AleSmith’s Peter Zien and Tony Gwynn collaborated to create this unique beer, available all season long.
Read more on page 2; 1994 photograph courtesy of John Schulz, StudioSchulz.com

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Back in February, AleSmith’s Peter Zien was invited to Tony Gwynn’s Poway home. As reported in the media, Gwynn wanted to bring a unique San Diego beer to the Hall of Fame induction ceremonies in Cooperstown, New York, and Zien obliged. He brought samples of AleSmith X, IPA, Anvil ESB, Nut Brown, and Horny Devil to get a sense of Mr. Padre’s preferences. “We discussed the malt, hop, and fermentation characteristics of each style,” Zien told West Coaster. “We then discussed with Tony what he liked about beer. I remember him clearly stating that he liked beer to be ‘light, but with a kick.’”

Later that night, Zien pondered Gwynn’s feedback, as well as how important of a figure he is to San Diego. “Then it hit me – let’s craft a San Diego Pale Ale, a style that technically doesn’t exist, but one that San Diego brewers and others around the country are familiar with, due to our liberal use of the almighty hop cone.” The beer would be light-colored and hoppy, with low bitterness but elevated alcohol -- around 6%.

Zien presented the idea to Gwynn in a follow-up meeting at the Miramar brewery, along with the name, 394, which represents the .394 batting average that the legendary baseball player achieved in 1994, his highest single-season batting average. The response was enthusiastic, and the meeting was fun for all. “The Gwynns were very excited to meet the AleSmith team members, who were equally excited to meet them,” said Zien.

Zien and company got to work. The first sample beer, brewed on their small-scale Sabco system, was delivered to the Gwynn household three weeks later for Tony and Alicia to taste. “Smiles abounded, but Tony did ask us to pull back on the bitterness level some. He wanted the beer to finish with a sweet malt aftertaste,” said Zien. After a re-brew, the beer was happily approved along with the in-house artwork designed by Alex Barbiere.

At time of writing, Tony Gwynn’s 394 San Diego Pale Ale is scheduled to be a baseball season-long offering, having debuted at the Padres Beer Fest on June 6, ten days before Gwynn’s death from cancer.

West Coaster also recently learned that the beer is expected to be packaged in 12 oz. 6-packs by August of this year.

“It was truly a privilege and an honor to brew this beer for him,” Zien told us. “Although Tony was going through treatments during the beer brainstorming and testing, he was always upbeat, cheerful, and frequently flashed that warm smile. His family at AleSmith is committed to honoring his memory with every batch of Tony Gwynn’s 394 San Diego Pale Ale that we produce. What better of a tribute could there be than to have ‘Tony Gwynn’ and ‘San Diego’ on the same label?”
Eleven guest breweries. Two live bands. Great food and some of the best craft beer in the world. We’re four and you score. **General Admission tickets** include unlimited beer samples, 4 food tasters and a cool keeper glass. **VIP ticket holders** get early entrance, plus a private party featuring the collaborative efforts of MHB’s Grazias Vienna Cream Ale dosed 10 different ways by our guest breweries and special treats by Andrea’s Truffles. Get your tickets before they sell out!
WRITERS

COLUMNS

INTO THE BREW

Sam Tierney is a graduate of the Siebel Institute and Coopers World Beer Academy brewing technology diploma program. He currently works as a brewer at Firestone Walker Brewing Company and has most recently passed the Certified Cicerone® exam. He geeked out on all things related to brewing, beer styles, and beer history.

THE CARBOY CHRONICLES

Ryan Reschan is a long time resident of North County San Diego, and he first got into craft beer during his time at UC San Diego while completing a degree in Electrical Engineering. Skipping the macro lagers, he enjoyed British and Irish style ales before discovering the burgeoning local beer scene in North County and the rest of the country. After his introduction to brewing beer by a family friend, he brewed sparingly with extract until deciding to further his knowledge and transition into all-grain brewing. Between batches of beer, he posts video beer reviews on YouTube (user: StumpyJoeJr) multiple times a week along with occasional homebrew videos and footage of beer events he attends.

THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE

Gonzalo J. Quintero, Ed.D. is a San Diego native, three-time SDSU grad, career educator, and co-founder of the popular multimedia craft beer discussion craftbeerstasters.wordpress.com. An avid homebrewer, Cicerone Certified Beer Server, and seasoned traveler, Dr. Quintero takes great pride in educating people about craft beer and the craft beer culture. By approaching the subject from the perspective of a scholar and educator, Dr. Quintero has developed a passion for spreading the good word of local beer.

Plates & Pints

Brandon Hernández is a native San Diegan and the author of the San Diego Beer News Complete Guide to San Diego Breweries (available on Amazon.com). In addition to this on-staff work for West Coaster, he is responsible for communications for local craft beer producer Stone Brewing Company; an editor for Zagat; the San Diego correspondent for Celebrator Beer News; and contributes articles on beer, food, restaurants and other such killer topics to national publications including USA TODAY, The Beer Connoisseur, Beer West, Beer Magazine, Imbibe and Wine Enthusiast as well as local outlets including The San Diego Reader, Edible San Diego, Pacific San Diego, Ranch & Coast, San Diego Magazine and U-T San Diego.

West Coaster, THE PUBLICATION

Founders
RYAN LAMB
MIKE SHESS

Publisher
MIKE SHESS
mike@westcoastersd.com

Executive Editor
RYAN LAMB
ryan@westcoastersd.com

Art Director
KAYLA COLEMAN
kayla@westcoastersd.com

Graphic Designer
ASHLEY DREWITZ
ashley@westcoastersd.com

Media Consultant
TOM SHESS
thomas.shess@gmail.com

Staff Writers
SAM TIERNEY
sam@westcoastersd.com
BRANDON HERNÁNDEZ
brandon@westcoastersd.com
RYAN RESCHAN
ryan.reschan@westcoastersd.com
GONZALO QUINTERO
drqcbt@gmail.com

Contributors
JOHNNY CAITO
JOHN SCHULZ
KRISTINA YAMAMOTO
MARC FIGUEROA
SARAH GATHMAN

West Coaster, THE WEBSITE

Web Manager
MIKE SHESS

Web Editor
RYAN LAMB

Web Master
JOSH EVERETT

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**ON THE COVER:**
Tony Gwynn, photographed in 1994, the year he achieved his highest single-season batting average. Mr. Padre’s collaboration with AleSmith will soon be available in 12 oz. 6-packs. Photo courtesy of John Schulz, StudioSchulz.com
The American Homebrewers Association (AHA), the organization devoted to promoting the community of homebrewing, hosts the annual National Homebrewers Conference, this year held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The conference is a three-day event where homebrewers congregate to learn about beer and brewing, to interact with other members of the community, and to share and to taste a lot of delicious commercial and homebrewed beer. Importantly, the conference culminates in the National Homebrew Competition, the largest beer judging competition in the world.

After two days of judging what is seemingly an impossible amount of beers—the competition saw 8,685 entries this year—the best beers in each style category were awarded a gold, silver, or bronze medal. Additionally, the AHA recognizes the Homebrewer of the Year and the Homebrew Club of the Year for their achievements in brewing. San Diego homebrewers have done well in this competition in years past, and this year was more of the same.

For starters, Kelsey McNair was awarded the gold medal in the IPA category for his hoppy delight, Hop-Fu!, a 7.5% ABV San Diego IPA. “I designed the beer to deliver a huge blast of hop flavor and aroma featuring lemon and orange citrus, oily dank hop resins, pine, and tropical fruit,” says McNair. The hop profile is impressive, featuring Columbus, Centennial, Chinook, Warrior, Simcoe, Amarillo, and Citra hops. McNair says he “immediately fell in love with Citra’s raw juicy orange and tropical fruit, which played really well with all the other hops.”

The judges at the competition love Hop-Fu! too. Not only did the beer beat out 851 other entrants in IPA in this year’s competition, but the same beer has won medals in 2010, 2012, and 2013. Other San Diego homebrewers to win medals this year included Peggy and Tom Kelly with a Belgian Strong Ale, and Justin Fleming with an English Brown Ale.

The historic local homebrew club, Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity (QUAFF), had a tremendous showing in this year’s competition too. QUAFF was this year’s runner-up for the AHA Club of the Year by a narrow margin of just six points behind the incumbent winner, The Brewing Network club. Travis Hammond led the coordination of QUAFF’s efforts, saying, “I am proud of the work we have done as a team, and I believe we can win [Club of the Year] next year. Just don’t tell that to The Brewing Network.”

Look for Team QUAFF to make a strong showing next year, when the conference and the competition returns to San Diego June 11 through June 13.

Besides being a homebrewer and a member of QUAFF himself, Mike Sardina is the Assistant Executive Officer at Societe Brewing Company in San Diego. Mike’s passion for San Diego-style IPA—including hoppy beers from Alpine, Societe, and other San Diego breweries—inspires him to eat, sleep, and drink all things San Diego Beer. Follow him on Twitter @SocieteMike.
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IN THE WORKS

Rancho Bernardo’s Abnormal Part of New Wave of Breweries-In-Planning

BY MARC FIGUEROA

The Abnormal Wine Company is getting into the craft beer business.

The small Rancho Bernardo winery, opened two years ago by co-owners James Malone and Matt DeLoach, is expanding its operations to include a brewery and restaurant. The new 5,000-square-foot facility just off Rancho Bernardo Road is eyeing a mid-July opening, according to head brewer Derek Gallanosa.

A former brewer at Karl Strauss, Gallanosa said the Abnormal Beer Company will be brewing on a 10-barrel system and will feature classic styles, among them American Pale Ale and IPA.

“We want our beers to be very drinkable, not something that destroys your palate,” he said.

Mike Arquines, co-owner of the Lab Dining Sessions and Mostra Coffee, has been brought in as executive chef. With Arquines’ connections, Gallanosa said he also plans to make a coffee beer.

The brewery operation will be a prominent feature in the restaurant, situated behind the bar in an area enclosed by glass.

“It’s kind of like a human aquarium,” Gallanosa said. “I will be brewing right behind the tap handles when you walk in.”

Abnormal will have 40 taps, featuring local breweries along with Gallanosa’s creations. The first batches of Abnormal beer won’t be available until August.

The new brewery/winery/restaurant will change its name to AWC, which stands for Ale, Wine, Comforts. The trifecta of offerings – also included are a music stage, Chef’s table, wood-fired grill and in-house charcuterie – will give patrons plenty to choose from while providing AWC artisans an abundance of freedom with their creations.

“There’s a lot of potential to do a variety of different things,” Gallanosa said. “We want to sell an experience.”

AWC will have inside seating for approximately 150 people and also feature outside patio seating for up to 40.
So far in 2014, five breweries have opened their doors to San Diego beer drinkers. (La Jolla Brewing receives an honorable mention for welcoming folks on December 30, 2013.) Additionally, Valley Center Brewery and Urbn St. Brewing have begun brewing, but weren’t quite ready at time of press to let the public into their establishments. In 2013, 27 breweries began operations, and there are more than 30 breweries currently in the planning stages.
New English Brewing Company, established in 2007 and one of San Diego’s most award-winning breweries, is coming to Los Angeles & Orange Counties in July. We are proud to be distributed by the Reyes Beverage Group Companies. We look forward to bringing our balanced and drinkable hand-crafted ales to Southern California’s largest metropolitan area.

Cheers!

Visit us online at www.newenglishbrewing.com
Over the next three pages we’ll share some of our favorite photos from Instagram that were uploaded using the hashtag #sdbeer.

Warning: Thirst for a tasty, locally-brewed beer may occur.

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Our favorite #sdbeer photos will appear in the August issue of West Coaster San Diego
In the Origins and History of Brewing class I had a unique opportunity to try the very first beers ever brewed. Our instructor Christopher McGreger and Yuseff Cherney brewed our class three historical replicas of what ancient civilizations drank. Although the exact era when people began brewing is unknown, it is believed that people were brewing in the Neolithic Age in Gobekli Tepe 12,000 years ago. During the empires of the Sumerians, Assyrians, and Babylonians, it is accepted that brewers had perfected the art of brewing and there are records of 40 types of beer brewed during that time (McGreger). The beer we got to taste in class is called Kaš (pronounced ‘kash’) Kal. It was quite a bonding experience for our class as we all tentatively bellied up to the ancient brews still actively fermenting to taste history.

The first beer we tried was made from two row malt, kamut, spelt, a yeast starter consisting of malt extract, sourdough yeast, and a culture of Lambic yeast from White Labs (probably not available in ancient times). The beers followed the basic recipe consisting of 1/3 malted barley, 1/3 unmalted barley, and 1/3 beer bread ball with sourdough yeast. The second beer was the same as the first, except without a yeast starter. The third beer was made from two row malt, spelt, and black barley – and it was pink! These beers were not heated before fermentation, and we relied on the low pH of fermentation and alcohol concentration to kill off bacteria that could hurt us.

Each beer tasted remarkably different. I enjoyed the first beer the most since it tasted like liquid bread. The second and third beers were more acidic: due to the lack of a yeast starter, wild yeast and bacteria had a greater chance to influence fermentation.

We also got to try beer balls (called Titab); early brewers likely traveled with these beer balls and used them to start a new brew. The balls were made with yeast, two row malt, kamut, spelt, and black barley. The baked balls had a crust on the outside that protected the yeast inside. People would crush up the balls into water and would have the yeast and barley needed to make beer. When fermentation was complete they could scoop up the yeast and other ingredients and reform the ball to be used again.

Mentally jump forward about 14,000 years from Gobekli Tepe to the first settlers of America.

I had a chance to brew my “Settlers’ Beer” today which is our extra credit assignment in class. I perused my American history book from high school to refresh my memory about the first American settlers and what they may have had available. I feel that the settlers of Jamestown would have had access Juniper berries, black tea from England, corn, and chamomile, and so did I at my local homebrew store. I made a tea with the berries, chamomile, black tea, and corn flakes. I dissolved my maple syrup into warm water, mixed in the tea and used some yeast from a cider I had fermenting. I decided to put an airlock on my carboy, but I might be getting a little big for my settler britches thinking I understood the “disease of beer” before Louis Pasteur. I’ll let you know how it tastes.

Sarah Gathman is part of the first cohort of students in UCSD Extension’s Brewing Certificate Program, and she created a personal blog (ucsdbrewingprogram.com) to give an insider look into the brewing world of San Diego and her experiences in the program. Sarah has a degree in Molecular Biology from UCSD and has worked as an enzymologist/fermentation scientist in the biotech industry. Follow her on Instagram @sarahgbrewgirl or email her via sarah@ucsdbrewingprogram.com
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The only bitter aftertaste residents of El Cajon Brewing Company’s namesake community expected when that brewpub was installed on their main drag in 2011 was what might follow a swig of its India pale ale. Unfortunately, the owners of that business burned through two infusions of taxpayer funds registering in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, which would have been fine had they made any notable impact on the local beer scene, decent brews or enough money to stay open. None of that transpired, forcing the business to go bankrupt and unceremoniously shutter its doors last summer. Understandably, that left El Cajon citizens disappointed, angry and sporting a highly visible black eye in the heart of its downtown area.

Fortunately, a group of bona fide hospitality industry professionals was able to see that vacated blemish as an opportunity to take a second swipe at bringing an authentic craft beer experience to the East County municipality. But it took a popular personality in the local beer scene to spearhead the effort. That individual is chef Alex Carballo. A veteran toque whose served as executive chef at Indigo Grill, Brigantine and The Fishery, but is most well-known for helming Escondido’s high-profile beer mecca, Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, his resume is an impressive one. There was only one thing missing from it.

“I’ve always wanted to start my own project, and what better way to kick off my entrepreneurship than opening a brewery and restaurant in my own backyard?” A La Mesa resident, Carballo was motivated to have an impact on the area he calls home, and quickly recognized El Cajon Brewing’s closing as a potential positive. “After I heard it had closed, I jumped on the opportunity right away and started looking for the right partnership.”

The symbiosis he sought was found in Jon Mangini and the URBN Restaurants Inc.. The muscle behind East Village’s BASIC

as well as a pair of URBN Coal-Fired Pizza eateries in North Park and Vista, Mangini is no stranger to craft beer or its customer appeal. But passion, understanding and business sense aren’t enough to open a brewpub. There’s the whole brewing thing to consider, and in filling the brewmaster role, Carballo sourced from his old stomping grounds, hiring Callaway Ryan, a senior brewer from Stone Brewing Co. with roots extending back to popular Minneapolis operation, Surly Brewing Co.

“He brings a little East Coast with a dose of West Coast swagger,” says Carballo. “I would say it’s like if Dr. Dre and Eminem made craft beer—Dre beats over East Coast rap…the earlier years, of course. With Callaway’s brewing talent, Jon’s keen eye for design and my love for this industry, we plan to turn some heads for sure.”

Dubbed URBN St. Brewery, the brewpub will feature 40 taps, 10 of which will be designated for beers produced onsite. Carballo says the tap list will feature beers and styles from all over the world, including 10 taps which will be outfitted with small-batch brews. Carballo has several methods for marrying the beer and food elements of the brewpub as well as providing means for appreciating the ales and lagers they’ll serve.

“My goal is to properly train our staff so that they get ‘it.’ We will have some basic recommended pairings, but that only goes so far. Our staff will have knowledge of the beers we are serving so they can properly guide our customers,” says Carballo. “We will also have some fun events like craft beer education sessions, and food-and-beer dinners. Maybe I’ll even convince my good pal and pairing partner “Dr.” Bill Sysak from Stone to join me for old times’ sake.”

While pairing-based events will feature dishes custom-made to illustrate the compatibility of beer and food, the everyday menu currently mirrors URBN’s North Park location. However, house-
made sausages, brunch items, whimsical desserts and other venue-specific items will be introduced once the business’ and its staff get their footing.

For now, an original taste of Carballo’s cuisine is provided in the following summer-specific recipe for grilled short ribs with a quick-and-easy blue cheese-studded coleslaw. “Grilling is always great with beer, because when you grill food, it brings out the caramel notes in beers such as brown ales, porters and pale ales. Hoppy beers are nice with spicy food because of the cooling effect they have. Also, the spiciness brings out the beer’s citrus notes.”

In addition to a recipe, Carballo also shared some tips for pairing beer with food. First and foremost, he says, do not over-complicate things, racking your brains and, in the process, over-thinking the pairing. “Start easy. For example, pale ales and porters are very food-friendly beers that go great with many types of cuisine. Try them with some of your favorite foods and make some notes about what you like in the pairing.”

He also points to the wealth of information that exists on the Internet, and suggests attending beer-and-food dinners because of the amount of insight into pairing methodologies that is typically doled out at such events. Like the ones Carballo and company will hold at URBN St. Brewery. OK, that’s a bit of a shameless plug, but it seems allowable for someone working to heal a wounded community through craft beer.

### CHEF ALEX CARBALLO’S GRILLED SHORT RIBS WITH QUICK & EASY BLUE CHEESE COLE SLAW

Yield: 4 servings

- 1 1/2 pounds pork short ribs, cut into 1/8-inch thick slices with bones attached
- 2 cups URBN St. Brown Ale (or your favorite brown ale to substitute)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup red onion, diced
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp quick & easy blue cheese
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 tsp freshly cracked pepper

Place the ribs in a sealable plastic bag. Whisk together the remaining ingredients and pour into the bag. Refrigerate and let marinate for at least 30 minutes (and preferably, overnight).

Preheat grill to high (use charcoal for best results). Place the ribs on the grill for 2 minutes per side. Reserve some of the marinade and brush onto the ribs as they are grilling. Transfer the ribs to a low-heat section of the grill and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on heat level. The ribs will be ready when they start to break when lightly squeezed. Remove from heat and serve, family-style, on a large platter with coleslaw. Garnish with cilantro leaves and serve immediately.

### QUICK & EASY BLUE CHEESE COLE SLAW

Yield: 10 to 12 servings

- 2 12-ounce bags broccoli coleslaw (in the bagged salad section of the grocery store)
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and thinly sliced (optional)
- 1/2 sprig cilantro, chopped
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- dash Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/3 cup blue cheese, crumbled
- dash garlic powder
- salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Place the coleslaw, scallions, jalapeño and cilantro in a bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, milk, sour cream and Worcestershire sauce until completely incorporated. Stir in the rest of the ingredients. Add half of the dressing to the slaw mixture. Season with salt and pepper, then add desired amount of additional dressing to the mixture. Cover and refrigerate for 20 minutes.
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BREAK-IN + ARSON ATTEMPT AT RITUAL

North Park’s Ritual Kitchen was the victim of an arson attempt by two suspects on May 22. The pair climbed over a patio fence and through the rear door. Surveillance footage (available on cbs8.com) shows them pouring gas in several locations throughout the business, igniting fires, and then leaving, causing an estimated $20,000 in damage.

During the shutdown, Ritual was able to donate enough food to help feed people at three separate shelters with Just Call Us Volunteers.

Thankfully for fans of local beer and food, Ritual reopened on June 1.

CA BREWERIES ELIGIBLE TO SAVE CASH

Starting this summer, California craft breweries will have a new way to save money. Effective July 1st, the sales and use tax rate in California will lower to 3.3125% on all qualifying equipment purchases and leases. This reduction is due to an exemption of the state portion of the tax, currently 4.1875%. Local sales and use tax will remain in effect.

Qualifying equipment includes property used in manufacturing, processing, refining, or recycling tangible personal property; R&D; or maintaining, repairing, measuring, or testing any qualified property. This not only covers brewing equipment, but devices used in quality control and machinery maintenance as well.

Items that do not qualify are consumables, inventory, furniture and fixtures, or equipment used to store finished products that have completed the manufacturing process.

So how can craft breweries get this new exemption? Simply provide the seller with a completed exemption certificate at the time of purchase. You may provide a certificate for each purchase, or you may issue blanket certificates. Exemption certificates, as well as guidance for issuing blanket certificates, can be found on the State of California Board of Equalization website by visiting http://www.boe.ca.gov/sutax/manufacturing_exemptions.htm#Purchasers

Debra Druther, CPA works with a team of dynamic professionals at Lavine, Lofgren, Morris & Engelberg, LLP, one of the largest independent certified public accounting firms in San Diego. She has over six years of tax and accounting experience, with the last two focused on the craft brewing industry. Debra is a craft beer fan and candidate for the San Diego State University Professional Certificate in the Business of Craft Beer. Got questions? E-mail her via drutherd@llme.com

NEW HOP PICKER

Just in time for this year’s hops, Ramona’s Star B Buffalo Ranch & Hop Farm has received shipment of a massive German-made Wolf harvester. The machine was made in the 1970s, and last month had to be cut in half before loaded into a shipping container. Despite what this means for the increase in productivity, Star B is still planning to allow homebrewers to pick their own hops on certain dates this month, while supplies last; follow them on Facebook for updates.
SAINT ARCHER @ SLEEP TRAIN

The Miramar-based brewery is in the midst of another big expansion, and they’ve just finalized a partnership with Live Nation and the Sleep Train Amphitheatre in Chula Vista to become the first local brewery to pour at this venue, from a custom built bar.

Two San Diego beers ranked in the top 10:

1. Russian River Pliny the Elder
2. Bell’s Two Hearted Ale
3. Ballast Point Sculpin IPA
4. Bell’s Hopslam
5. The Alchemist Heady Topper
6. Lagunitas Sucks
7. Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA
8. Stone Enjoy By IPA
9. Founders Breakfast Stout
10. Goose Island Bourbon County Stout

RUSSIAN RIVER AGAIN TOPS AHA LIST

The American Homebrewers Association’s (AHA) members like their beers bitter and voted Russian River Brewing Company’s Pliny the Elder the “Best Commercial Beer in America” for the sixth year running. The poll is conducted annually by Zymurgy magazine — the journal of the AHA.

This is the 12th year that AHA members voted for up to 20 of their favorite beers in an online poll. Members were able to choose any commercial beer available for purchase in the United States. As in recent years, flavorful IPAs and double IPAs continue to outshine the rest, and comprised eight of the top 10 beers.

Two San Diego beers ranked in the top 10:

1. Russian River Pliny the Elder
2. Bell’s Two Hearted Ale
3. Ballast Point Sculpin IPA
4. Bell’s Hopslam
5. The Alchemist Heady Topper
6. Lagunitas Sucks
7. Dogfish Head 90 Minute IPA
8. Stone Enjoy By IPA
9. Founders Breakfast Stout
10. Goose Island Bourbon County Stout

HOMEBREW SALES HOP 10 PERCENT IN 2013

The American Homebrewers Association (AHA) released the results of its fifth annual Homebrew Supply Shop Survey in May, detailing the current state of the home beer and wine supply retail industry. Examining data from 408 shops across 48 states, the survey—which had a 48 percent increase in participants from last year’s report—found that gross revenue grew for shops on average by 10 percent in 2013.

“Homebrewing is on the rise, both as a hobby and a business,” said American Homebrewers Association Director Gary Glass. “With the U.S. now home to some 1.2 million homebrewers, supply shops are experiencing solid growth. The growth in homebrew supply businesses means it is easier than ever for Americans to get into the hobby of homebrewing.”

Survey highlights include:

- Revenue Brewing: For shops that primarily sell homebrew supplies, gross revenue grew on average by 10.5 percent in 2013. Additionally, the survey found that nearly 36 percent of businesses see homebrew/home winemaking supplies as a supplemental source of income, meaning a growing number of businesses are adding sales of home beer and wine making supplies to their existing portfolio.

- Opening Doors: There was considerable growth in new shop openings, with 37 percent of respondents indicating they have been open for three years or less. Furthermore, more than 60 percent of shops reported seeing a new shop open in their area in 2013.

- Beer vs. Wine: Sales of beer ingredients outpaced wine ingredients among home beverage supply retailers, with an average of 35 percent of retail revenue coming from beer ingredients versus 21 percent from wine ingredients.

The full report on homebrewersassociation.org contains additional information on customer demographics, marketing and sales. Results demonstrated significant advancement in several areas monitored by the survey, including gross revenue, store openings and beginner equipment sales, indicating a growth in the industry. The AHA conducts this survey every year to provide homebrewers and supply retailers with the latest industry information.

SAINT ARCHER @ SLEEP TRAIN

The Miramar-based brewery is in the midst of another big expansion, and they’ve just finalized a partnership with Live Nation and the Sleep Train Amphitheatre in Chula Vista to become the first local brewery to pour at this venue, from a custom built bar.

The Sleep Train Amphitheatre will host several acts this summer, including KI$$ and Def Leppard (July 6), Brad Paisley (July 10), Slightly Stoopid (July 26), Dierks Bentley (July 27), Mötley Crüe (July 30), Arcade Fire (August 5), Rascal Flatts with Sheryl Crow and Gloriana (August 17), Nine Inch Nails and Soundgarden (August 21), Wiz Khalifa (August 23), Marc Anthony (August 29), The Offspring with Bad Religion and Pennywise (August 30), Dave Matthews Band (September 5), Blake Shelton (September 6), Linkin Park (September 16), Drake and Lil Wayne (September 20), and Jason Aldean (September 25).
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- Logsdon’s Seizoen Bretta Farmhouse Ale
- Almanac Bourbon Sour Porter 13’
- Noble Ale Works 5 and Dime made with Raspberries
- Allagash Brewing Company Interlude Farmhouse Ale made with Brettamycoses 13’
- The Bruery Tart of Darkness 12’
- The Bruery Berazzled Wild Ale
- Lost Abbey Framboise de Amorosa
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WE SHOW PPV UFC FIGHTS!
In early June the inaugural meeting for the new San Diego chapter of Pink Boots Society was held at Monkey Paw Pub in the East Village.

“Co-chair Laura Ulrich and I are very excited about the new direction that we are taking Pink Boots Society on a local level,” said Denise Ratfield, event organizer for International Women’s Collaboration Brew Day, held in March. “I told her that I wanted to have the best chapter on the planet and I’m going to make that happen.”

All women who work in the local beer industry are invited to become members of the group, which focuses on education and empowerment with 1,194 members and counting.
During the Rhythm & Brews fest in Vista I had posed the question to Denise Ratfield from Stone, “How does the Pink Boots Society get the funds to have their scholarship program?” After some conversation throughout the day, it became apparent that Latitude 33 and Pink Boots needed to pair up for a brew day. The ending result will be a hoppy oatmeal pale ale featuring a trifecta of New Zealand hops (Motueka, Nelson and Southern Cross) named Worldly Scholar.

Very early in our discussions on what to brew and how this could be of benefit to Pink Boots, we received assistance and support from various people and organizations. David Cryer, the festival director of Beervana in New Zealand, has been a huge supporter of this project after being introduced to Denise by Luke Nicholas of Epic Brewing Company in Auckland. Aside from releasing this beer in San Diego, David has paved the way for some of this brew to be shipped to New Zealand where it will be represented at the Beervana fest by Denise in August. Glenn Gallagher from Country Malt has been very diligent in helping to get the ingredients for this brew. Country Malt was even generous enough to donate some of the ingredients. Local artist Monarose Ryan has also chipped in by designing a wonderful label for the limited bottle release of this collaboration. The efforts and generosity of these great people have been invaluable.

Denise and I have been friends for a while, and I have had the pleasure of working with several members of The Pink Boots Society. I am very honored and pleased that we can use this project to help the PBS. Part of the proceeds from this brew will be donated to The Pink Boots Society to aid them in providing their scholarship program. Look for this beer to be out in San Diego County in early July!

Follow our local Pink Boots chapter @PinkBootsSD and with the hashtag #PBSSD
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More than 2,700 attendees descended on the 36th Annual American Homebrewers Association (AHA) conference held in Grand Rapids, Michigan this past June. In a poll conducted by the Brewer’s Association, Grand Rapids was voted Beer City USA in 2013 and shared the title with Asheville, North Carolina in 2012. The city is home to world renowned Founders Brewing Company and HopCat, a brewpub voted one of the best beer bars in the country. Other notable breweries in the city include Brewery Vivant, Harmony Brewing Company, and Grand Rapids Brewing Company. The conference was held at DeVos Place, a convention center located along Grand River with attendees staying in hotels within a short walking distance.

This year 75 speakers talked during 55 seminars held throughout the three day conference. Topics ranged from making the transition to all-grain brewing, water chemistry, brewing sours beers, barrel aging beer, blending yeast strains, and making mead. Kara Taylor from White Labs and Mitch Steele from Stone Brewing Co. were local experts giving talks on yeast blending and brewing with botanicals. With four different tracks of talks going on this year, the seminars were less crowded than those at last year’s conference in Philadelphia. Also different from last year was the Welcome Toast on Thursday night, where over 50 breweries from Michigan (plus a couple from California) poured their beers for thirsty homebrewers. Club Night was in its usual Friday night spot and is always a great way to try new, weird, classic, and/or experimental beers.

The homebrew competition was also the largest the AHA has put on. More than 8,000 homebrews were judged over two rounds of competition. The top three entries in the 28 categories from each of the 12 judging centers moved on to the second round judging that took place during the conference. 969 entries were evaluated by 212 of the country’s top beer judges with the winners being announced during the Saturday night awards ceremony. New to this year’s competition was the Radegast Club of the Year award that went to the club that made the most exceptional and positive impact on its local community. The Carolina BrewMasters of Charlotte, NC beat out 25 other homebrew clubs including San Diego’s QUAFF (Quality Ale and Fermentation Fraternity) for the inaugural award. The club raised $77,500 in charitable donations to their local community in 2013.

Homebrew Club Of The Year was a close race between QUAFF and The Brewing Network going into the final round of competition. The Brewing Network won the award by six points, making it their fourth win in a row. Considering QUAFF is a San Diego based club and The Brewing Network is a loose group of brewers from all over the country, it’s remarkable that any real homebrew club got close to winning. A special thanks goes to Travis Hammond for leading the Team QUAFF competition team to a near victory in this year’s competition. Local winners included Kelsey McNair winning gold in India Pale Ale (IPA) category 14 yet again with his beer Hop Fu!, Justin Flemming winning bronze in English Brown Ale category 11, and Tom and Peggy Kelly winning bronze in Belgian Strong Ale category 18.

The great news is that the National Homebrewers Conference is coming back to San Diego next year. Mark your calendar for June 11-13, 2014 and be sure to be a registered AHA member to get tickets. While San Diego has not been voted Beer City USA, it will be time again to show the country that our county is one of the top destinations for craft beer in the world. So get brewing and help QUAFF try to take Club Of The Year on our own turf. Cheers!
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Take a look at a beer label or bar menu and you’ll see that most beers are described as either an ale or lager. But why? What makes a beer of one type or another, and do all beers fit this dichotomy? As with anything in life, things can get complicated. Nearly all beers are fermented with one of two species of yeast: *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* or *Saccharomyces pastorianus*. Ales are fermented with the former and lagers with the latter. Remember that and you are almost home free. Almost.

The name lager comes from the German word *lagern*, which means “to store,” as these beers were historically kept in cold cellars (“lagered”) for several months before consumption. This cold storage allowed the beers to mature, carbonate, and clarify at a time when most other beers were drunk fresh, cloudy, and relatively flat (think un-fined cask ale). These days, the defining character of a lager comes not from lagering itself (though that is still done), but from a colder fermentation of about 45-55°F with *S. pastorianus* yeast strains. These yeast strains were originally formed from a hybridization of *S. cerevisiae* with a cold-tolerant yeast from South America that was an early passenger of transatlantic trade. This particular method of fermentation creates a lower level of fruity esters, and also more sulfur character, which can be reminiscent of a struck match. This is due to sulfur dioxide produced by *S. pastorianus* yeast strains during fermentation, which also has the beneficial property of acting as an anti-oxidant, prolonging freshness. *S. pastorianus* yeasts also have the ability to break down and metabolize raffinose, a longer-chain malt sugar that *S. cerevisiae* yeasts leave behind, leading to potentially dryer beers. The overall result is a “cleaner” fermentation character that allows the hops and malt to stand out more in the flavor profile.

All commercial strains of *S. pastorianus* yeast are descended from two original isolates from the Carlsberg brewery in Copenhagen that was an early passenger of transatlantic trade. This particular method of fermentation creates a lower level of fruity esters, and also more sulfur character, which can be reminiscent of a struck match. This is due to sulfur dioxide produced by *S. pastorianus* yeast strains during fermentation, which also has the beneficial property of acting as an anti-oxidant, prolonging freshness. *S. pastorianus* yeasts also have the ability to break down and metabolize raffinose, a longer-chain malt sugar that *S. cerevisiae* yeasts leave behind, leading to potentially dryer beers. The overall result is a “cleaner” fermentation character that allows the hops and malt to stand out more in the flavor profile.

Saccharomyces cerevisiae likes to ferment at warmer temperatures (60-75°F), which increases the amount of fruity esters and higher alcohols that it produces. This leads to typically rounder, fuller-tasting beers with varying degrees of fruity character from subtle, as in the American-type strains commonly used for IPAs, to high levels of banana, stonefruit and pear-like aroma in some German and Belgian strains. Warmer fermentations are also faster, leading to beers that can be ready to drink in just over a week. Lagers can take at least three times that, with some brewers lagering their beers for several months. This ties up valuable tank space in the brewery, which can be cost-prohibitive for most small breweries. For this reason, you see many more ales being brewed by local breweries.
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Local beer promoter Michael J. Macare (aka @dragonaf-termarket on Instagram) recently asked his friends at Mostra Coffee roasters if they’d host a special bottle share and coffee tasting for select enthusiasts. Mostra’s creations have made their way into AleSmith and Karl Strauss beers, with Stone coming up soon. On June 19 several types of coffee were blended with various beers at a tasting party.

### THE PARTIAL BEER LIST

- 2013 Bourbon County Stout infused with coconut and cocoa
- 2013 Pizza Port San Clemente Double Entendre
- AleSmith BA Kopi Luwak Speedway Stout
- AleSmith Speedway Stout with Vietnamese Coffee
- AleSmith Speedway Stout with Mostra Coffee cold press Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee
- Belching Beaver Dammed DIPA
- Belching Beaver Peanut Butter Milk Stout infused with raspberries
- Bootlegger Far Out IPA
- Cigar City 5 Beers for 5 Years Porter
- Cigar City Humidor Series American Sour Ale
- Cismontane XPA Citra
- Firestone Walker 3 Floyds Dry Hopped Blonde Barelywine
- Firestone Walker Parabola 2012
- Firestone Walker Parabola 2013
- Firestone Walker Velvet Merkin 2013
- Founders KBS BA Imperial Coffee Stout
- Golden Road Get Up Off That Brown
- Green Flash / Pizza Port / Stone HWY 78 Scotch Ale infused with Mostra Coffee cold press Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee
- Hoppin Frog Boris The Destroyer Oatmeal Stout
- Hoppin Frog Double Imperial American Stout
- Karl Strauss BA Wreck Alley Imperial Stout
- Kuhnherrn 4th D Olde Ale
- Local Option Morning Wood Coffee Amber
- Modern Times Blazing World
- Old Rasputin Russian Imperial Stout
- Pipeworks Imperial Ends of Days Milk Stout with cocoa, vanilla beans, cinnamon sticks, and ancho chillis
- Pipeworks Vanilla Coffee Abduction Stout
- Real Ale Coffee Porter
- Revolution Dethstar BA Russian Imperial Stout
- Rip Current BA Old Ale Anniversary
- Steigl Radler
- Terrapin Tangerine Creamsicle
- The Brewery Cuir
- The Brewery Mash & Grind Coffee Barleywine
- The Brewery Rue’D Floyd BA Imperial Porter infused with cherries and coffee vanilla beans
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According to San Diego’s Chaldean American Chamber of Commerce (CACOC), “San Diego has the world’s second largest population of Chaldeans, the indigenous people of Iraq, in the world (outside of Iraq) with an estimated 71,000 people. Another 200,000 Chaldeans reside throughout the United States, particularly in the Chicago, Detroit and Phoenix areas. The population enjoys steady growth (unfortunately) due to a constant influx of Christian refugees who have fled Iraq in the face of religious persecution. Like many ethnic groups, Chaldeans began immigrating to America in search of better economic, religious and political freedom and opportunities.”

The CACOC asserts that 6 out of 10 food stores in San Diego are owned by Chaldean Americans. With a population of 71,000 people, Chaldeans compose just over 2% of San Diego county’s population (Source: 2013 U.S. Census) yet own 60% of the county’s food stores. This means that Chaldeans, essentially, own the majority of independently owned and operated food stores, a number that is actually proportionately larger when you take into account that the other 40% of food stores are, mostly, comprised of national super market chains and big-box stores. In the San Diego craft beer community, this means that if there is a liquor store, convenience store, or bottle shop that you frequent in search of your favorite craft beers, chances are, you are visiting a Chaldean-owned business.

Chaldean American elder statesman, San Diego resident, and business-owner Tony Konja, owner of Del Cerro’s KnB Wine Cellars, affirmed the above assertions stating that his people, “facing religious persecution, have been immigrating to the United States since the turn of the 19th century. Our blood lines trace us back to being merchants, and naturally in the land of opportunity, we continued to be just that. My family, the Konjas, were no different; we immigrated here in 1974, sponsored by my Aunt Sue who led the way by marrying a Chaldean man who immigrated to the US in the 60s. After serving in the US military, Mike Najor along with my aunt bought a super market in Chula Vista that employed her eight siblings, which served as the building block of all the stores that we own today.” Now, the family owns Keg N Bottle stores, KNB Wine Cellars, Brabant Belgian Bar & Café in South Park, plus five other non-branded liquor stores. This happened as each uncle and aunt helped one another in not only financing and cosigning for the additional locations, but in actually working at the stores to ensure their family’s success. “I am truly blessed to have witnessed that love and strive to do my part to ensure that continues today. You will find a similar story for each of the Chaldean families you will encounter.”

West Coaster had a chance to learn the story of San Diego’s Chaldean community when speaking not only with Mr. Konja, but also with other Chaldean American business owners, including brothers Jonathan and Joseph Salem of South Bay Liquor in Chula Vista, as well as brothers Sid and Omar Mikhail of Downtown San Diego’s Best Damn Beer Shop located inside Krisp, and Geoi Bachoua proprietor of Bine & Vine in Normal Heights. What follows are the thoughts and feelings of some of San Diego’s preeminent Chaldean champions of craft beer.

Tony Konja:
Chaldeans, for the past 50 years, have been investing in San Diego businesses, specifically grocery stores, liquor stores and gas stations. As the San Diego craft beer movement hit us all pretty hard in the past 10 years, the Chaldeans already had the brick and mortar stores in place to embrace it. Any good merchant will listen to customers’ requests and bring in the products that are being sought after. What made it so successful for us was the quick response time it took to make adjustments on our shelves and inventory. We don’t have to run this up a corporate latter, and request that the store shelf schematic change; at best, you may have to ask your father and mother, or a brother and sister, and I’m not joking!

Jonathan Salem:
We are all first or second generation Americans. Our family first immigrated from Iraq to Detroit and later came to San Diego. When our parents immigrated here in the late 1970s and early 1980s there were a lot of liquor stores and convenient stores available for purchase in San Diego. In fact, at that time this was the easiest option because, in that era, nobody wanted these businesses and these were the only businesses which Chaldeans were “allowed” to buy. Our parents saw it as a unique and available option. Theoretically, there been other businesses available at the time, the Chaldean community in San Diego would be known for owning something else, but liquor and convenience stores are what we got, and we grew with them. As the first wave of Chaldeans found opportunity and, later, success, our numbers kept growing and growing.
Sid Mikhail:
Our families came from Northern Iraq with high levels of education; they were doctors, lawyers, engineers, as well as merchants. The most accessible step, and the best fit, was the retail space. In our case our families bought liquor stores and convenience stores because there was good, honest living to be made with them.

What is it about craft beer that appeals to Chaldean business people?

Geoi Bachoua:
Money. The industry is strong right now and liquor stores are trying to take advantage. Liquor stores follow trends, fads, and what’s “hot” at the moment. It’s business.

Tony Konja:
Now some brought in a few craft beers while some of us went a little wild and brought anything we could get our hands on. Call us crazy, call us innovators, call us what you want, but the result is an amazing beer selection of over 2,000 craft beers from all over the world. Unfortunately, from a business standpoint today, every store in town including big box retailers are selling craft beer, which has decreased some of the draw to our locations. I caution the beginner beer enthusiasts not to accept the mediocre selection that the big box retailers have to offer. Just because you see Stone, Ballast Point and Green Flash doesn’t mean the beers are stored well. All of these breweries have some of my favorite beers, and some of my longest relationships in the industry. You won’t find any Belching Beaver or Mother Earth brewing on their shelves though, or the knowledgeable staff that goes along with our stores.

Jonathan Salem:
As the sons and daughters took over the family businesses we added items that we are into. We, my brother and I, for example, were into craft beer. It made the work of running the store more fun because we enjoyed the product as well as the people that enjoy craft beer. The main thing, from a business standpoint, is the customer base. Craft beer people are pleasant people who are nicer, excited to try new things, and spend more money on it. Craft beer people are not your average liquor store customer.

Joseph Salem:
The craft beer customer is a very savvy consumer who comes in with an agenda, as well as an open mind. They do their research, know everything about the beers they are purchasing or trying for the first time, and they are happy to spend more on a better or new product.

Sid Mikhail:
For us, we are a market first and foremost, not just a liquor store or beer shop. In fact, we sell more food than anything. I like to believe that Best Damn Beer Shop brings the majority of people in to Krisp, but it’s our natural food selection that’s the real catalyst.

What should people know about the Chaldean role in San Diego’s craft beer community?

Geoi Bachoua:
I’ll just be real and say most Chaldeans are just in it for the money. However, I’ve been selling craft beer since 2001. It evolved from my hobby of collecting and drinking craft beer since I was in my late teens (1995-1999). My intent on building our former business’ (South Bay Drugs) craft beer section was to simply have the community taste what I was tasting, and, if they liked it, to explore other products and styles. It was, and still is, more than just about making money.

Tony Konja:
I want to say Chaldeans own something in the neighborhood of 1,200 of the aforementioned business in the County of San Diego. I don’t think Chaldeans went looking for craft beer, rather craft beer was looking for a home and Chaldeans embraced it, learned about it, and continue to explore it. For example, Jonathan Salem and I, along with other friends, enjoyed tasting some sours last month at Press Box, his craft beer sports bar in Rancho San Diego during a “beer sharing” program they run on Wednesday nights.

What would you like to accomplish with your craft beer centric businesses?

Tony Konja:
Our family goal is to bring a friendly atmosphere, consistent craft beer offering, knowledgeable staff, fresh beer, at a reasonable price to your neighborhood near you.

Jonathan Salem:
We want to always keep up with the latest beers. We take pride in being the best craft beer spot in the South Bay. We are remodeling and redesigning our store to keep up-to-date.

Sid Mikhail:
We want to raise people’s awareness about craft beer in our community. The majority of people downtown, whether they’re residents or people who work here, don’t know about us. We pick and choose products based on our community’s needs, craft beer or not, and we want to meet more customers so we can adapt and bring new and needed items to our shop.

What can we expect from the Chaldean craft beer community in the future?

Craft beer really picked us. The craft beer community, the people in our neighborhood, demanded it. If you listen to your customers, build relationships by staying on the same page, it is the best way to grow your business. Ultimately, the customer has had the most power in determining why we sell craft beer, the vote with their dollar.
Tony Konja:
For KnB, our future plans are to grow our brewing business. We are still using guest brewers, but we are looking for somebody to take this over and give it the attention it deserves to take it to the next level. Our newest venture Brabant Belgian Café is a joint venture with my brother Randy, Adam Parker, and yours truly. I first met Adam at my Keg N Bottle on El Cajon Blvd as a college kid buying craft beer (unusual at the time, especially when all his friends were buying 40s of Old English). He helped make KnB in Del Cerro what it is today. He showed through his hard work and that red beard of his the passion I’m looking for, and he is now an equity partner in Brabant.

Jonathan Salem:
We hope to finish the remodel and redesign of South Bay liquor this summer. We are also growing our craft beer-centric restaurant, Press Box, out in East County more and more every day. Aside from this, we are always looking for opportunities to spread craft beer throughout San Diego.

Sid Mikhail:
By the end of 2014 Golden Hill will be the home of a second Krisp store that will house the second Best Damn Beer Shop. There are very few organic food markets that are also craft beer-centric in the immediate area. We will provide new products and services to the area of Golden Hill in a meaningful way.

What should people know about the Chaldean people?

Tony Konja:
Well you can look to guys like Sid, at Best Damn Beer Shop, who took his family supermarket, reinvented the concept to a relevant health food market called Krisp, and added one of SD’s best selections of craft beer as well as a home brew shop.

You can look at Joe & Johnny at South Bay Liquor and Press box. They have a retail mecca of beer at their retail location and come up with great beer events for you to enjoy at their bar and restaurant. They are an awesome brotherly duo in the craft beer community, and we are lucky to have them.

Now I’ve mentioned many Chaldean names, but there are so many more that have made tremendous improvements to elevate our craft beer community. My parents Jim & Bernadette at the top, my older brother Roby, my younger sister Vicky and youngest brother Randy. All of which, own, one way or another, and make up the Keg N Bottle Family.

Jonathan Salem:
Chaldeans are hard workers. We try take care of the customers as best we can. We are very family-oriented. The craft beer community is very much like a family. That is probably why we like it so much. The craft beer community makes us happy. It is so rewarding to make people happy and satisfied with a rare beer or good recommendation.

Sid Mikhail:
We are Chaldeans, and we take our culture and traditions very seriously. We are very family-oriented, this means that we tend to help each other out and stick together to cross promote. So, when you have an opportunity to work with a Chaldean business person, it is important to keep it real and keep your word, because we sure do.
In early June, brewers guild representatives from across the country traveled to Chico to help brew a special beer that will be served at each of the festivals that are part of Sierra Nevada’s seven-city Beer Camp Across America, which starts this month. Brian Scott, Karl Strauss Equipment Maintenance & Packaging Supervisor, and San Diego Brewers Guild President, represented our city, where Beer Camp makes a stop July 20 (Scott is pictured in the black shirt adding grain).

Every craft brewer in the nation was invited to pour beer at the fest closest to them.
“Just to be here is incredibly inspiring,” said Scott during the pilgrimage to Northern California. “I’m seeing so many different things that I would love to convince Matt (Rattner, Karl Strauss Co-Founder and President) to buy.”

Here are the Beer Camp stops:

- **Sat, July 19:** Northwest Edition at Sierra Nevada Hop Field in Chico, CA, 12-5 p.m.
- **Sun, July 20:** Southwest Edition at Embarcadero North in San Diego, CA, 1-6 p.m.
- **Fri, July 25:** Rocky Mountain Edition at Civic Center Park in Denver, CO, 5-10 p.m.
- **Sun, July 27:** Midwest Edition at Navy Pier in Chicago, IL, 12-5 p.m.
- **Fri, August 1:** New England Edition at Thompson’s Point in Portland, ME, 5-10 p.m.
- **Sat, August 2:** Mid-Atlantic Edition at Penn Treaty Park in Philadelphia, PA, 12-5 p.m.
- **Sun, August 3:** Southeast Edition in Mills River, NC, 1-6 p.m.

In addition to locals being a part of Guildy Pleasure, Ballast Point’s Yuseff Cherney, James Murray and Colby Chandler were invited to brew in late April. Their collaborative effort, Electric Ray India Pale Lager, will be part of the 12-pack Sierra Nevada is putting together for release in mid-July. Other collaborators include Allagash, Firestone Walker, Russian River, Ninkasi, Asheville Brewers Alliance, Victory, Oskar Blues, Bell’s, 3 Floyds, Cigar City, and New Glarus.

At time of press, several Beer Camp-related events were scheduled to go down locally, with tappings happening at O’Brien’s (July 11), San Diego Brewing Co. (July 13), Hamilton’s (July 16), West Coast BBQ (July 17), Slater’s 50/50 (July 17), McGregor’s (July 18), South Paw (July 19), and Toronado (July 21).
JULY EVENT
Saturday 7/26
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Boom! An explosion rocked the warm, California night. “Good God, they’re firing at us,” I thought. “They’re launching a grenade attack right here in my living room.” I was jolted awake by the sudden blast not long after falling into a deep sleep. REM sleep was just on the horizon, so it goes without saying that the blast was an unwelcome disruption. My family, visiting from out of state was also awoken by the thundering wallop. Frightened and bewildered, we rose, wiping our tired eyes and made our way into the kitchen to see that the top cupboard had been blasted open. Razor sharp shrapnel littered the floor as my precious home-brewed IPA dripped down onto the counter-top. Wounded soldier. Man down! I feared the worse, but held out hope that no more of my heavily hopped, 22oz bottles of liquid goodness would fall victim to the random bottle bomb. I was aware of the possibility of exploding bottles which can be brought on by a number of issues: bacteria due to insufficient sanitizing, over-carbonation, and high temperatures. I knew that a lack of attention to detail could lead to this type of event, causing the pressure to build to the point that the thick glass would be unable to contain the reaction, resulting in a powerful explosion.

What in God’s name was I thinking trying to brew my own beer? Just a couple of years prior, I would have never imagined the possibility of brewing. I was content with drinking fizzy yellow crap, filled with nasty rice adjuncts, fancy cans that turned the mountains blue, and buying into the less filling/tastes great nonsense. Then the clouds parted, trumpets blared and the hop God’s baptized me in a sea of craft beer.

But now I was brewing my own beer? Such an Arrogant Bastard I was. The thought flooded into my mind faster than the brew flooded from the cupboard. Sure, there’s exhilaration in the consumption of one’s own creation. A sense of pride. Babied and fostered into a Frankenstein; a living being of yeast and hops. I live in San Diego, one of the great brewing cities in the United States, so there’s no shortage of brewed excellence. There’s no way I could compete.

We have some of the top IPA’s, not only in the country but in the world. Any day Alpine’s Nelson or Pure Hoppiness can duke it out with AleSmith’s IPA or Societe’s The Pupil. Then there’s the sours and barrel-aged beers from Lost Abbey and the welcoming garage-style tasting rooms at Mother Earth Brewing and Mike Hess Brewing. It’s a slugfest, no matter how you put it. There’s a plethora of giants within a short distance, and once you get the taste of a true masterful beverage, there’s no turning back; no matter how good your own brew is.

The morning following the initial blast, I grabbed a ladder to begin the messy duty of discarding shards of glass, and soaking up the remnants of the golden ale. I stood face to bottle with the exploding beasts, and asked them why they betrayed me like this.

“I boiled you and fed you delicious pungent hops and beautiful yeast that you ate, farted out and created alcohol. I transformed...
you from a malty based mixture of sugar and water, I gave you life and turned you into beer, and now you repay me by exploding? I could’ve sat back, downed a Green Flash Palette Wrecker, but instead you’ve wrecked by cupboard, and wrecked my kitchen. How dare you!” As I reached down to grab another rag, Boom! Another explosion rocked the cupboard overhead. The golden ale again fell from above, flooding down like Niagara Falls onto my counter top. Cloudy thoughts quickly shifted from, “oh no, not another one,” to “uh oh, there goes another one.” My thoughts came into focus. I was now at war with about twenty, 22oz bottles of beer.

“I’ve been betrayed,” I thought, left alone to fight a battle against a fierce, golden amber beast that stands eleven inches tall and weighs in at 22 ounces. Alpine Brewing Co. has never betrayed me like this. Stone Brewing Co. has never betrayed me. Monkey Paw Brewing has never betrayed me. They’ve always been so pleasant with their Cascade, Centennial, Chinook and Nelson hops. Even far, far away beers like Allagash Curieux from Portland Maine have always treated me as a close friend, and have offered to tickle my taste buds with their Jim Beam, bourbon barrel-aged Tripel and take me to beer euphoria. They’ve never threatened violence, and never made me question the importance of an eyeball or forced me to envision a piece of glass slicing through my jugular. On any given day I can take a short stroll down to the local bottle shop, fall in love all over again and take home a beautifully slick bottle with a sexy green label and a red circle with the word Pliny the Elder draped across its body. Or if I’m feeling like a real mad man, and ready to go a round or two with a beautifully seductive conquest, I can pick up Alesmith’s Horny Devil; the incredibly delicate and complex Belgian Strong Pale Ale, which packs a mighty punch at 11% abv. Or I could go with her speed demon counterpart, Speedway Stout; a beast of a Russian Imperial Stout that’s black as night, smooth as velvet, and as dangerous as a Soviet spy, hot on my trail and determined to steal my thoughts and take my memories.

“I’ve got to get rid of them,” I said. I feared that more would explode, leaving my family and myself in grave danger, so I had no other option. “I must exterminate them,” I thought, as I stepped back into the war zone. But I faced resistance. Not from the enemy, but from my family.

“It’s too dangerous,” they said. Apparently, their visions of sliced jugulars and ripped up eyeballs were more than just fantasy. This was real. They were frightened. “I think we need to call the fire department,” they said.

Good God, the fire department? What are they, nuts? It’s not like they’re grenades, and there’s not a chance in hoppy hell that I’m calling them to dispose of some beer. The fire chief will think I’ve gone bat-shit crazy. Off the rails, totally nuts. Most certainly a total lunatic, and at the very least a raging drunkard.

“No way,” I said. “I have a better idea. I’ll just wrap myself in a couple of sweatshirts, tie a towel around my neck, put on some sunglasses and snow gloves and remove the bottles one by one and throw them all away.” Done. It was a simple plan. One I was sure would be most effective. It was a good plan, but unfortunately my family was not on board. This was not a battle I was going to win. So after much deliberation, and some back and forth bickering, I sucked it up and made the short journey to the local fire department.

I approached the side entrance, took a deep breath, and prepared myself, knowing damn well that there was a possibility that I would be detained, locked snuggly into a strait jacket and transported directly to the loony bin. Inside I could hear the sounds of college football. After two knocks, the door opened.

“What can I help you with?” said the man, dressed in shorts and a blue fireman shirt.

“Oh. This is going to sound completely bizarre,” I said, “but I’ve got a bit of a situation.” I described the unusual circumstance and my family’s concern. “Do you think you guys can come out and give me a hand with these things?” I asked. At the very least I figured that their face shields and thick suits would protect them from the savage beasts.

“Well, we’ve never encountered a situation like this, but I’ll send the guys out,” he said.

Ten minutes later they arrived in a full length rig, blowing the air horn to let me and anyone else within a three block radius know of their arrival. I met them outside, and again explained the dilemma. Following the full brief, they entered. They eyed the closed cupboard, keeping their distance and stared at it as though it was...
the den of viscous, man-eating vipers.

“We’re not going to be able to remove them,” said one of the men. “What you’re going to have to do is leave them in there for a couple of weeks—maybe three weeks and give them a chance to settle before you remove them.”

A shocking development. No doubt. My creation had become too dangerous for even the bravest of men.

“No, it’s too dangerous,” they responded, exiting the kitchen and returning to the station.

It became apparent that we were left alone, stranded on a five man dingy in the middle of the great Pacific with no sign of help. Man versus monster. It was my time to rise up and destroy my once close friend. A friend I spent hours creating. Hours of sweating over a boiling kettle, precisely measuring the hops and the grain, and weeks of constant temperature control, a secondary fermentation process and an extra dose of hops. But let this be clear. This was no longer my friend; despite the heavenly pine and citrus notes that escaped from the bottle and traveled up through my nostrils to zap my senses. It was my time to conquer.

I dug deep into my closet, in search of armor, attempting to locate my bag of winter clothing on this 80-degree day. Something to protect me from the beasts or the vipers, whatever was hiding behind the wooden doors. I located a fleece, along with a thick, hooded wool sweatshirt. I wrapped my neck in a large towel to protect the ever important jugular as I slid on two pairs of winter gloves. As I struggled to pull the second pair on over the other, I couldn’t help but hear the ghost of Johnny Cochran, “If it doesn’t fit, you must acquit.”

I was ready, fully equipped and ready for battle. I climbed atop the counter and slowly opened the cupboard. I feared that any moment one of those deadly vipers would strike, sink his deadly fangs into my arm and drop me like a bowling ball to the kitchen floor. Once the cupboard was completely opened, I could see an army of soldiers, a full regiment, standing tall and staring me directly in the eye. Quickly, I grabbed them by their necks, two at a time and slid them carefully into a 32-gallon trashcan. Clank. Clank. Clank. They each found their resting place at the bottom of the can.

“I’m sorry,” I said, whispering underneath my breath. “I should’ve been more careful with you. Sanitized you better. Taken better care. I’m sorry.” I could feel the broken glass that littered the battlefield, but stayed focused and continued the mission. “Snap out of it,” I thought. “Now is not the time for compassion. Destroy the savage. Cry later.”

As the final bottle slid down into the trash, clanking against the rest of his buddies, I felt a sense of accomplishment. The mission was complete, and we had won the war. Although no medals were awarded and no victory flags were flown, we knew that we had won. We triumphed.

Luckily, there were hundreds of options to celebrate this momentous occasion. In years past, it felt as though you’d have to fly thousands of miles, squished between two strangers on a 747 jet and fly for hours across the dark Atlantic to obtain a tasty beverage. Fortunately, this is no longer the case. On any given day, I can shuffle down the street and find American brewed beer in bottle form, or something freshly tapped among dozens of beers that will satisfy the most stringent of hop-heads, Belgian enthusiasts, spine-tingling sour-lovers, winter-warming Imperial Stouts, Porters, Reds, Ambers, or cool-me-down Pilsners, Lagers, Wit’s and Hefeweizen’s. The savage beasts had been defeated. It was a wicked journey. A firefight, a battle, a cry for help, and an overwhelming victory. The faded and bizarre disposal of my own creation slowly blurred into a pint of AleSmith IPA.

“Cheers,” I said, as we clanked the glasses together in triumph.
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<td>760.407.7600</td>
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<td>1356 W Valley Pkwy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>760.426.8820</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Manhattan Tap Tavern</td>
<td>3. Board &amp; Brew</td>
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<td>4. Palm Springs Liquor</td>
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<tr>
<td>6380 Del Cerro Blvd.</td>
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<td>619.286.0321</td>
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<td>1. Tin Star Brewing Co.</td>
<td>2. Tin Star Brewing Co.</td>
<td>760.935.8100</td>
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<tr>
<td>437 S. Highway 101</td>
<td>858.353.7174</td>
<td>13200 Kirkham Wy. Ste 105</td>
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<td>858.300.8070</td>
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<td>760.632.2437</td>
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**BEER BARS & RESTAURANTS**

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<tr>
<td>301 W Washington St.</td>
<td>619.295.0217</td>
<td>760.263.2377</td>
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<td>1212 Camino Del Mar</td>
<td>641 S. Coast Hwy.</td>
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<td>858.481.1021</td>
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A Thousand Words...
Gents from Hamiltons/Monkey Paw/Small Bar compete in the Dogfish Head Intergalactic Bocce Tourney at the Ace Hotel in Palm Springs, May 2014
Visit Vista in North San Diego County to enjoy a large selection of award winning craft beer. Ten breweries with more breweries opening soon. Vista - it’s a craft brew destination.
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