last year it didn’t really work out very well because there was confusion and once the general admission opened nobody really hung out in the VIP area anymore. So it just didn’t really seem to make sense to do it that way.

There have been a few industry members that have taken to social media to gripe that the Guild Fest used to be a smaller, more intimate event with brewers and industry members. So I guess the question there is — how do we grow the culture without watering it down?

It’s a fine line and it’s difficult to find that balance. I think what we’ve seen is that we want to grow as a Guild and we’re trying some different things to help us grow. This partnership [with FM 94/9] I think was a good thing but we may also have to figure it back to what it’s really gotta be about. It’s important to take all that feedback and try to figure out a way to grow but also maintain all the integrity of the what the Guild stands for. It certainly don’t want it to be thought of as another drunken fest. That’s not what it’s for.

What’s one of the biggest challenges when planning the event? It’s hard because we do it once a year, so how can we really figure out what’s right and what’s

Local Beer & Food Fans’ Cups Runneth Over
Two new restaurants significantly boost the county’s total number of taps
By Brandon Hernández

The beeriest county in the country just got 160 taps added to its already robust supply with the opening of two craft beer-focused restaurants. While similar in the most basic of senses — approachable, uncomplicated food geared toward families and singles — there are a number of differences. Geography is the most obvious; Slater’s 50/50 is located at Point Loma’s Liberty Station development while Sublime Ale House is the newest addition to Restaurant Row in San Marcos. Despite the distance separating them, both locations are just a stone’s throw from established beer venues with local history and big-time name recognition.

Slater’s 50/50 — a casual sports bar, burger joint and shrine to pork fat in all its culinary renderings — found a home at Liberty Station, right across the street from Stone Brewing World Bistro & Garden’s second location slated to open in spring 2012. Sublime’s built-in competition is Churchill’s Pub & Grille just down the street. The owners of both establishments did their research and knew their competition from the get-go; keeping with the rising tide of all-suds restaurants that’s prevalent in San Diego’s brewing industry, they’re excited rather than discouraged by the presence of such accomplished businesses surrounding them.

Sublime Ale House owner James Limjoco believes both operations can flourish in unison, because each offers a different atmosphere and experience. While Churchill’s is an archetypical So-Cal take on a British Pub offering bangers and mash, shepherd’s pie and curry dishes to go with their massive tap and bottle selection, Sublime is a modern, beer-centric pizzeria and comfort food emporium.
The Proof is in the Bread Pudding
Karl Strauss Executive Chef Gunther Emmlacher shares a pairing and bit of his past

By Brandon Hernandez

Nowadays, there’s a big buzz around local ingredients, preserving, distilling and sustainabiltiy. Few brewers are as enamored with these concepts as Karl Strauss executive chef Gunther Emmlacher. As a youth in Germany, Austria, his family owned a brewery and six restaurants which, naturally, served the local fare. It was his first memory of craft beer and the food that accompanied it. When he moved to San Diego, he set his sights on a more refined menu, surrounded by local restaurants and breweries. Emmlacher’s culinary journey began in San Diego, where he set up his very own restaurant on Fifth Avenue in the Gaslamp Quarter. At the time, there were few places that served the sort of food he had grown up with, and he was determined to make it happen.

Emmlacher’s restaurant, Emmlacher’s, was known for its craft beers and wine selection. He worked closely with local breweries and wineries to create unique dishes that complemented their offerings. Emmlacher’s was a hit among foodies and beer enthusiasts alike. In 2016, Emmlacher’s was named one of the best restaurants in San Diego by the San Diego Union-Tribune.

Emmlacher’s wasn’t just a restaurant, it was a community. He worked closely with local farmers and chefs to create dishes that showcased the best of the local produce. In 2018, Emmlacher’s was named one of the best restaurants in the world by the James Beard Foundation.

One of Emmlacher’s signature dishes was his popular bread pudding. The dessert was a perfect pairing for a cold winter day and brought together the richness of the bread and the sweetness of the custard. Emmlacher’s recipe for bread pudding is still a secret, but he has shared his recipe with us.

**Bread Pudding with Drunken Raisins and Caramel Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 loaf day-old bread
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup cognac
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup cornstarch

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Cut the bread into 1-inch cubes and place in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, vanilla extract, and cognac. Pour the mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 30 minutes.
4. In a saucepan, combine the sugar, water, and cornstarch. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick. Remove from heat and let cool.
5. Add the heavy cream and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
6. Pour the hot cream mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 1 hour.
7. Bake the bread pudding in a preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes, or until golden brown.
8. Serve warm with the caramel sauce on top.

**Caramel Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup heavy cream

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Add the heavy cream and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
3. Serve warm with the bread pudding.

Emmlacher’s bread pudding is a perfect pairing for a cold winter day, and his signature caramel sauce is the perfect complement.

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**PLATES & PINTS**

**December, which features a charcuterie plate.** "I love beer like two Tortugas. They just have so many nuances of flavor—the roasted, nutty and fruity notes with Belgian yeast flavor. There’s just so much you can do with a beer like that," says Emmlacher. In celebration of the holidays, he’s decided to marry the dried fruit and spice characteristics of the beer with an apricot and fig bread pudding, garnished with a boozy black mission fig sauce and miso caramel. In Two Tortugas, the recipe for that rich, luscious sauce is included below. Consider this a holiday gift that comes straight from the heart—and kitchen—at Karl Strauss.

Recipe courtesy of Karl Strauss Brewing Co.

**Caramel Sauce**
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp water
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup cognac

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Add the heavy cream and vanilla extract and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
3. Serve warm with the bread pudding.

---

**Drunken Raisins and Caramel Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 4 cups raisins
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp cornstarch
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup brandy

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the raisins, brandy, sugar, cornstarch, and water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Serve warm with the bread pudding.

---

**Bread Pudding**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 loaf day-old bread
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup cognac
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup heavy cream

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Cut the bread into 1-inch cubes and place in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, vanilla extract, and cognac. Pour the mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 30 minutes.
4. In a saucepan, combine the sugar, water, and cornstarch. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick. Remove from heat and let cool.
5. Add the heavy cream and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
6. Pour the hot cream mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 1 hour.
7. Bake the bread pudding in a preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes, or until golden brown.
8. Serve warm with the caramel sauce on top.

---

**Emmlacher’s Bread Pudding**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 loaf day-old bread
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup cognac
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup heavy cream

**Instructions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Cut the bread into 1-inch cubes and place in a large bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, vanilla extract, and cognac. Pour the mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 30 minutes.
4. In a saucepan, combine the sugar, water, and cornstarch. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick. Remove from heat and let cool.
5. Add the heavy cream and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
6. Pour the hot cream mixture over the bread cubes and let sit for 1 hour.
7. Bake the bread pudding in a preheated 350°F oven for 45 minutes, or until golden brown.
8. Serve warm with the caramel sauce on top.

---

**Emmlacher’s Caramel Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp water
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/4 cup vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup brandy

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Add the heavy cream and vanilla extract and stir until the mixture is smooth and thick.
3. Serve warm with the bread pudding.

---

**Emmlacher’s Drunken Raisins**

**Ingredients:**
- 4 cups raisins
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp cornstarch
- 1/4 cup water

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the raisins, brandy, sugar, cornstarch, and water. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Serve warm with the bread pudding.

---

**Emmlacher’s Black Mission Fig Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- 1/4 cup black mission figs
- 1/2 cup brandy
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch

**Instructions:**
1. In a saucepan, combine the black mission figs, brandy, sugar, and cornstarch. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture is smooth and thick.
2. Serve warm with the bread pudding.
Rye has been a staple grain for millennia—sought after for its stubborn resilience in the field and revered for its unique flavor. Ruthless Rye IPA is brewed with this rustic grain for refined flavors—combining the peppery spice of rye and the bright citrusy flavors of whole-cone hops to create a complex ale for the tumultuous transition to Spring.

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Brews in the News
News and highlights from San Diego's craft beer community

SAN DIEGO BEER WEEK, TAKE 3
The biggest news from November was the return of San Diego Beer Week, which officially kicked off with the Brews Guild Festival on Friday, November 5th. But it was the night before the big event that set the tone for the week: big celebration of brewers, specifically, the launch party for the official book of San Diego craft beer! The San Diego Beer Week 2010 was coordinated by Chef's Press, the book's publisher, and Tap Hunter. Fans packed into the vast Mission Brewery to plug the new food and craft-beer fest, reinvigorating brewers featured in the book. Melani Gordon of Tap Hunter said that she wondered if Lost Abbey's Frank Mikkelsen might say something like, "This is maybe the last time this small group of brewers will be able to gather as an entity as this." And he was right—with all the hectic schedule of these brewers here, the San Diego beer trend was truly something special.

The next night, another unique event took place at Sea Rocket Bistro. Assembly, a very beer-geeky ping-pong tourney dozen or so by Chef Chad White, Local Foodie,(packet), the most beer-soaked of brewers and San Diego Beer Bistro's famous brewmaster, Brian "Loaf" Lamond, along with a team of San Diego brewmasters of the South County area, represented the brewers for a second time, and went on to win the championship. The winning team kept a can of Great Western Flash 9th Anniversary IPA, the perfect pickup for chicken mole plates dished up by the Hamilton's team. West Coast can hardly wait for the 40th Nigrafest next year.

Post-Bier Week, we asked readers on our website what they thought—or didn’t about the ten-day extravaganza. Out of almost Brian Schmidt, no sugar for women visiting San Diego 24 hours and not disapproving. "I'm sure if I had another beer, I'd be more in favor of this event," said one.

SOUTHWESTERN CRUSHED
Jean Newcomer, an employee of Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant in Wilmington, Delaware, along with her husband, partner in the business, and co-founder of Iron Hill Brewery Co. to be the 50th brewery they’ve ever visited. The tour arrived on November 13th to a surprise welcome from Brewmaster Matt Schell who led them on a private tour of the brewery facility in addition to a guided tasting and special lunch in the gardens. Newcomer and Woeller also indulged in Stone 2010 Old Guardian Barley Wine Style Ale Aged in Bourbon Barrels, which is Bürg- tringly part of the Quagmire Malt series.

ELEVEN IN 2011—In January 2011, West Coaster selected 11 craft beer-related businesses or events that we predicted would make an impact on the year coming—in addition to what we put on our annual list of 111 craft beer-related businesses or events.

MORE BAR IN MIKASA—Who doesn’t like more bars? Hub AcSmith and the Biscuit is renowned for its beer and wine selection, and is a great place to grab a bite to eat. They have a variety of beers on tap, including some from local breweries, and a selection of wines by the glass. The atmosphere is relaxed and inviting, with comfortable seating and friendly staff. They also have an extensive menu of small plates and sandwiches, making it a perfect spot for a quick bite before or after enjoying a drink.

PRODUCE IN THE NEWS
Production in their first quarter of business, the third quarter of 2016, yielded fourteen barrels—the same amount that it made in three years during this period. In order to reach the goal of having more than 30 barrels of beer in production, they are developing a "tapping takeover" at Bottlecraft and brewmaster's dinner at Local Habib and the Hotel. Look for more barrel-aged beers (bourbon barrel-aged Exit 70. Rye Imperial Stout is in the works for March), a new brewing facility (relocated to be in North Park by mid-year) in addition to the current Miramar space, and the possibility of a tasting room in the future. Family-owned Java Flat Iron Brewing Co. in Vista is looking to hit their stride with production in 2012, with 3000 barrels/year the target. To help facilitate this, 36 barrel-configurable fermenters and a new bright tank is joining the ranks, which means more beer for the East Coast is on the horizon. Also look for more barrel-aged beers and a 5% ABV breakfast stout made with cold-pressed coffee. We; too; are still wondering where in Europe Stone Brewing Co. will touch down as the first American craft beer in Alesbury. However, there's less mystery surrounding their new Liberty Station, the 20,000 sq., 8,000 barrel-eryservant slated to open in late spring 2012.

SEVEN hours Lee Cho and his brewery, Boulevard Brewing Co., had a goal for 2011: create six different beers using coffee. So far, Cho has completed five rounds of darkly-buzzing beer, with his sixth on the way this December. More news on the horizon for the Edwardian: they've added the possibility of a barrel room and brewpub from within Blind Lady Ale House to his newest project, TigerTiger (a barrel room in trading). Given his record, we predict Cho will have plenty of tricks up his sleeve come 2012, his third year of brewing at Boulevard.

PASTA AND ORANGE NEWS—For 2011, look for more expansion in 2012 by adding more taps at the Scripps Ranch facility. Like a fighter that’s marched up in weight class, the brewery will compete for the title of Champion Mid-South Brewing Company at the 2012 World Beer Cup, hosted on our home turf this year. No doubt, it will be a big challenge for the small brewery category. Also, look for Long's Lager to come on six-packs in 2012. San Diego Ale Brewing Co. will be released nationally, and SBC's first brewpub, Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, Old Town, will be open for business.

AND IN PIZZA PORT NEWS—Pizza Port North Coast is looking at a potential 2013 opening at the site of the former Fosters Ale House. The brewery will feature a 1200 square-foot taproom and 40 taps. The pizza is expected to be made in-house, and the beer will be brewed on-site. The new location will allow the brewery to expand its production facilities, and it will also provide a new venue for the community to enjoy craft beer and pizza. Pizza Port North Coast is planning to open in the spring of 2013.
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Growing Pains
Examining where the beer scene’s headed and ways to improve it

By Jeff Hammert

It’s no secret that craft beer is becoming big business in San Diego. Our local beer industry has grown considerably over the last year and it doesn’t show any signs of slowing. Breweries and beer-focused pubs continue popping up all over the county, and San Diego’s 3rd annual Beer Week grew exponentially this year from 2010, and certainly from its debut in 2009. The surge in interest and support is undeniable — but from a national standpoint, craft beer still has a long way to go before it could possibly dominate the market. In 2010, craft beer sales comprised just 7.6% of total beer sales according to the Brewers Association; however, the promising news is that sales were up 12%, with the remaining industry members trending downward.

From the perspective of San Diego Beer Week’s booming growth in 2011, we saw that local media support goes a long way. Industry members from breweries to journalists made appearances on local television and radio in a publicity blitz aimed to dispel the notion of a city not fit to enjoy and enjoy the 10-day celebration. Thousands of people — possibly hundreds of thousands — were (if nothing else) reminded that many have tasty alternatives brewed right here in town. FM 94/9, known for supporting craft beer with its weekly program Rock & Roll Happy Hour, was chosen in the main media sponsor for Brews Guild opening and closing events. And despite the spreading the good word, the stations brought in notable musical acts like Matthew Sweet for the Guild Festival’s live entertainment

Given the considerable leap in media flux from the past two years, it’s no wonder more people showed up ready to party in the name of our city’s craft (for exact numbers and comparisons to last year, check out the interview with Brewers Guild event chairman Necia Parker on page 1). While most would agree this is a good thing, there were some fundamental issues within the beer community that detract from the experience: the opening and closing events more like drunk-fests — a far cry from the once intimate get-togethers that celebrated beers and offered a chance to learn more about what goes into their craft.

For next year, organization and education are two elements I’d like to see re-emphasized. In the case of the Guild Festival — SDPW’s flagship event — all of the breweries and allied pub members were placed in a tight horseshoe-shaped space on one side of the field, while the other half was reserved for music stages and other beer-related Industry-related booths, including local media. This created a pocket effect on the food and beer side and less utilized space on the other. For next year, spreading booth participants out would allow potayers more room to meet, mingle and educate drinkers, returning to the spirit of past festivals.

A simple map with the locations of all the different breweries in relation to one another would’ve been helpful — like the ones provided for attendees at this past June’s National Homebrewers Conference. On several occasions I was at the back of a long line and couldn’t see which Brewery was pouring straight ahead; more clearly placed tent signage with the names of breweries would also help. Another missing element were more readily available sources of water throughout the venue, and drop boxes for unconnected beer. This was likely the effect of an overload crowd versus the 70-something plus breweries in attendance and their limited resources.
A New Year, with More Beer

The grandest event hitting our shores in 2012 is the Craft Brews Conference & BrewExpo America, culminating with the ninth edition of the World Beer Cup. Known as “the Olympics of beer,” craft brews from around the world will submit their entries in hopes of earning global bragging rights come May 5th. The call for entries closes December 6th, so get on it, San Diego brewers. For a complete preview of the McKay Business event, look forward to our April issue that also commemorates Earth Day. In that issue we’ll be exploring how such a grand scale event impacts our city from an environmental standpoint.

Closer on the calendar, we’re not printing a January issue (we need a vacation) but don’t worry—we’ll be back in February with our anticipated “12 in 12” feature, where we predict twelve businesses slated to make a big impact on San Diego’s craft beer scene. Last year we printed the 11 in 11 in January (check out where our pub stand a year later on page 4), but this year we’ll have the added breadth of seeing who kicked off 2012 with a bang. Do you have suggestions for who to watch over the coming year? Or maybe you have a lady in mind for our next Ladies of Local Beer issue, out this March. Either way, e-mail ryan@westcoastered.com with your ideas.

Continuing with our “five-question” interview web series that features a local craft beer industry member each week, “The Friday Five” is open for your content ideas. Are you, or someone you know, a local craft beer industry member? E-mail ryan@westcoastered.com for consideration. This series of posts is a favorite of ours; we get to share the lesser-known facets of the industry and provide website content you won’t find anywhere else. While you’re on the site, also make sure to check out our event calendar. Submissions are free and we’re constantly updating it with the best, thanks to you.

As we close out yet another year in beer, it’s time to set some New Year’s resolutions. Not surprisingly, mine are mostly beer-related; I resolve to be a better reporter, to learn from my mistakes (contrary to what I’ve been believing in last month’s “SD Beer History” article, Karl Strauss began in the 90s, not in my year of birth), two years prior, and to increase my knowledge of everything related to the production, distribution, and sale of craft beer. What do you resolve? If I could make a humble suggestion, it’d be to attend more beer education events. Beer is good, yes, but it’s better when you know why.

Suhul.

West Coaster, The Publication

FOUNDBERS
Ryan Lamb & Mike Shess

PUBLISHER
Mike Shess
mike@westcoastered.com

ART DIRECTOR
Brittany Everett
brittany@westcoastered.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Ryan Lamb
ryan@westcoastered.com

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Kristina Hamamoto
kristina@westcoastered.com

STAFF WRITERS
Sam Tienor sam@westcoastered.com
Jeff Hammett jeff@westcoastered.com
Brandon Hernández brandon@westcoastered.com

COPY EDITOR
Amy T. Grande amy@westcoastered.com

MEDIA CONSULTANT
Tom Shess

MEDIANMR TO STUDENT INTERNS
Nickie Pello

West Coaster, The Website
westcoastered.com

WEB MANAGER
Mike Shess
mike@westcoastered.com

WEB EDITOR
Ryan Lamb
ryan@westcoastered.com

WEBMASTER
Josh Everett
Fresh Cut

WEB CONTRIBUTORS
Ryan Resch
Brandon Hernández

West Coaster is published monthly by West Coaster Publishing Co. and distributed free at key locations throughout Greater San Diego. For complete distribution info—westcoastered.com/distrib. Email us if you would like to be a distribution location.

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"My beer was entered in the midst of this production."
Out of the Way. But Worth the Drive

By Tom Basinski

Driving out where you’re driving from, The Brew House at Eastlake in the South Bay can seem like a road trip. But once you’re settled in with a sampler of their hand-crafted brews before you, whatever the distance traveled, it’s worth it.

Before The Brew House owners Don Chace and Jim Shirley opened in late 2007, they envisioned a restaurant with a menu that would appeal to sophisticated palates along with sure to please everyone right on down to burger and fry lovers. Their vision came true.

Both Chace and Shirley were homebrewers for 12 years and knew their beer was good enough to get on the market. What to do next? The Eastlake community in Chula Vista was one of the fastest growing in the county. Although the brewery-restaurant is in the Eastlake Design District, Shirley and Chace found an ideal space with ample parking — and an opportunity to get started.

This was too much to do with the Chula Vista Planning Department to satisfy a multitude of zoning regulations. The planning rep asked Chace how he was going to be environmentally conscious. Properly for an answer, Chace said that his beer would be in kgs and vats. He explained that tons of the bottles of beer would not be sent to landfills. Of the few bottles beer the brewery handles, those bottles are recycled appropriately.

Chace is the primary brewmaster with Shirley handling most of the administrative duties. In addition to his years as a home brewer, Chace completed an intensive study of fermentation science at the University of California Davis to fine-tune his brewing skills. He succeeded.

The brewery begins at an off-site location in western Chula Vista and ends at The Brew House itself, with its planting of stainless steel vats that produce about 1,500 barrels each year. The Brew House’s seven original beers reflect all things Chula Vista and San Diego. Read their descriptions below.

The “Liberty Layer” is Chace’s version of a Czech-style summer season with Pilsner and American pale malts. The “Bonita Blonde” refers to the lidl area just north west of where the Brew House is located and is a lighter golden ale. Chace calls it an “American interpretation of a Kolsch style beer: ”

America’s Finest Amber” pays homage to San Diego’s city slogan, and features corn and carapils malts with challenger hops. San Diego Bay’s landmark inspired the “Star of India IPA” which has a generous hop character. The “Rolling Hills Irish Red” refers to the Rolling Hills area of Eastlake where The Brew House is located. This style of ale was originally brewed by Irish monks. Another offering is the “Wolf Canyon Wheat” that acknowledges a small canyon in eastern Chula Vista. This beer’s marked by its dry, crisp finish. Otay Lakes is the name of the Olympic Training Center and a popular fishing site in eastern Chula Vista. “Otay Lakes Oatmeal Stout” provides an excellent choice that will please lovers of stouts and beers served on nitro.

Come check the place out — among the obvious (beer), amenities include a heated outdoor patio, a mix of live music and DJs, and you can catch a Pay-Per-View event on multiple big screen televisions without a cover charge.

Homebrew Insight

How far can you push your yeast?

By Matt Steiger

Yeast is arguably the most important element of beer. Virtually any sugar is fermentable, and there are myriad beneficial agents. But there is no substitute for the magical creature that turns sugar into alcohol.

It’s no surprise then that yeast is an expensive. Hops and grains for a 5-gallon batch cost about $35, and a packet of liquid yeast averages $8. The real crime is you usually need more than one!

To beat the system, some homebrewers (including this one) have started yeast harvesting. Yeast can be washed after fermentation, or collected from the bloom off tab, and pitched into a new batch, or a yeast that has been through a brew just a generation with preproagation, creates the possibility of reusing. So the real question of washing isn’t how, but if, and when. How many generations of yeast can you reuse as homebrewers ask, “What do the pros do?”

Ballast Point Lead Brewer James Murray relies on strict quality control. “We try to shoot for yeast that is a minimum of 90% viable and has a cell count close to 1 billion cells/ml. We can generally get close to 15 generations per strain of yeast.” This method clearly works for BP, but doesn’t offer much practical advice to the homebrewer.

Smaller operations like Hops Brewing rely on knowing the patterns and behavior of their yeast. CBO Mike Hess said, “I reseal until the fermentation characteristics start to deteriorate; a day longer to start or a few missed points of attenuation. Usually the biggest limit for me is storage time. More than 2 weeks and I start getting the skunks.

How does have advice for champagne homebrewers. “Don’t use old yeast. If you’re worried about your yeast, you should be. Buy a new yeast or source a new, viable pitch.” He even offers a solution himself. “If homebrewers want yeast, we’re happy to share from the bottom of our caves. Just come on by with a clean, sanitized container on yeast dumping day; contact me directly for times.”

Thanks, Mike Hess, I’ll be sure to get down there before this story goes to press.
San Diego Beer Week Loses its Training Wheels
By Melani Gordon

Now that we’re back to our regularly scheduled programming post San Diego Beer Week, we’ve had some time to reflect on how the city of San Diego and other local organizations can become more involved. Next year’s SD Beer Week will enter its fourth year, and the training wheels have officially fallen off. But how do we grow from here? We try to learn from others — of course.

Thinking back to Denver Beer Fest (their name for Beer Week), which is intentionally scheduled around the Great American Beer Festival, we saw a similarity to the annual San Diego Brewers Guild Festival coinciding with San Diego Beer Week. However, we saw one glaring difference: Denver Beer Week and GABF are heavily supported by the Denver Visitors Bureau. During our 2011 GABF visit we witnessed first hand how their tightly run ship attracted multitudinous media that showed off what Denver is all about: supporting their craft beer scene whether it be large or small, old or new.

As part of our exploration we followed up with Deborah Park, Associate Director of Communications at VISIT DENVER, The Convention & Visitors Bureau. She commented on why Denver Beer Fest is purposefully scheduled around GABF: “VISIT DENVER loves to have the opportunity to showcase Denver and Colorado brewers/breweries while there are beer enthusiasts from around the world in town,” she says. “It’s also a great way to get the community involved in the festivities, outside of the convention center since tickets are becoming harder to get for GABF.”

On the organized media bus tours VISIT DENVER organizes she said, “We like to give a taste of the overall beer/brewery operations in town. We like to make sure the media gets to see some spots that they may not have seen in previous years.”

San Diego Beer Week may never grow to have the tourism pull that GABF boasts (or could it?), but we can draw from a lot of what Denver is executing. With the visitors bureau playing a very active role in hosting media Denver generally comes off shining brightly. What San Diego organizations should be taking a bigger role in promoting OUR city as a beer destination?

“We’re getting successful enough that we need to start OVER planning,” said Cybe Chandler, HalfBall Point Brewing Company Specialty Brewer and lead planner of the SD Guild Fest at the first 6 years at the World Beer Center. “Let’s help the brewers start planning earlier and share the stats that others are having in terms of increased revenue during this time. We’re looking forward to hearing more from breweries and bars on how Beer Week was successful for them.

Another touch that made a visitor’s trip to Denver great was the bike sharing program, which runs almost eight months out of the year. There are more than 500 shiny red bikes and 50 stations set up around the downtown and surrounding areas. Very smart. The bikes were perfect for quick trips between the convention center and the other hotspots like Falling Rock. We know one local media publisher had a fantastic time cruising around the city on his rental one day. These bikes are just another added touch we could see complementing the San Diego craft beer scene. What visitor wouldn’t love to grab a bike downtown and head up to North Park to cruise 30th Street? Denver’s bike program is run by an outside corporation not affiliated with the visitors bureau, you can find more information here: http://denver.bikeshare.com/

Hey, we’re just here to make suggestions and hopefully this piece gets into the hands of local associations and corporations alike. The San Diego Craft Brewing industry is here to stay and we hope 2012 plays a larger role in driving tourism and supporting these small businesses throughout the county.

Full disclosure, we are members of the SDBW planning committee. Our inboxes are open for suggestions and improvements.
Two Times the Beer

Beer-heavy restaurant / Bottleshop
Knob Weeds Culinary, Del Cerro
With 32 formidable taps, a popular happy hour with excellent tacos, and an outdoor patio, Knob Weeds offers the Del Cerro market. Stop in for an intimate pairing dinner, grab some bottles to drink on-site or at home, or simply wander through the shrine to alcohol that is Knob. You may even find an employee using a library-like ladder to procure bottles stacked right up to the building’s high ceilings.

Iconic brewpub / Bottleshop
Pizza Port Carlsbad, Carlsbad
After sweeping the awards ceremony at GABF, a visit to Pizza Port Carlsbad is never a bad idea for the discerning beer drinker. Added bonus! Right next door you’ll find a bottle shop overflowing with 600+ selections. If you want the best of both worlds, eat one of their renowned pizzas, wash it down with some straight beer, and then take some bottled local rarities home with you.

Brewery tasting bar / Homebrew supplies
Home Brew Mart, Linda Vista
Many of San Diego’s top brewers have either worked at Home Brew Mart, or learned to brew from its expert staff that’s coming up on its 25 year anniversary in 2012. Balboa Point Brewing Company started producing beer in the space behind the retail store in 1996, and now visitors can enjoy tastings, including rarities from Specialty Brewer Colby Chandler, directly from the barrel. All this, while shopping for supplies and taking notes from the experts.

Upscale market / Tasting room
Oliver Tree Marketpace, Del Mar
In the market, whole chickens playfully named “bachelor birds” are ready to take to go — a hit with locals. But it’s the great beer selection that keeps us coming back. On the southern side of the space, massive wooden doors separate grocery shoppers from the date-worthy tasting room that fills up quickly on weekend evenings. Constantly changing flights are carefully geared toward every level of beer drinker.

Brewery tasting bar / Homebrew supplies
Mother Earth Brew Co., Vista
If you want to try some beer while doing a bit of shopping under one roof, you may have to hurry. Mother Earth will soon be moving their supplies a few suites down in order to make space for a new merchandise room and some massive pews from a Jewish synagogue for tasting room seating, procured by brewery consultant, Lee Chase of Blind Lady. Don’t fret, homebrewers — they’re working on a license to serve beer at the new supply shop, too.

Bottleshop / Tasting room
Bottleswift, Little Italy
Bottleswift is a unique venue to purchase rare bottles and then imbibe on-site, and their great selection and rare animals are constantly updated on Facebook. The tasting rooms, complete with beer half-style tables and window seating, specializes in flights that change themes daily; for example, Tuesday night is Mystery Flight Night, with this display bottles in brown bags so the goods stay secret before hitting the tasting bowls.
Two Times the Novelty

Arcade games / Pizza parlor
La Bella Taste & Games, Chula Vista
The sprawling facility housing La Bella Pizza Garden and the attached Caffe & Games section will make you feel at home no matter where you’re from. Wonder through dozens of arcade games so advanced you’ll wish more of them were around when you were a kid; you can also rent an XBOX 360 game for $7 an hour, or half that for half the time. La Bella’s also got good prices on pitchers, especially on select weekdays, and owner Tony Raso is currently experimenting with pizza dough that incorporates local beer. This spot is great for families and beer drinkers looking for an escape from the room.

Rock music / Board games
Bar Eleven, Normal Heights
Bar Eleven hosts a special place in West Coaster’s heart. It’s where we used to fish for insider info from former SDEG Presi-
Brew Hop Beer Tours

Treat yourself to the ultimate brewery tour offered in San Diego. With a fleet of luxury vehicles that includes SUVS, stretch limousines and party buses, the size of your group determines the size of your ride. Best of all, every Brew Hop vehicle is permitted so that you can enjoy adult beverages on the road from one brewery to the next. Brew Hop is ready to deliver you and your friends to the world’s best breweries in style.

Much more than a tasty treat, Brew Hop offers two tour packages: The Beer Connoisseur tour is a 5-hour party experience that visits 3-4 breweries with tastings at each. The Brew Masters tour is a 2.5-hour visit to 1-2 breweries, including tastings. Each tour group is led by a tour host, and at each brewery there’s a private tour of the facility, a chance to meet the brewery staff or to ask questions about your favorite beers, and, of course, tastings! New in 2013, Brew Hop will be adding 10 new San Diego breweries to their already killing tour lineup.

Brew Hop was founded in San Diego and also operates in Seattle, with future sights set on Portland, Oregon. If you’re looking for the best, look no further; as of November 2011, they maintain a 5-star average on Yelp.com and TripAdvisor.com.

Members West Coast and receive 10% off your next booking! Beer must be booked by 12/31/11, some restrictions apply. Contact Summer for a custom-ized party proposal and visit BrewHop.com for more information.

King of Happy Hour's New Year's Eve Hop Fest

Need a gift for someone who loves craft beer? Well now you can stop looking, because San Diego's New Year's Eve Hop Fest for beer lovers, the Hop Fest, is an annual event hosted under the sun and stars in the beautiful Terramar Garden at the recently renovated Holiday Hotel & Resort in Mission Valley, there’s the day and evening sessions on Saturday, December 31st, and a beer brunch to celebrate New Year’s Day.

The Hop Fest is the perfect New Year’s Eve event. No club, no lines for beer or the bathroom, no expensive hotel rooms, and most importantly, no crappy beer. Good beer! It’s getting better. The Hop Fest has more than $100 worth of beer for only $50 for either session, and brunch the following day is $40. If you don’t want to wait for a cab to show up on the busiest night of the year, no problem! Limousines are available for guests at the exclusive rate of $89.

Want to celebrate the entire weekend? The all-inclusive Happy Package is available for less than $200 and includes:
- 2 Tickets to the New Year's Hop Fest with unlimited beer tastings (day session 3pm-6pm or evening session 8pm-11pm) plus live entertainment. The Adam Lasher Band will perform during the evening session. Day session entertainment TBD. • 2 Tickets to the New Year's Day Beer Brunch (11am-1pm, tax & gratuity included) • 1 Standard Room on New Year's Eve (rates include) • 1 Overnight Parking Voucher

Prices go up after Christmas, so get your tickets now. www.NewYearHopFest.com

Local Habit

With a chef uprooted from Louisiana, it’s no surprise that Local Habit's cuisine is a tad more flavorful than other organically-themed restaurants. Traditional California favorites are improved upon with additions pulled from the famously flavorful cooking of the South, and the result is what Local Habit likes to call "Cali-Creole" cuisine.

Executive Chef Nick Brune was raised among the spicy culture of Baton Rouge. His first experience with food involved fishing and hunting for evening meals of fried whole broom, spiced trout, and duck and turkey gumbas, all prepared by his self-taught, Southern family. Brune is constantly whipping up an array of whatever is current in season and available locally. He continues to develop his Cali-Creole cuisine and makes this newly style the focal point of the restaurant's fare. Once you have your first taste of Local Habit, you will realize that it’s much more than your ordinary organic and sustainable eats. From the strictest of vagans to comfort food lovers alike, Local Habit stands out as a dining option that serves all tastes and preferences. Everyone will appreciate Local Habit's efforts to prepare and present home-made and local offerings, from root beer to creative dishes such as Rosemary Smoked Pork Loin & Peppercorn pasta or Roasted Garlic and Tahini Chicken Sausage with Smoked Paprika Oil. Beer enthusiasts will delight in Local Habit’s rotating selection of California craft beers. Each top pours forth a fine craft beer, and as the wall mars dry, Local Habit quickly puts to work replacing it with a new variety to entice an entirely new range of tastemakers. Thursday evening turns the jack a notch further with Local Habit’s Cask Nights, offering special beers that invite you to bring in a few close friends and linger all night long.

CHEFS PRESS San Diego's Top Breweries

- Top Brewers is the most comprehensive look at the county’s craft beer scene ever published. — Peter Rowe, San Diego Union Tribune
- BarCharts, & Brewpubs featured: Blind Lady Ale House, Downtown Johnny Brenda’s, Hamilton’s Tavern, Lure Wine, O’Briens Pub.
- Other members of the San Diego beer community featured: Chicks for Beer Kit the High Dive, Doggie Bone Bone, Home Brew Mart, PubCakes, QUAFF Homebrewers Association, TopHatter.com, West Coast, White Labs. Here’s a taste of some of the recipes your food lovers will love: Black Garlic Fondue (Sutherland Erhardt/Karl Strauss Brewing Company), Herb-and-Hops-Crusted Artichoke (Giberto Umberto-Guadagnoli), Stevia’s BBQ Smoke Texas (Alex Carbajal/Stone World Bistro & Garden), Thunderdevil’s German Mustard (Kyle Bergman/The Grill at the Lodge at Torrey Pines), Cap O’Helmet Cupcakes (Jody Michaels/PubCakes), and Rustic Horror Beer Must (Rob The Marine Room).
- San Diego’s Tap Brewers also includes: Tailoring notes from all the brewers. Links to video tastings with all the brewers. Beer pairings with each recipe. Pages of essential resources for any craft beer fan or homebrewer. Published by Chefs Press, Inc., full color, 206 pages, $24.95. www.quaff- homebrewers.com/; www.taphatter.com
Scavenger Beer Tours

Looking to try a different kind of brewery tour? Scavengers offers unique tours starting at $19 per person. Ideal for groups of 2-10 people, Scavenger offers guided tours to over 100 breweries in San Diego, with two separate tours in the city of San Diego. Each tour includes a warm-up with a variety of beers, medal winning, and IPAs, and a private tour of the brewery. This 4-hour tour includes a six-course meal, which is perfect for those who love beer and fear the usual "beers and burgers" tour. Gather your friends, and book your tour today! Contact us directly at 619-551-0568 or visit our website at ScavengerBeerTours.com for more information.

Bottlecraft

The first of its kind in San Diego, Bottlecraft is a beer bar, shop, tasting room, pop-up art gallery, and event space located in Little Italy. A formidable bottle shop with great prices, their selection is eclectic and constantly evolving with a good mix of local favorites and picks from around the world. Aside from beer, the shop has a great selection of t-shirts, glasses, books, and more. What makes Bottlecraft unique is the ability to drink the beer you just purchased in its spacious tasting room. This makes for a great location to bring friends. Spontaneous bottlesharing happens frequently among customers. Bottlecrafts Flights are all available and often follow a theme. Some of these have included: "Sea, Salt, and Sun in San Diego," "It's a Beer Thang," and "A World of Beers." Bottlecraft is the perfect place to grab a beer and enjoy the atmosphere of the little city.

BeerNerdz Tasting Challenges

A fun way to get involved in San Diego's craft beer scene is to participate in a BeerNerdz tasting challenge. Equipped with a scorecard that includes tasting notes, alcohol percentage, brewery, and beer names, the goal is to match each beer tasted with its description. San Diego breweries will always be showcased, and you are invited to compete against one another in a friendly atmosphere to see who can name the most correctly. The blind tasting allows the beer to be tasted and experimented with a variety of styles San Diego breweries are known for. Exposure to multiple breweries and styles is a great way to experience first hand why San Diego is a leader in the craft beer front. It's also a fun way to introduce a favorite among varieties of beers, in all non-intimidating, social setting. The seasoned beer connoisseur can test his or her skills in the blind tasting format, too, which helps develop a deeper appreciation for the intricacies found in certain styles. Experience the subtle flavors, nuances and characteristics each style and brewery has to offer among other beer enthusiasts that share your passion. Participation in events includes a scorecard, souvenir tasting glass, apple schnapps, bottle opener, T-shirts, and occasional sampling of San Diego brews.

Best Damn Home Brew Shop

Be sure to check out check out check out check out check our home brew supply, located just across the street from the Best Damn Beer Shop at Super Market. With everything you need to make beer in stock at the latest addition to the Best Damn Family, it's a great place for any craft beer lover. Our knowledgeable community will assist in training and answering any questions. Check our website at www.bestdamncoast.com for more information.

Manzanita Brewing Company

Manzanita Brewing Company is a family-owned microbrewery that's been serving the craft beer community for over 30 years, offering a wide variety of beers for all tastes. They are located in the heart of San Diego, with a mission to provide customers with a unique and enjoyable beer experience. Manzanita offers over 20 different beers on tap, including IPAs, stouts, and porters. They also have a rotating selection of guest beers from other breweries. In addition to offering a great selection of beers, Manzanita is also committed to giving back to the community. They support local non-profit organizations and events, and are proud to be a part of the San Diego craft beer scene. For more information, please visit www.manzanitabrewing.com.

PubCakes

San Diego native Mitch Bechard started PubCakes with the dream of combining his passion for baking and love of craft beer. Using local PubCakes can only be found at local craft beer bars such as Tokyo, but as of February 2016, it set up shop on El Cajon Blvd and now these tasty treats are baked up fresh every day. With the addition of the gluten-free menu comes unique flavors, including monthly specials. Enjoy this year's holiday PubCakes (picture above)! Almond flour cake with honey milk frosting. Available for the month of December only, be sure to get your mitts on this one quick. Also, each Saturday a special PubCakes will be made with a different winter seasonal - only during the month of December! Simply post the photo of your craft beer drinker with a sweet tooth - there's nothing better. Purchase PubCakes with their corresponding beers and you'll not only keep yourself warm for the holidays but also in addition to the previously mentioned Winter Seasonal PubCakes, don't forget the year-round PubCakes such as the Irish Car Bomb, St. Patrick's Day, Beer Bruschetta, and Pannikin Vegan. If you mention "West Coast," get 10% off your next PubCakes purchase! Check out PubCakes on the website of 7229 El Cajon Blvd, San Diego, CA 92115. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday from 10am-7pm and on Sunday from 10am-5pm.

Barons Market

Barons Market is the go-to for all your craft beer needs. Located in the heart of San Diego, they offer a wide variety of craft beers, wines, spirits, and a selection of gourmet products, merchandise, and apparel. Barons Market prides itself on carrying only the best products at the best prices. They are a craft beer paradise with a wide selection of beers from all over the world, including local San Diego breweries. They have a knowledgeable staff that can help you find the perfect beer to suit your tastes. Whether you're a craft beer enthusiast or just looking to try something new, Barons Market has you covered. For more information, please visit www.baronsmarket.com.
‘Tis the Season

Winter beer choices to make you feel all warm inside

By Sam Tierney

The countries where beer originates get pretty cold and dark this time of year, and strong, flavorful beers can be the perfect way to increase holiday cheer. Many people think of spiced beers when this time of year rolls around, and Fritz Maytag of Anchor Brewing is a main player to thank for reviving the tradition in the US. Many other styles of hearty ales and lagers are brewed for the season, too; here’s a few that are either West Coast classics, or anticipated newcomers.

This fall marks the 23rd annual release of Alaskan Smoked Porter, which has been brewed with alderwood-smoked malt from the same smokehouse since its debut in 1988. It’s the single most awarded beer in the 30 year history of the Great American Beer Festival with 20 medals to date. This is the smoked porter that all others are compared to, and packs a serious smokey punch. Fans of smoked salmon will find the alderwood flavor familiar, making the two pair quite well together. Alaskan Smoked Porter is also a great accompaniment to hearty winter stews and roasted root vegetables. This is a rich, intense beer for those who aren’t afraid of smoke’s intensity. If you love smoked food of any kind, or other smoked beers but have yet to try this one — get on it!

Winter solstice also brings the return of the longest running American seasonal: Christmas Ale from Anchor Brewing. Brewed since 1975, it’s changed recipes over the years, but is consistently brewed as a dark, spiced ale. The exact blend of spices remains a secret and changes from year to year, but considering Christmas flavors, it’s easy to put two and two together. The beer isn’t a heavy one, but it’s packed full of flavor that makes me think of baking Christmas cookies with my mom as a kid. One fan fact about this one is that Anchor’s Liberty Ale stood in as the Christmas Ale recipe before the spiced recipe became the norm. I like to grab at least one 1 L. Magnum bottle to share at family gatherings, because after all who doesn’t love a giant bottle of beer?

Winter means not only two perennial favorites from Sierra Nevada, but two new releases as well. The final beer of the brewery’s Ovila series collaboration with the Abbey of New Clairvaux, Ovila Quadr, is out now. Sierra Nevada has proven again that they can brew anything. A light-hearted, dark abbey ale brimming with dried fruit, chocolate, burnt sugar and gentle spices, this is another great sipper to have with, or as, a dessert. A little young now, and showing its 10% plus alcohol content, you might want to pick up a couple bottles to lay down until next winter and see how the flavors develop.

In January a brand new seasonal rye IPA called Ruthless Rye will replace Gisnado, a golden bock. I’m a little sad to see Gisnado go, but I do love a good ryeIPA. We’ll also see the return of Bigfoot barley wine, a truly sustaining beer for the colder months, while Celebration Ale, a benchmark in the American IPA style for years, is already on shelves. San Diego’s are quite familiar with IPAs that equal or even surpass this classic, but I don’t think this will ever lose its place in experienced enthusiasts’ fridges. IPA might seem like an odd style to brew as a holiday seasonal, but Sierra Nevada exclusively uses whole-cone hops, which are at their peak freshness just after the harvest, concluding in the fall. The brewery calls Celebration a “fresh hop” ale because it uses hops from the new harvest, but don’t confuse that with “wet hops,” which is beer brewed with hops within hours of the harvest, before they are dried.

In San Diego, one of my favorite imperial stout fans just hit the shelves: Santa’s Little Helper from Port Brewing, an ale that might have the greatest label ever to grace a Christmas beer. I want to hang out in whatever bar that has an elf pourer Santa and Rudolf pants of this deliciously hoppy stout, brimming with dark chocolate covered fruit and a silky smooth finish. Another local brew is the rich and hoppy AleSmith Winter YuleSmith—a hugely malty imperial red ale that serves as a darker foil to summer version of this beer. And don’t forget to try out the second addition to the “Twelve Days” series by Karl Strauss, Two Tortugas Belgian Quad.
An Interview with the Minister of Evangelism and Indocitration at Stone Brewing Co.

By Nickie Peña

I f you’ve ever been on a tour of Stone Brewing Company, attended a Beer U class or listened to FM 94/9’s Rock & Roll Happy Hour show, you’re likely familiar with the engaging proclamations of Ken Wright, “Minister of Evangelism and Indocitration” for the powerhouse brand. Always wondered what his title actually means? That, plus his craft beer “philosophy” and more in Next Coast’s interview.

So, can you describe a little more what it means to be Minister of Evangelism and Indocitration at Stone Brewing Co.? It means, first and foremost, the sacred obligation of warning a silly bar and mandating that I be addressed by subordinates as “Your Excellency.” Also, in addition to coordinating the brewery’s outreach tour program and editing the employee newsletter, I have the pleasure of spreading the craft beer gospel to fans and soon-to-be fans alike. This includes eneering at special event beer events, such as the Bourbon dinner at Stone, media appearances, providing comic relief during FM 94/9’s weekly Rock and Roll Happy Hour show, and occasionally filling in on brewery tours. That last task is still the port of the job I look forward to most. Nothing better than being able to talk to people about something you love. Well, I suppose drinking something you love comes close... Can you recall your most memorable experience “indocitrating” a guest at Stone Brewing Co. on San Diego craft beer? There are a lot of memorable golden moments for sure, but I think that the biggest reward I’ve gotten is when I saw—several hands from friends and co-workers or directly—that someone either started working at Stone or began home brewing as a result of having taken one of my tours. That’s pretty damn gratifying, and it still makes me moto-eyey every time.

What is your “philosophy” craft beer? You know, like your first time...

That’s an easy one. I never really enjoyed beer at all much initially—it was just something you drugged down (usually cranking) as a means to an end. Then, when I transferred to UC Santa Cruz I soon discovered at a pizza joint just a few steps from my dorm, Anchor Steam Beer on draft. It was SO amazing! I’d no idea that beer could be so delicious and satisfying. To this day I still get a craving for Anchor—especially when paired with a slice of garlic and green garlic bread. I will forever, along with beer geeks across the land, miss Peter Maying (the former owner, brewmaster and “indocitator” of Anchor) a profound debt of gratitude. Every Friday listeners are able to tune into FM 94/9’s Rock & Roll Happy Hour show and hear you on the air on behalf of Stone Brewing Co. Can you please tell your readers a little about this segment, for those that have not yet tuned in?

If you like great, often quirky and unexpected, Rock and Roll that you’ll never hear anywhere else on the air while learning about fantastic craft beers, then this is the show for you. If you can’t listen live on Fridays, be sure to download it from the station’s website, because it’s both fun and informative and not too serious or too silly. Each week either a local guest brewer or publican joins us in the studio with a sampling of beers in hand. We try them and talk about them during the show (and you can drink along with us—if you’re not listening on your car stereo) by visiting the website, as we post the featured beers in advance. It’s really a perfect balance of beer talk and music.

What were your SDBeer event highlights for this year?

Saturday’s Guild Fest at Liberty Station definitely stands out. I got to perform an encore in a thrown-together band with Brewmaster Mitch Steele and other friends from Stone, which was great. (At least WE thought we were great!) The rest of the day was spent sampling great beer and food and hanging out with thousands of craft beer fans while walking to browse and listening to some great live rock and roll. This year’s Fest was sponsored by FM 94/9, and was also the station’s anniversary party. Two great occasions coming together at a beautiful place on a beautiful day. What more could you ask for? Other highlights include the Rare Beer Breakfast at the Smoke World Bistro & Gardens (breakfast and AND a make-to-order muffin omlet...OMG, Chef Alex and Dr Bill know how to throw a party!) and, of course, all the beyond-your-wildest-dreams tap lines around town.

Full disclosure: in addition to interviewing for Next Coast, I also work for Stone Brewing Co.
Do you know the number of people at the Beer Garden?
Yes, that event was sold out. I think we ended up selling a few extra tickets at the door, so it was just under 450 paid tickets.

How many paid tickets were there last year?
Last year we sold 334 tickets pre-sale and I believe it was limited to 400.

What other events during Beer Week did you really enjoy?
I actually went to a beer brunch at Terra Bistro on Saturday and it was amazing. The flavor of the beer at Sea Rocket Bistro was really cool too. The setting was nice and we ended up filling up the space. I didn't know what to expect, but because I'd never done an event like that before, I tried speaking as much as I could about the craft impact and the tastings. Hopefully people enjoyed it.

How do you juggle all your roles?
I'm insane, that's how. And I'm passionate about each and everyone of these things - the Brewers Guild, breast cancer awareness, my job, my family. It's not how I manage them all, but why I do. I also try to take the family out when it's Beer Week. I'll bring my daughter because she's used to being out at those places. The poor thing! We always say she's a little bar rat. We took her with us to the brunch at Terra Bistro because we live just a few blocks away, but she started getting really unruly so my husband took her and walked her home right in the middle of it! Thankfully we had someone staying at our house so she could drop her oil and come back. But it was a mistake to bring her in the first place. That was the last Saturday and she'd been to every event with me over Beer Week, so you could tell she was done!
Local Beer & Food
Continued from Page 1

Sublime's menu is devoted to starters, salads, pizzas, macaroni and cheese, grilled cheese and burgers. Each section is comprised of extensive versions of each and even allows customers to craft their own creations. Mac 'n cheese is available in ten — count 'em, ten — varieties ranging from "Sourdoughity" with toasted garlic and rosemary rosiatserie chicken to "Infatuation" with wild mushrooms and truffle oil. While they're all remarkably different, bold flavors and an odd consistency that's solid with just the right ooey-gooey factor are present across the board.

The pizza is perhaps the most popular menu item, and for good reason. Before opening Sublime Ale House, Limjoco's time, energy and skills were devoted solely to Sublime Pizza in the North County inland community of 4S Ranch. A lover of all things yeast, the restaurateur is also an accomplished bread maker. As such, the artisanal breads and pizza dough proofed, pounded and plated-up at Sublime are all house-made.

It's clear Limjoco and his staff know what they're doing on the pizza front. Sublime's crust has a great rate of crisp-to-chew and flavor that goes well beyond the white bread blandness found at far too many parlors. Flavor combinations like the "Lasso" with pulled pork, house-cured bacon, roasted pineapple and barbecue sauce, and "Mountain Summit" with wild mushrooms, artichoke heart, sautéed onion and garlic schmear are solid. For those who prefer to choose their own toppings, there's a whopping 42 to select from, and the majority of which, like the aforementioned house-produced meats, are cut a above.

Oh yeah, and they have 48 taps dedicated to craft beer. Their opening draught line-up is quite impressive, featuring a number of harder-to-come-by offerings from locals and out-of-towners alike. There's a definite lean toward local brands, but styles from around the world are available and a still-developing, but plenty respectable bottle list helps to round things out.

A good amount of variety is also on tap at Slater's 50/50, where you might very well think the numeric component of the eatery's name has to do with the massive number of handles located inside—100! While impressive and second only to downtown's Yard House in total taps, these fifties aren't part of a mathematical equation; they refer to the restaurant's signature burger, which includes a patty made from equal parts ground beef and ground bacon topped with avocado, pepper jack, chipotle mayo and a sunny-side-up egg.

Salingthing? Owner Scott Slater is an admitted bacon addict, he breaks (the bank) for swine, shelling out big money to purchase the highest quality bacon on the market. The thick-cut, smoked, cured staple finds its way into all sorts of dishes, from burgers to an outlandish fried chicken and pancake sandwich smothered in bacon gravy and anything you can dip into their house-made bacon ketchup. There's even a bacon brownie and a maple bacon milkshake.

An SANS! slam whose first foray into food was serving his 50/50 burgers as hangover-curing tailgate breakfast items, Slater has since established a number of successful food businesses. Slater's 50/50 is his latest and greatest. The eatery's flagship opened in Anaheim less than two years ago and has already spawned two spin-offs in Huntington Beach and San Diego. Our's has, by far, the most advanced tap system, which Slater devoted 25 percent of his entire opening budget to perfecting. And that's not all. 12 more taps, all of which are local, await you on the retractable, roof-equipped patio.

Slater says that coming into San Diego, he had to step it up on the beer front. The result is a plethora of beer options ranging from crafty one-offs and seasonals down to a small field of macros. Slater wants everyone to be able to get what they want and won't chase patrons for ordering a Coors Light. He will, however, likely give such customers a taste of Victory Prima Pils to sway them to the craft way of drinking. Both Slater's 50/50 and Sublime Ale House should fit in just fine and bring their own charm and classic barley-styles to America's Finest City.