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As the weather warms up, the West Coaster online event calendar — westcoastersd.com/event-calendar — fills up.

This month alone the events already listed include brewmaster dinners at both Rock Bottom locations, a bacon and beer fest at Aztec, several American Craft Beer Week-themed events, and numerous anniversaries: Cali Kebab - 1 Year, Mother Earth - 3 years, Toronado - 5 years, and Port Brewing/The Lost Abbey - 7 years.

We try to keep the calendar updated, but we're not psychic. If your beer-related business is hosting something, please help us reach your audience by submitting your event with the simple form available at westcoastersd.com/submit-an-event.

Salud,

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

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**WRITERS**

**COLUMNIST INTO THE BREW**

Sam Tierney is a graduate of the Sac State and Cicerones World Beer Academy, brewing technology diploma program. He currently works as a brewer at Freestone Walker Brewing Company and has most recently passed the Certified Cicerone® exam. He's gekk'o out on all things related to brewing, beer styles, and beer history.

**COLUMNIST PLATES & PINTS**

Brandon Hernández is a native San Diego, proud to be contributing to a publication that serves a positive purpose for his hometown and its beer-loving inhabitants. In addition to his 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, travel and other such killer topics to national publications including The Beer Connoisseur, BeerWest, Beer Magazine, Medieval and Wine Collector as well as local outlets including San Diego Magazine, The San Diego Reader, Edible San Diego, Pacific San Diego, Ranch & Coast and 617 San Diego.

**COLUMNIST THE CARBOY CHRONICLES**

Ryan Roschan 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. Selecting the macro lager, he enjoyed British and Irish style ales before discovering the outstanding local beer scene in North County and the rest of the county. After his introduction to brewing beer by a family friend, he became acutely interested in moving into all-grain brewing. Between batches of beer, he posts video beer reviews on YouTube (user: SumplyBeau) multiple times a week along with occasional homebrew videos and footage of beer related shenanigans.

**COLUMNIST THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE**

Gonzalo J. Quiñótero, Ed.D. is a San Diego native, three-time SDSU grad, career educator, and co-founder of the popular multimedia craft beer discussion CraftBeerBites.com. As avid homebrewer, Cicerone Certified Beer Server, and seasoned traveler, Dr. Quiñótero 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. Quiñótero has developed a passion for spreading the good word of great beer.
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**ON THE COVER:**  
Father and son team Jim and Matt Akin, on brewhouse and tank arrival day late March. Photo by Ryan Lamb
MORE BELCHING BEAVER
Vista’s Belching Beaver opened up a new 12-tap tasting room inside the former Motorsport Scooters building, just south of El Cajon Boulevard on 30th St. Situated between Tiger! Tiger! and Ritual Tavern, the ‘Beaver brings a relaxed garage-door appointed tasting room for growler fills, pints, and tasters. Hours: 3-9 p.m. weekdays and 3 p.m. - 12 p.m. weekends. Address: 4225 30th St, San Diego, 92104.

MODERN TIMES KICKSTARTS BIKE SD
Modern Times Beer earned a $2,400 donation to nonprofit bicycle advocacy group Bike SD by becoming the most-backed brewery ever on the crowdsourced microloan website Kickstarter. Seven vendors, including Premier Stainless Systems, Atlas Kegs, Coastal Automation Solutions, The Country Malt Group, Helms Workshop, Brewers Supply Group, and Beer-Con grouped together to fund the “bonus” donation if they passed over the $52,375 mark. The under-construction Loma Portal brewery wielded their Kickstarter campaign effectively, with nearly $55,000 promised at time of press, easily surpassing their original goal of $40,000. Keep up to date on the progress and/or schedule a brewery visit by signing up for their email list at moderntimesbeer.com.

BOSTON BEER: MORE SCROOGE THAN FEZZIWG
In a move ripe with irony, lawyers for Boston Beer Co. aka Samuel Adams recently contacted Fezziwig’s Brewing Co. of Carlsbad, CA. Boston Beer felt that the copyright for their seasonal Old Fezziwig Ale was infringed by the San Diegan nanobrewery. Weighing the outstanding costs of a legal battle against the behemoth brewery, Fezziwig’s owner Daniel Guy agreed to change the name of his operation. The irony? In Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, Mr. Fezziwig was once the employer of Ebenezer Scrooge. Their characters were in direct contrast. Fezziwig was generous and kind; more interested in happiness than money. On the other hand, Scrooge was miserly and mean; putting business and money above all else.

After soliciting new name suggestions online, Fezziwig’s is scheduled to host two “Grand Renaming” parties Friday, May 31 and Saturday, June 1.

ALPINE LOOKS TO CONTRACT BREW WITH COLD SPRINGS
Pete Rower at the UT San Diego reports that Alpine Beer Co. is poised to ink a deal to produce 5,000 total barrels of Nelson, Duet, and Hoppy Birthday. The catch? The beer will be produced on a contract basis in Minnesota by Cold Spring Brewery. While the prospect of seeing more Alpine Beer is exciting, there is a conventional wisdom that believes contract brewing is undesirable. Alpine owner Pat McIlhenney contends that the contract brewing setup is a means to an end, and that the profits from the contract brew sold will be used to expand operations within San Diego county. If the deal goes through, kegs, 22 ounce bottles, and 16 ounce aluminum bottles will start appearing in Fall 2013.

BALLAST POINT TO OPEN IN LITTLE ITALY
Last month, Candice Woo of Eater San Diego broke the news of a small Ballast Point brewery opening in Little Italy in 2013. West Coaster was pleased to learn that this brewery will focus on small-batch research and development, and will be headed by BP’s Specialty Brewer Colby Chandler. Chandler, a former SD Brewers Guild President, is slated to expand his sour beer program and will be making the move from his current post at Lindy Vista to the Little Italy brewhouse. The 9,000 square feet expansion will be located at 2215 India Street (mere steps away from Bottlecraft and 98 Bottles), and is slated to open mid to late summer 2013.
EAST TO WEST IPA COMING SOON

After a successful collaboration brew of West to East IPA with COEDO Brewery in Japan last September, the Home Brew Mart/Bulllast Point team welcomed Hiromi Uetake and Shigeharu Asagiri to Linda Vista in late April for the creation of East to West IPA. This beer will be quite similar to the last, except for the use of Meyer lemons from Jamul, California malted barley and brown rice. Roughly one-third of the 60 kegs will be shipped overseas by Long Beach’s Global Craft Trading, with the rest making its way to local accounts.

EL CAJON BREWING CO. & LA JOLLA BREW HOUSE SHUTTER

Mired in internal strife and mismanagement, El Cajon Brewing Co. closed its doors April 2013 after less than two years in business. According to an April 23 article by the UT San Diego, the brewing equipment is owned by the City of El Cajon - not the owners of El Cajon Brewing Co. The City of El Cajon is seeking “someone to open a similar business using the equipment that is owned by the city’s redevelopment successor agency.” ECBC Owner Stephen Meadows applied for bankruptcy protection in October of 2012.

Across town, La Jolla Brew House has shut down after nearly ten years in business. Although technically a brewpub, there hadn’t been any house beer on tap for some time. When they were brewing, West Coaster watched as LJ BH hired and then quickly parted ways with at least three brewmasters (all of whom are now pursuing other promising endeavors).
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SINCE 1992
HOW LAND USE POLICY CAN MAKE OR BREAK THE SD BEER SCENE

BY ANDREW KEATTS, VOICE OF SAN DIEGO

Beer has become a favorite son in San Diego. Politicians make a point of being seen at local beer festivals. The local brewers’ guild gets tax dollars to promote its annual weeklong celebration. And the City Council’s land use committee is taking a look this week at a proposal to help local brewers continue to grow.

And the local beer scene isn’t just a facilitator of fun, it’s become a legitimate economic force: The National University System Institute for Policy Research last month released a study pegging the industry’s net benefit to the local economy at nearly $300 million per year.

But San Diego isn’t alone. The industry as a whole is undergoing massive growth statewide and nationwide, and other markets are similarly carving out niches as hotbeds for good beer.

For the local industry to remain competitive, said Vince Vasquez, author of the study, the city needs to address a series of land-use-related constraints.

One is that new converters to good beer might be less willing to venture to industrial areas like Miramar, home to many of the city’s first breweries, Vasquez said.

“I love the Spartan, grassroots feel to enjoying beer, where you’re not here for anything else but for the beer itself,” Vasquez said. “But someone like me five to 10 years from now might like something closer to work, more accommodating.”

That change is already taking place, as more breweries open in North Park and East Village, but current land use policies make a low ceiling for such expansion.

Breweries are currently considered “light manufacturing” by the city’s zoning ordinance.

Because of sound, smell and pollution concerns, light manufacturing companies usually can’t get too close to homes. And as far as the zoning ordinance is concerned, there’s no difference between a small batch brewery and one operating on a much larger scale.

But encouraging new breweries to open in the city’s urban core is possible with a change to land use policy.

One option, embraced by other cities, is introducing microbrewery-specific land use designations.

Doing so, however, would mean implementing the designation through the city’s various community plans, a time-intensive, costly and difficult process.

Instead, according to architect and planning expert Howard Blackson, the city should issue permits that give it more direct control over the operations that are most likely to result in neighborhood conflict.

“Our zoning treats everything as one-size-fits-all, so any brewery is seen as Anheuser-Busch, even though there are different levels of brewery,” he said.

“We need something at a neighborhood scale, at a block scale, at a lot scale, so it’s based on how micro your microbrewery gets.”

The city should issue permits, he said, that carefully outline when a brewery can brew and how much beer it can produce, based on its lot’s size and proximity to housing.

He pointed to North Park’s Thorn Street Brewery, a small on-site brewing operation and tasting room located within a compact commercial area at the corner of Thorn and 32nd streets.

“We know the Thorn Street model works, so I’d hope instead of putting breweries through a horrible rezoning process, we could just manage it through a use-permit,” Blackson said.

The city’s land use and housing committee approved last month a similar item. It’ll come before the full council in the coming months.

The amendment to the city’s land development code would allow breweries of 12,000 square feet, operating in industrial areas, to open tasting rooms or restaurants of more than 3,000 square feet, which is the current limitation.

The current limitation is meant to restrict restaurant-only operations within industrial areas, but it’s having an unintended effect on breweries in the same areas looking to allow for additional space to accommodate a growing customer base.

I’m Andrew Keatts, a reporter for Voice of San Diego. Please contact me if you’d like at andrew.keatts@voiceofsandiego.org or 619.325.0529 and follow me on Twitter: @andy_keatts
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DIRECT IMPACT

On April 22, the National University System Institute for Policy Research published a study revealing the economic impact of San Diego’s craft breweries in 2011.

The study’s overall findings:

• Craft breweries have a significant regional economic impact. In 2011, brewers and brew pubs generated a $299.5 million direct economic impact in San Diego County.

• The economic contribution of craft brewers is more than 1.5 times greater than the economic impact of Comic-Con International, San Diego’s largest annual convention. NUSIPR also found that the industry made $680.8 million in sales, and employed 1,630 workers in 2011.

• San Diego’s craft brewing community is growing rapidly. More than half of the brewery licenses in the region have been issued since 2011. Larger, more established brewers are also expanding and adding new locations. Given that expansion, when 2012 figures are released we expect to find an even larger economic impact.

• Brewery tourism is an important part of San Diego’s visitor industry. Unlike seasonal attractions, brewery tourism occurs year-round, and most of the major industry events in the region occur during non-peak visitor months. Readers should note that because of data and methodological limitations, the figures above do not include the impact of beer-related tourism.

By the numbers:

• 497 - Brewery Workers
• 1,133 - Brewpub Workers
• 1,630 - Total Brewery Industry Jobs
• 2,796 - Total Jobs Created/Sustained by Brewery Industry

"San Diego’s craft brewing industry is a major economic driver in the region. That said, more partnerships and investment will be needed to advance industry development long-term. Competitor markets are also experiencing similar growth and interest in new brewpubs and breweries."

- NUSIPR Senior Policy Analyst Vince Vasquez

View the full study: masinstitute.org/assets/resources/pageResources/NUSIPR_SD_Craft_Breweries_Econ_Impact_Brief.pdf
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Before the days of municipal water treatment, people were wary of public water sources as contaminative water led to diseases like cholera, dysentery, and typhoid fever.

When that water was used in the making of beer, bacterial sickness was mitigated on boiling into the bacteria making the water in the beer safe to consume.

Today brewers better understand the chemical makeup of the water and are able to give their beers different characteristics depending on how they treat their water.

For example, San Diego is known for its hoppy beers and this is owed in large part to our municipal water. San Diego has "hard" water. Depending on location, San Diego County water supplies contain large amounts of sulfate which helps with bitterness and therefore brewers can extract more of the alpha acids from hops without over-bittering their beer.

Malts
Malt is the term given to a cereal grain that has been soaked in water, beginning the germination process and the starch and nutrients are modified through the action of enzymes.

Hops
Most regional brewers and home brewers use a pellet form of hops—those that have been dried, ground, and vacuum packed. They are usually a storage and freshness issue for smaller operations.

Yeast
The yeast are unicellular organisms that turn sugar into ethanol and give beer bubbles through metabolism.

Bottled & Kegged exhibit curator Matthew Schiff. Photos by Ryan Lamb
The year 1868. An eventful year in respect to the progress of these United States. President Andrew Johnson became the first president to be impeached. The University of California was founded, setting the stage for the existence of all universities in California. President Johnson became the first president to be acquitted. The 14th Amendment was adopted, granting citizenship and civil rights to all Americans. The first Memorial Day holiday was observed in the U.S., undoubtedly resulting in the first Memorial Day barbecues. Many San Diegans at the time likely took a break to enjoy this post-Civil War celebration with some cold and refreshing brews from Conrad Dobler and his fermentorium: The San Diego Brewery.

Dobler was the original San Diegan craft beer brewer at our county’s first commercial brewery, producing 200 barrels of beer in Chalas Valley. Not only was this the first brewery, but it was also the largest industrial operation of San Diego at the time, and one of the first companies anywhere to use large-scale refrigeration.

Despite 1868 being the true birth of San Diego beer, the late 80s is generally viewed as the period when the industry showed its first signs of bloom, through Bolt Brewing and Karl Strauss. Based on this math, the culture would still be carded at the door to prove legal drinking age.

Yet there is quite a fascinating tale spanning from 1868 to Prohibition and then through the modern age, and the San Diego History Center recently debuted a new exhibition to tell the story. “Bottled & Kegged: San Diego’s Craft Brew Culture”, which runs through January 20, 2014 at scenic Balboa Park, explores the ebb and flow of beer production in the San Diego region over the years and answers the question: Why is San Diego becoming such a nationally renowned place for craft beer production and innovation?

Beginning with the region’s earliest inhabitants, the exhibit highlights events and individuals who built a brewing industry where once there was none, kept an industry alive during Prohibition, and managed to bring back what was, at one time, one of the region’s most robust enterprises. The exhibit features many hands-on interactive elements that help explain the brewing process, how San Diego County brewers achieve such expansive flavor profiles, and the science behind matching beers with food. Bottled & Kegged has components that speak to audiences of all ages and will educate even the most avid craft beer lover.

Recently we visited the San Diego History Center to meet a young and energetic historian, Matthew Schiff, who serves as the exhibit’s curator. “Why now?” I asked him of the exhibit’s timing. Schiff replied that in recent years the San Diego History Center was lucky enough to have Virginia Morrison, a local attorney, on its board. Aside from her many skills and capabilities, she understood that San Diego’s brewing industry had a rich history, thanks in part to the fact she’s married to Marty Mendola,
Where are San Diego County’s Craft Beers Brewed?
brewmaster at Rock Bottom La Jolla and a former San Diego Brewers Guild president. “She helped create the Taste of San Diego Craft Brews event,” Schaff explained, “which brought in an entirely new demographic to the San Diego History Center. As we got to meet more of these people, we began looking more deeply into San Diego’s brewing history. We found a wealth of knowledge and over two million photos. As the exhibit’s curator I felt it was important to share this information, develop a clearer picture of the timeline, and answer some questions as to how and why this industry is now thriving in San Diego.”

Upon entering the hall you are immediately greeted with a wall of local bottles and growlers on display in beautifully framed shadow boxes to your right. “This is art,” I whispered to Matthew. He smiled and nodded his head assuredly and said, “This display is a piece of art. We wanted to showcase these items to remind people of the hand-crafted nature of craft beer.”

To the left, a timeline of events starts in 1868 with Conrad Dobler’s San Diego Brewery. With each step you learn more about the innovations, developments, and growth of an industry that was flourishing in our region — yes, region; not only was San Diego becoming a hub of beer brewing, but so was Mexico. In fact, during Prohibition it is when San Diego first became famous for beer tourism. Long before we saw beer busses, private vans, and reappropriated military vehicles in the parking lots of breweries, people were flocking to Tijuana via San Diego for the beer. A weekend trip south of the border meant you could legally enjoy a cold one at the world’s longest bar (measuring 100 yards) by day, and lose yourself, but hopefully not your money, in the glamorous Agua Caliente casino by night. Then you could return to San Diego the next day and enjoy the weather and the beach.

During that era there were no commercial breweries in Tijuana, but there were in Baja, most notably Cervecería Mexicali, where a Czech brewmaster produced quality lagers. There was a steady flow of cash coming from the U.S. to Tijuana, and a steady flow of beer coming from Mexicali to San Diego, until a great earthquake and storm washed out the only road between Mexicali and Tijuana. It was then that the very same people who engineered Charles Lindbergh’s transcontinental marvel The Spirit of St. Louis designed and built a small cargo plane that flew beer from Mexicali to Tijuana. This was the first documented air-mail beer delivery service in the Americas, and an innovation that kept the industry alive in our region.

As you continue down the exhibit’s timeline you will learn that in 1933, just after the repeal of Prohibition, Aztec Brewing Company opened San Diego’s first post-Prohibition beer bar, Rathskeller, at 2301 Main Street in the neighborhood of Barrio Logan. On display are handcrafted murals, tables and chairs from the original tasting room, juxtaposed with an original photo showing the Rathskeller in all of its glory. At this time San Diego again began producing large quantities of beer, supplying 25% of the state’s beer in the late 1940s until national conglomerates started to
push local brands out of the market. In 1953, production ceased in the City of San Diego.

“The death of beer in San Diego was not unlike that of the rest of the country. Advances in transportation, particularly large trucks and cargo planes, made it easier to produce beer in one region and distribute it throughout others,” Schiff continued. “New-found ways of distribution, paired with mass marketing campaigns created the belief that an identity moves a product, rather than a product creating an identity. That was what edged out the local brewer, along with the muscle and money to undersell, which started a trend throughout the nation.”

However, San Diego’s proximity to Mexico led many people from our region down to Baja where they enjoyed Mexican beers. Yes, those beers were also macros, but it showed the consumer that there were other beers in the world. This kept the desire for new and different beers alive until 1978, when the federal government made homebrewing legal. California quickly followed suit when the Bates Bill, a California law sponsored by Senator Bates, an avid homebrewer, was passed into law.

Not being of the era, or familiar with the Bates Bill, I asked Schiff what made 1978 the right time for homebrewing to become legal. “Rachel Carson’s 1962 book Silent Spring shook people into realizing the need to protect the environment, the first Earth Day was celebrated in 1969, and the hippie movement of the 1960s and 70s saw people growing their own food and making their own clothes. Homebrewing was a natural progression,” Schiff surmised. “The Bates Bill tied food to the making of beer, and essentially legislated the existence of brewpubs, which placed a veti of legitimacy to brewing, taking it out of the shadows of bars and into the limelight of a family establishment with beers. If the hippies of the 60s and 70s led to homebrewing, the Bates Bill and yuppies of the 80s led to the boom of brewpubs, as well as craft beer breweries of the 80s and early 90s.”

Then from 1996 to 2001 there was a big pushback from macro brewers who focused on making low calorie beers that appealed to tastes of that era. So who got good beer back into the fighting shape it maintains today? Foodies and hipsters, in a way. “The farm-to-table movement, the desire for artisanal ingredients, the way craft brewers ply their trade — these aren’t disjointed,” Schiff noted.

That explains the growth of San Diego’s craft beer community and culture, but how has the industry grown into an economic powerhouse? Schiff admitted, anecdotally, that San Diego has long been an established tourism hub. Add to that distinction the fact that it is now a Brew tourism hub has not hurt San Diego’s mystique.

Perhaps not coincidentally, San Diego has been successful at the Great American Beer Festival as well as the World Beer Cup for nearly two decades, placing San Diego in the top tier of decorated beer cities.

When asked about the future of craft beer in our region, Schiff, with the reflex of a historian, referred to the cycles displayed in the exhibit’s timeline, but also returned to the word collaboration. “It is San Diego’s unique spirit of collaboration and good will within the industry that has made it grow, and will make it flourish.”

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- **July 26** – Alpine Beer Company and Sea Salt Candy Co. with a special screening of *Suds County, USA*
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On April 10 the Brewers Association released this list of the top fifty craft brewing companies in the United States based on 2012 sales volume, and three San Diego breweries made the list.

TOP 50 U.S. CRAFT BREWING COMPANIES:

1. Boston Beer Co. (Boston, MA)
2. Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. (Chico, CA)
3. New Belgium Brewing Co. (Fort Collins, CO)
4. The Gambrinus Co. (San Antonio, TX)
5. Deschutes Brewery (Bend, OR)
6. Lagunitas Brewing Co. (Petaluma, CA)
7. Bell’s Brewery, Inc. (Kalamazoo, MI)
8. Matt Brewing Co. (Ulster, NY)
9. Harpoon Brewery (Boston, MA)
10. Stone Brewing Co. (Escondido, CA)
11. Brooklyn Brewery (Brooklyn, NY)
12. Boulevard Brewing Co. (Kansas City, MO)
13. Dogfish Head Craft Brewery (Milford, DE)
14. Allagash Brewing Co. (Portland, ME)
15. Shoyard Brewhing Co. (Portland, OR)
16. Alaskan Brewing Co. (Juneau, AK)
17. New Glarus Brewing Co. (New Glarus, WI)
18. Long Trail Brewing Co. (Bridgewater Corners, VT)
19. Great Lakes Brewing Co. (Cleveland, OH)
20. Firestone Walker Brewing Co. (Paso Robles, CA)
21. Anchor Brewing Co. (San Francisco, CA)
22. Rogue Ales (Newport, OR)
23. Summit Brewing Co. (St. Paul, MN)
24. Full Sail Brewing Co. (Hood River, OR)
25. SweetWater Brewing Co. (Atlanta, GA)
26. Victory Brewing Co. (Downingtown, PA)
27. Oskar Blues Brewery (Longmont, CO)
28. Cold Spring Brewery/Third Street Brewhouse (Cold Spring, MN)
29. Flying Dog Brewery (Frederick, MD)
30. Founders Brewing Co. (Grand Rapids, MI)
31. Ninkasi Brewing Co. (Eugene, OR)
32. CraftWorks Restaurant & Breweries, Inc. (Chattanooga & Louisville, TN/CO)
33. Odell Brewing Co. (Fort Collins, CO)
34. Bear Republic Brewing Co. (Guerneville, CA)
35. Stevens Point Brewery (Stevens Point, WI)
36. Blue Point Brewing Co. (Patchogue, NY)
37. Southern Tier Brewing Co. (Lakewood, NY)
38. Lost Coast Brewery and Cafe (Eureka, CA)
39. Karl Strauss Brewing Co. (San Diego, CA)
40. BJ’s Restaurant & Brewery, Inc. (Huntington Beach, CA)
41. Breaker’s Edge Brewery (Denver, CO)
42. North Coast Brewing Co. (Fort Bragg, CA)
43. Left Hand Brewing Co. (Longmont, CO)
44. St. Louis Brewery, Inc./Schlafly Beers (St. Louis, MO)
45. Saint Arnold Brewing Co. (Houston, TX)
46. Ballast Point Brewing Co. (San Diego, CA)
47. Big Sky Brewing Co. (Missoula, MT)
48. Allagash Brewing Co. (Portland, ME)
49. Uinta Brewing Co. (Salt Lake City, UT)
50. Tooraks Brewing Co. (Hershey, PA)

Petaluma, CA’s Lagunitas jumped three spots from number nine to number six in 2012. Photo by Ryan Lamb

Brewers Association’s Definition of a craft brewer

Small: Annual production of 6 million barrels of beer or less. Beer production is attributed to a brewer according to the rules of alternating proprietorships. Flavored malt beverages are not considered for purposes of this definition.

Independent: Less than 25% of the craft brewery is owned or controlled (or equivalent economic interest) by an alcohol beverage industry member who is not themselves a craft brewer.

Traditional: A brewer who has either an all malt flagship (the beer which represents the greatest volume among that brewer's brands) or has at least 50% of its volume in either all malt beers or in beers which use adjuncts to enhance rather than lighten flavor.
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Nano Diego

A look at the risks and benefits of brewing small

BY SAM TIERNEY

Take a look at the recently-released Brewers Association Top Craft Brewers List and you'll see several local names pushing the limits of beer produced locally in San Diego. Green Flash is even undertaking a new brewery location on the East Coast. Everywhere you look, there is growth and expansion. Local beer is booming, with seemingly no end in sight.

Amongst this bonanza, several of the local breweries that have opened in the past few years have taken a decidedly more local and intimate focus. Since Hess Brewing and Automatic Brewing Co. first opened in 2010, an ever-growing group of brewers in San Diego have chosen to focus on extremely small-batch brewing. These nanobrewers, sometimes producing as little as 20 gallons of beer at a time, are redefining what local, artisan beer can be.

While there is no clear origin for the dividing line, most nanobrewers consider a nanobrewery to top out at about three barrels (93 gallons) of beer per batch. On the low side, some nanobrewers still use the same 10-gallon homebrew system that they worked out their original recipes on. Sam Calagione famously started Dogfish Head of Delaware on a 10-gallon system, and they have since grown to producing over 200,000 barrels of beer a year. While still not legally recognized as a distinct class, “nano” simply came into use as a descriptor for a brewery that is, well, smaller than a microbrewery. For comparison, most brewpubs have a brewhouse that makes seven-10 barrels of beer per batch, and most distributing microbreweries start in the 15-20 barrel range, with regional breweries like Stone pumping out about 120 barrels at a time from their brewhouse, typically brewing multiple times into even larger fermentation tanks.

Common industry wisdom several years ago was that if you weren't a brewpub, you were wasting your startup cash, as well as remaining sanity, by opening with anything smaller than 15 barrels. This idea was based on the assumption that you would distribute your beer in kegs to draught accounts, and possibly also bottles to bars and stores, either by yourself or a third party wholesaler/distributor. You might have a tasting room, but it wouldn’t be very significant as far as the volume of your beer that you would move out of it. This sizing rationale is based on the analysis of fixed versus variable costs.

A batch of beer takes the same amount of time to make on a one barrel or 15 barrel system, and the amount of space needed is not significantly different between seven...
and 15 barrels (though one barrel can be made in a much smaller space). So your fixed costs, including the same licensing and fees for starting up, would not change much, though your variable costs, mainly ingredients, would. At under 15 barrels per batch, the idea was that your cost-per-unit would be too high for you to charge what the market would bear and still make a profit. Your fixed costs would essentially eat your profit and you would eventually be forced to upgrade to a larger-sized brewery in order to become profitable enough to survive, or you would go under.

This economic model has changed somewhat in the past several years as brewery taprooms have become more prevalent and popular. Many locales, San Diego included, allow breweries with a certain license to sell full pints of beer and growlers to go out of their tasting rooms. This turns the old thinking on its head because small breweries can now make a survivable profit on a smaller amount of beer due to the higher margins on pints and growlers versus wholesale bottles and kegs. When this route you are essentially a brewpub without a kitchen that may or may not also distribute some of your beer. Add on regular visits from the plethora of awesome local food trucks now doing business, and you have some of the benefit of a kitchen without the risk and cost of starting a restaurant, a decidedly more risky venture these days. Most nanos are selling all or most of their beer out of their taproom, though some, like Cold Bore Brewing Company of Jamul, are packaging all of their beer for local distribution.

Amongst brewers, there is essentially a consensus that the nano step is chosen mainly because it's simply far less expensive than a 15-20 barrel brewery. Without a sizeable trust fund, it can be very daunting to go into massive debt or give up control to investors in order to get started. Starting small allows for more personal control and less risk. At the same time, almost all of them agree that their first brewing system is only a launching pad to larger capacity and production down the road. Dave Hyndman of Wet 'N Reckless embodies this enthusiastic outlook. He enjoys the freedom of artistic experimentation that brewing on a 45-gallon system provides, but also acknowledges the downsides. "The disadvantage is that for every keg of beer I produce there is much more time and labor that goes into it," he says. "It's a labor of love but it's also a reality of the business model. As demand for his beers grows, he plans to expand capacity in his current space.

Vista brewpub Prohibition Brewing Company brewed 350 barrels of beer last year on a three-barrel system, though they already realized the need for more brewing capacity and have just installed a 10-barrel brewhouse built by local San Marcos brewing industry equipment supplier Premier Stainless, on which they plan to brew over 1,000 barrels this year. To head brewers Matthew Adams and Jonathon Rielly, nano is less about the absolute size and more about the local distribution of beer and connection to the community. "In our minds a nano brewery is an establishment that brews beer for their friends and family in their local community," they said, adding, "between the two of us we agree that nano signifies a connection to the community that you are brewing for. Nano is connecting with the people who drink your beer and catering your product to their tastes, even if it conflicts with style guidelines." While many consider nano to be all about size, I do think there is something to be said for the local state of mind.

Another brewery that walks the line is Amplified Ale Works in Pacific Beach. Located inside California Kebab, they were limited by the amount of space they had to build a brewery. They were able to fit a 3.5-barrel brewhouse in a former office, and two seven-barrel fermentation/conditioning tanks behind the bar. They double-batch on brew days, producing seven barrels at a time, so owner JC Hill is reluctant to use the nano label, preferring to call Amplified a "small craft brewery." Right now, they can brew about 150 barrels of beer a month.
a year, a nano-amount by most measures. Hill hopes that will change. "If we can add another seven barrel fermenter and some brite tanks to carbonate in, we’ll be able to brew a lot more" he says. Even within this limited capacity, Hill and head brewer Cy Henley have already experimented with bourbon barrel aging and plan to get into more sour and wild experiments in the future. Nano or not, Amplified is exemplifying creative brewing engineered to fit the constraints of a given space.

One of San Diego's newest breweries, Intergalactic Brewing Company, is set to host their grand opening party on May 4, but owner Alex Van Horne already understands the freedom as well as constraint that starting nano has placed on them. He’s decided to start on a 20-gallon system, and would like to be able to brew 100 barrels in the first year, with expansion allowing more after that. "I am constantly changing recipes and improving the beer," he says of the advantages of brewing on a small scale. "So the more I brew, the more opportunities I will have to make my beer better." At the same time, Van Horne has a keen eye for expanding capacity as the business grows. "I don't think anyone starts nano with the thought that they are going to stay that way. There is always some other end goal." He says, finishing with an assessment that I think sums up the essence of brewing on such a small scale:

"Nano is great for starting out, getting a name, getting credit and a following. But when you start to realize it takes about the same amount of time to do 15 gallons as it does 15 barrels or 150 barrels and you have to hire 10 employees to keep up with demand on a small system, you know that nano is not sustainable. I will add one thing, San Diego is different. With the tasting room culture that is here, nano can work. Just prepare to work 80+ hours a week if you want to make it work."

So all you aspiring homebrewers thinking of starting a nanobrewery in the future, get ready for long hours, mountains of paperwork, and pressure to grow. We brewers are generally a crazy-determined bunch though, and I know more than a few who are up to the challenge.

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BREWERIES IN PLANNING
Current count: 34

Bagby Beer (Oceanside)
Balast Point (Little Italy)
Barrel Harbor (Vista)
Benchmark Brewing (Grantville)
Bespoke Brewing (Little Italy)
Birrificio Calabria (North Park)
BMS Brewing & Distilling (Santee)
Border X Brewing (South Bay)
Devil's Forge (Undisclosed)
Full Body Brewing (North County)
Half Door Brewing (Downtown)
Hess Brewing (North Park)
KnB Wine Cellars (Del Cerro)
Kuracaili (San Marcos)
Legacy Brewing (Oceanside)
Magnetic Brewing (Undisclosed)
Modern Times Beer (Point Loma)
Mother Earth Brewing Co. (Vista)
Nickel Beer Co. (Julian)
North Park Beer Co. (North Park)
OB Brewery (Ocean Beach)
Pizza Port (Bressi Ranch)
Plan 9 Alehouse (Escondido)
Prodigy Brewing (Undisclosed)
Red Topper (Golden Hill)
RPM Brewing (Undisclosed)

Benchmark's brewmaster Matt Akin received his brewhouse and fermentation tanks in late March. Follow the brewery's progress at benchmarkbrewing.com, as they are on track for a May opening at time of press.

Stone Brewing Co. (Escondido)
Stone Liberty Station (Liberty Station)
Taproot Brewing (Undisclosed)
Toolbox Brewing (Undisclosed)
Two Kids Brewing (Undisclosed)
Urban Jungle Brewing (Poway)
Valley Center Brewing (Valley Center)

DISCLAIMER: Due to the complex nature of starting a craft brewing business, this list should be treated as an approximation. Visit westcoastersd.com/sd-brewing-industry-watch for an up-to-date version of this list.
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I'm guessing at some point in their homebrewing experience, most brewers have made a bad beer. Either through poor process, poor fermentation, and/or poor sanitization, the beer has developed aromas and flavors not acceptable for the style being created. A great way to figure out what went wrong is by identifying the offending flavors and aromas in order to link them to the source of the problem.

The BJCP (Beer Judge Certification Program) occasionally offers a sensory evaluation class to help brewers and judges learn about such flavors and their sources. At the class, a sensory evaluation kit with 24 vials from the Siebel Institute in Chicago is used to spike a light, neutral tasting base beer (a control), allowing the aroma and flavor of each sample to come through clearly.

If you'd like to get in on one of these classes, join up with a local homebrew club and find out when a BJCP judge in their ranks can get a subsidized kit. You can also order one straight from siebelinstitute.com; it's pricey at $250 with shipping, but if you consider that the kit serves about 20 people, that's roughly $12 per person.

The first step in the class I attended was to get familiar with the base beer, noting the aroma and flavors present, so you know what to look for in the spiked samples. A spreadsheet was passed out to everyone listing the flavor, flavor descriptor, sources of the flavor, related terms, and the concentration of the flavor in the one-liter pitcher of beer. The class was broken up into five categories – process-related, hops, aging/storage, fermentation, and contamination/infection.

Process-related off flavors included DMS (Dimethyl Sulfide), metallic, and grainy. DMS will produce a cooked vegetable character that is similar to creamed corn and/or cooked tomatoes, making the beer less sweet. DMS can occur when you cover your boil kettle while boiling, not cooling your wort fast enough, or by contamination. A metallic flavor has a tinny, blood-like character that can come from bad water sources or non-passivated brewing vessels. A grainy flavor has a stale, tannic malt character that can come from excessive lautering/sparging, lautering at too high of a pH level, or from an insufficient boil.

Hops provide many flavors to beer but the kit highlights three of them. Geraniol is a floral, rose-like flavor that adds a big perfume character to the beer. Hops can also provide a lot of bitterness, and in this ex-
ample, an intense spice and herbal bitterness similar to quinine. Certainly the least favorable hop character is isovaleric, a flavor that is similar to cheesy, sweaty socks. This can occur with aged hops stored past their prime.

In the case of clear or green bottles, storing a beer is important. If left in sun for several minutes, a beer will become light-struck and produce a skunky aroma and flavor. This is due to a chemical reaction between photons from the light and the hops in the beer. Aging a beer for a length of time can produce two types of oxidation characteristics: papery and sherry. Papery oxidation can make the beer taste like cardboard while a sherry-like (fruity, cherry-like) oxidation character can be quite pleasant in certain styles of beer.

Fermentation can produce quite a few flavors, both good and bad, depending on the yeast used. Pleasant characteristics include spicy clove and banana (found in Hefeweizen and Belgian style ales), almond (marzipan, bitter almond character), banana and pear (isoamyl acetate), flora, anise and apple fruitiness (ethyl hexanoate), and custard, cream soda-like character (vanilla). Unpleasant characteristics include green bitter bruised apple character from staling or contamination (acetaldehyde), oily, buttered popcorn character from contamination or improper maturation (diacetyl), roten, dirty diaper, sewage character from poor yeast health and autolysis, the destruction of the yeast cells from its own enzymes (mercaptan), and nail polish remover character from poor yeast health or extreme fermentation temperatures (ethyl acetate).

Contamination can occur with improper sanitation procedures. Most contaminations occur when undesirable wild yeast and/or bacteria get into the wort or beer and produce undesirable flavors ranging from vinegar-like (acetic acid), sour milk (lactic acid), blue cheese and vomit (butyric acid), damp top soil with bolts (earthy), rancid dirty diapers and body odor (indole), waxy goat cheese (caprylic acid), close spiciness, and buttery tannins. The exception to the above will be in wild/sour ales where pleasant levels of lactic and/or acetic acid are present.

Despite some very unpleasant flavors, it was a great learning experience going through the kit. Doing the class with a large group of people highlighted how different everyone’s palate can be. Certain flavors were more intense for some and harder to detect for others. It was also enjoyable seeing everyone’s reaction to some of the horrible flavors mentioned above.

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**SAN DIEGO HOMEBREWERS ALLIANCE**

*Participating Clubs:*

- **Foam on the Brain** meet the third Saturday of the month at San Diego Brewing Company in Grantville (foamies.net)

- **QUAFF** meet the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Randy Jones All American Sports Grill in Mission Valley (quaaff.org)

- **The Barley Literates** meet the third Wednesday of the month at Holiday Wine Cellar in Escondido (barleyliterate.com)

- **The Mash Heads** meet the second Wednesday of the month in the UTC/Miramar area (mashheads.com)

- **The North County Homebrewers Association** meet the first Saturday or Sunday of the month in North County (meetup.com/northcountyhomebrewers)

- **The Society of Barley Engineers** meet the first Wednesday of the month at Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens (societyofbarleyengineers.org)
Here are some things that stay trapped in one’s memory forever—your wedding day, the birth of your first child, the first time you tried to make hot sauce at home and nearly suffocated said child on capsicum-laced fumes. Haven’t experienced that last one? Well, it’s my intention that, as a direct result of reading my column, you never will. But first, let’s laugh at my (former) culinary ineptitude, shall we?

Picture it, a small apartment in Escondido. A twenty-something aspiring gastronome with a penchant for spicy food decides he’s tired of settling for the sugary, preservative-laced, substandard versions of hot sauce largely available in grocery stores. It’s time to get artisanal. It’s time to make his very own brand of kick-you-in-the-teeth, punch-you-in-the-gut, hot sauce. He even has a slew of badass-sounding names ready to affix to this sure-to-be-the-next-big-thing condiment. All he needs to do is actually make the stuff.
So, he hits the Escondido Henry’s (Sprouts for those of you who have no memory of the last iteration of the local grocery chain) and bought up pounds of chili peppers—habaneros, red and green jalapeños, white and Anaheim, then proceeds to chop them up, sauté them with some onions and garlic, cover them with a mixture of water and vinegar, and bring it all to a low boil.

Like me, my son is afflicted with a bloodlust for blood-boiling heat, so he was as excited about this spicy adventure as I was... until the part where he almost suffocated.

Being the hot sauce novice I was at the time, I took precautions to sanitize and re-sanitize my hands, being careful never to touch my eyes. What I did not do was open a friggin’ window!!!

Shortly after I set the temperature on the stovetop to get the liquid boiling, I received a phone call and retreated to a back bedroom to take it so my son could watch his cartoons at the same blaring level of volume every red-blooded American child desires. Between the riveting conversation and the loud ‘toons, I couldn’t even hear my son coughing up his miniature lungs out in the living room until my throat began to tickle and I, too, found myself unable to fight the urge to cough.

I headed toward the kitchen and, with each step, it got harder and harder to breathe, and my mistake became more and more evident. I turned off the burners and opened the front door and every window, then took my son outside where we spent the next 15 minutes trying to get back to good.

While the hot sauce I eventually made turned out pretty nice (not nearly the Dave’s Insanity Sauce rival I’d been gunning for, but edible and plenty fiery), the memory of that day is not. Clearly, I can’t be trusted to give you sage advice in this area, so I’ve enlisted the skills of someone who can—Clyde Van Arsall, the man behind local craft condiment company, Chingon Hot Sauce.

Van Arsall is a classically trained chef who has owned and operated Del Cerro’s 3 Squares Gourmet for a decade and served as executive chef at nearby KnB Wine Cellars for the past two years. His decision to get into the hot sauce business was similar to what drove me to turn my home into a caustic danger zone.

“I saw a need for a group of hot sauces of varying heat rather than the same old middle-of-the-road stuff,” says Van Arsall. “Our battle cry is ‘burn locally.’ We only use natural ingredients sourced locally and let the heat of the chilies, which change seasonally, speak for itself.”

Van Arsall’s line includes three sauces—a mild sauce made with red Fresno chilies called Big Rojo, a medium jalapeno-based sauce called Maquina Verde and an aggressively spicy Stupid Hot variety fueled by habaneros. All three are made in similar fashion with lime juice added to enhance the flavor of the sauce as well as the foods it’s used on. On that front, Van Arsall thinks they work best with pork, fish and anything fried.

Right now, Chingon hot sauces are on sale at Windmill Farms in Del Cerro and KnB, but they also grace the tabletops at Carnitas’ Snack Shack, Churchill Pub and Grille, Bistro Sixty and Longhorn Café and Saloon as well as a number of brewery tasting rooms including AleSmith, Ballast Point Brewing & Spirits and Green Flash Brewing Company. Having them on hand, he says, allows beer-centric eateries and taste spaces to offer a premium “craft” product. It also helps him expose locals to
his product, which is sold at most of the aforementioned locations.

But even if you stock your cabinets with Chingon, there’s something very satisfying about making spicy potions using your own two hands. “There are a bunch of different ways to make hot sauce. Most involve some degree of cooking, but ours does not,” explains Van Arsdall. “We grind the chilies with salt and let them ferment for a few days, then we add vinegar and lime juice and let it pickle.”

It’s a simple process that can be fun when done at home. Turns out kids can be helpful in the process as opposed to collateral damage. Van Arsdall is a father of three and his kids do everything including stemming mega-hot chilies. The trick, he says, is to always wear gloves and eye protection. Also, as I learned, ventilation is a must. Van Arsdall also warns, “Capsicum, the substance in chilies that delivers the heat, is not water soluble, so washing your hands with soap and water will not work. I use a light bleach solution to break down the capsicum, then I wash with soap and water.”

Now that you’re armed with some solid tips and a precautionary tale, take a stab at the recipe for a hot sauce Van Arsdall developed specifically for inclusion in West Coaster. And when it’s ready for its debut, consider adding it to a chilled pint of craft beer. He’s also hooked us up with a recipe for a spicy yet refreshing Michelada made using Ballast Point Habanero Sculpin IPA. Burn, baby, burn!

THE FIRE RESCUE SQUAD
The best local beers for quelling chili pepper heat

While the bitterness of hops does a good job of cutting down the fiery flavor of chili peppers, it does little to extinguish the flames. Malt is the most effective spice-counteracting ingredient in beer. So, when daring to dial up the Scoville units, reach for something with serious malt backbone such as an amber ale or stout. Or, if you want to smother that burn with both malt and hops, opt for a maltier IPA veering toward the traditional British style or an imperial red ale.

AleSmith Anvil ESB
Arrogant Bastard Ale
Ballast Point Big Eye IPA
Belching Beaver Milk Stout
Coronado Mermaid's Red Ale
Green Flash Hop Head Red
Karl Strauss Oktoberfest
Latitude 33 Breakfast With Wilford Oatmeal Stout
Lightning Amber Ale
Mission Amber Ale
Port Shark Attack Imperial Red Ale
Stumblefoot Schwarzbier
Homemade Hot Sauce

Yield: 4 servings
1 pound fresh jalapeno peppers
3 Tbsp kosher salt
2 cups distilled white vinegar
Gloves, Eye Protection & Ventilation

De-stem the peppers and place in the bowl of a food processor, season with salt and process until finely chopped, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula, about one minute. Transfer the mixture to a glass jar. Cover and let sit in a cool place for two days.

Uncover the jar and stir in the vinegar. Cover and let sit in a cool place for five days to age and allow the flavors to meld.

Set a mesh strainer over a bowl. Pour the chili mixture into the strainer and press it through the mesh screen with the back of a spoon. Discard solids and pour the sauce into a glass bottle with a tight-fitting lid. Serve or store, refrigerated in the airtight container for up to six months. Shake well before each use.

This is a thin sauce in its natural state. If you want it thicker you can add 1/3 cup of xanthan gum while blending at high speed, as xanthan gum tends to clump.

Big Rojo Michelada

Yield: 1 cocktail
Salt for garnish
1 cup Clamato (or alternate tomato juice)
Juice of 1/2 lemon
3 to 4 dashes Worcestershire sauce
2 dashes Big Rojo Hot Sauce
1 dash soy sauce
12 ounces Ballast Point Habanero Sculpin
PA, chilled

Wet the rim of a tall glass and roll the rim through salt. Pour in the Clamato, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce. Pour in the beer and serve immediately.

NOTE: We used our mild Big Rojo hot sauce due to the chili presence in the beer, but if you’re using a non-spicy beer I would use Hot or Maquina Verde.

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MAY CRAFT BEER EVENTS

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PORT / LOST ABBEY 7TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY - MAY 4
Perhaps the craziest of San Diego's craft breweries is celebrating its seventh anniversary with two four-hour sessions. Attendees can expect to see some of the brewery's finer draft and bottle offerings as well as some of the limited Track series beers available. Food will be provided by four different food trucks, complete with a suggested beer pairing. Each $20 ticket receives 10 tastings, a food ticket and a commemorative tasting glass. Tickets are available online at lostabber.com. Morning session is 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. and the afternoon session is 3 - 8 p.m. @ 135 Mesa Way #104, San Marcos, 92069.

SAOUD DIEGO RELEASE PARTY @ GREEN FLASH BREWING CO. - MAY 7
The beer formerly known as Summer Saison makes its seasonal debut this month at Green Flash's tasting room. This 4.2% unfiltered Belgian style farmhouse ale is tart, earthy and a bit funky - perfect for upcoming sunshine. (Just make sure to keep the bear in the shade.) While attending this release, "tweet or Instagram @GreenFlashBeer your answer to "If you could drink a Saison anywhere in the world, where would it be, and why?" using the hashtag #saisonprizehousen for a chance to win a "Saison Prize Pack". The party starts at 3 p.m. @ 8550 Miramar Mesa Blvd, Miramar, 92121.

2ND SATURDAY W/ STONE BREWING CO @ HAMILTON'S - MAY 11
Every second Saturday of the month, Hamilton's gets crazy. This month, the South Park taproom will feature Stone Brewing Co. On tap, Double Bastard, 2010 Double Bastard aged in Bourbon Barrels, Cali-Belgique IPA aged in red wine barrels, Suitable for Cave Aging aged in red wine barrels, Saison Ale with added espresso beans, 2005 Old Guardian, and 2004 Imperial Russian Stout. Stone will also release Saison at the event. Tickets are $25 for 4 tickets for 4 one ounce samples. Start times at 11 a.m. @ 3012 Old Pacific St, San Diego, 92104.

AMERICAN CRAFT BEER WEEK – MAY 13-19
A national version of our San Diego Beer Week, American Craft Beer Week (ACBW) is organized by the Brewers Association. Essentially, craft beer businesses are encouraged to throw cool events under the auspices of the Brewers Association & ACBW. Below you’ll find a collection of events held in America’s Finest Beer Town during this week. Visit craftbeerweek.com for a national listing of events.

FILM PREMIERE: CRAFTING A NATION @ GREEN FLASH BREWING CO. - MAY 13
According to the film’s website, Crafting A Nation is a feature-length documentary “about how the American craft brewers are rebuilding the economy one beer at a time.” The California premiere will be hosted inside Green Flash. Thanks to a keen printer & video setup, the brewery tasting room transforms into a movie theatre with awesome beer. More information at craftinganation.com. Tickets are $10 online @ greenflashfilm-events.eventbrite.com; doors open at 6 p.m., film starts at 7 p.m. @ 8550 Miramar Mesa Blvd, Miramar, 92121.

GOLDEN ROAD @ RAGLAN PUBLIC HOUSE - MAY 14
Steps from the Ocean Beach pier, Raglan is serving up Golden Road Brewing in a partial 10-pack takeover for ACBW. On tap: Hazelnut Brown Ale, starts at 5 p.m. @ 1851 Bacon St, San Diego, 92107.

AMERICAN CRAFT BEER WEEK COAST TO COAST PARTNERS @ HAMILTON’S - MAY 16
Glassses around the nation will be raised for a “simultaneous toast” to American craft brewing prowess. Hamilton’s will host the toast with lots of Lost Abbey / Port Brewing beer. French Bistro de Amorosa, Red Poppy, Saint’s Devotion, Avanti Garde, Red Barn and more will be available. Toast starts promptly at 5 p.m. @ 1521 30th St, San Diego, 92102.

SIERRA NEVADA TOTAL TAP TAKEOVER @ RAGLAN PUBLIC HOUSE - MAY 16
All of Sierra Nevada’s 20 taps will be loaded with Sierra Nevada beer. While still in the works at time of printing, we were told there will be “lots of rarities and one-offs”. The beer program is impressive at Raglan, so we trust they’ll deliver. Visit raglanpublichouse.com closer to the event date for more. Starts at 5 p.m. @ 1851 Bacon St, San Diego, 92107.

12 BREWERS, 12 CASES, 12 MALLETS @ STONE BREWING WORLD BISTRO & GARDENS - MAY 16
Eleven of Stone’s brewers have augmented twelve different cases of Stone beer. Taste brewer Cecil Monasco’s Stone Cali-Belgique IPA withaji miso-tahini-chili sauce or Joel Sherman’s Stone IPA with wildflower honey, Moroccan mint and chickpea peppers. Full listing of beers online at stonebrewing.com/calendar; event goes from 5 - 7 p.m. @ 1699 Citracado Pkwy, Escondido, 92029.

CRAFT BEER BLOCK @ NORTH PARK FESTIVAL OF ARTS - MAY 18
This particular festival is one of our staff favorites. Taking place within the larger Festival of Arts, the Craft Beer Block takes over Ohio Street and features more than 20 San Diego breweries. Check out http://bpt.me/3345572 for info and tickets. Cost is $25 for 4 one ounce samples. Starts at 11 a.m. @ Ohio St & University Ave, San Diego, 92104.

2ND ANNUAL BACON & BREWS COOK-OFF @ AZTEC BREWING CO. - MAY 18
You can think with your bacon! For $25, Aztec provides you up to four pounds of uncooked bacon plus cooking supplies. Contestants should bring everything necessary to cook, including grills, smokers, utensils, chairs, tables, etc. The goal is to craft the best two-bite dish that uses bacon as a main ingredient. The bacon itself comes from Cook Pigs in Fallbrook and the pigs are fed, among other local feed, Aztec’s spent grain. Bacon beer is available to purchase, of course. Visit aztec-brewery.com/aztec-events.html to download an entry form. The event starts at 9 a.m. and judging takes place at 2 p.m. @ 2330 La Mirada Dr, #200, Vista, 92081.

5TH ANNIVERSARY @ TORONADO - MAY 24
One of the finest beer bars in San Diego, Toronado is celebrating proper for their fifth with nearly a full week of great beer leading up to and including Memorial Day weekend. Expect to see The Bruery’s own five-year anniversary beer, High 5 IPA from Pizza Port Solana Beach, Alpine’s Helles Pils, casks from Ballast Point, plus lots more from Hollister, Kern River, Russian River and more. There will be a keg of Toronado’s 25th Anniversary as well. Expect to see whites, too @ 4026 30th St, San Diego, 92104.

ROUGH DRAFT BEER Q @ KNB WINE CELLARS - MAY 25
If you haven’t tried Miramar’s Rough Draft in a while, here’s your chance. Draft offerings will include Freihofer’s Sipo, Hop Therapy Double IPA, Barrel-aged Embolishment Tripel, Weezer IPA and more along with food from KnB’s tasty kitchen. Starts at noon @ 6360 Del Coro Blvd, San Diego, 92120.

KARL STRAUSS PRO-AM DEADLINE - MAY 31
Karl is accepting entries to their annual Pro-Am homebrew competition until the end of May. First place gets to brew on Karl’s system and the beer will be placed on tap in all the Karl Strauss brewpubs throughout Southern California. Plus you’ll be entered in the GABF Pro-Am competition. Visit karlstrauess.com for guidelines and rules. Entries must be delivered no later than 5 p.m. on May 31st @ 5955 Santa Fe St, San Diego, 92109.
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is for Fermentation

We’ve doubled up for this month’s glossary of terms, which comes straight from the beer educators at CraftBeer.com, with Fezziwig’s added by West Coaster (in bold)

E

Endosperm - The starch-containing sac of the barley grain.

Esters - Volatile flavor compounds that form through the interaction of organic acids with alcohols during fermentation and contribute to the fruity aroma and flavor of beer. Esters are very common in ales.

Ethanol - Ethyl alcohol, the colorless primary alcohol constituent of beer.

Export - Any beer produced for the express purpose of exportation. For example: export-style German lagers or export-style Irish stouts.

F

Fermentation - The chemical conversion of fermentable sugars into approximately equal parts of ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide gas, through the action of yeast. The two basic methods of fermentation in brewing are top fermentation, which produces ales, and bottom fermentation, which produces lagers.

Fermentation Lock - A one-way valve, often made of glass or plastic that is fitted onto a fermenter and allows carbon dioxide gas to escape from the fermenter while excluding ambient wild yeasts, bacteria, and contaminants.

Fezziwig’s Brewing Co. - This won’t be the Carlstadt-based brewery’s name for long. On April 2, owner Daniel Guy announced on Facebook that the company would be changing their name due to a complaint by Boston Beer Company, which produces Samuel Adams Old Fezziwig Ale.

Filtration - The passage of a liquid through a permeable or porous substance to remove solid matter in suspension, often yeast.

Final Gravity - The specific gravity of a beer as measured when fermentation is complete (when all desired fermentable sugars have been converted to alcohol and carbon dioxide gas). Synonym: Final Specific Gravity; Final SG; finishing gravity; terminal gravity.

Fining - The process of adding clarifying agents such as isinglass, gelatin, silica gel, or Polyvinyl Polypyrrolidone (PVPP) to beer during secondary fermentation to hasten the precipitation of suspended matter, such as yeast, proteins, or tannins.

Flocculation - The behavior of suspended particles in wort or beer that tend to clump together in large masses and settle out. During brewing, protein and tannin particles will flocculate out of the kettle; coagulum or fermenter during hot or cold break. During and at the end of fermentation, yeast cells will flocculate to varying degrees depending on the yeast strain, thereby affecting fermentation as well as filtration of the resulting beer.

Fresh Hopping - The addition of freshly harvested hops that have not yet been dried to different stages of the brewing process. Fresh hopping adds unique flavors and aromas to beer that are not normally found when using hops that have been dried and processed per usual. Synonymous with wet hopping.

Fusel Alcohol - A family of high molecular weight alcohols, which result from excessively high fermentation temperatures. Fusel alcohols can impart harsh or solvent-like characteristics commonly described as lacquer or paint thinner. It can contribute to hangovers.
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Above: Eagle Rock’s tasting room welcomes patrons on a brewery tour.

Left: El Segundo Brewing’s Rob Croxell is a member of the board of directors.

Photos by Ryan Lamb
WHAT’S BREWING IN LA LA LAND

Los Angeles brewers form guild as craft beer builds

BY RANDY CLEMENS

Collaboration and camaraderie have become major pillars of the foundation that unites craft brewers, who’ve largely chosen to eschew the inhuman pitfalls of cutthroat competition in favor of genuine bonhomie and mutual respect for each other’s talents and successes. Taking their unified vision one step further, a cadre of craftsmen have recently announced the formation of the Los Angeles Brewers Guild, an industry group which aims “to create and foster a culture of world-class beer in Los Angeles County by promoting and protecting local craft brewers.”

“It’s great for us to be able to rally together, and to have a collective voice,” explains Eagle Rock Brewery co-owner Jeremy Raub, who is serving as the guild’s inaugural president. “It’s so important and so helpful—especially in an area as huge and spread out as L.A.—to know that you have a support network you can turn to.”

While new to L.A., brewers guilds have existed elsewhere for some time now, with an impressive 46 out of 50 states claiming their own statewide guilds, and plenty of regional associations under each of those, according to the Brewers Association. Rumblings of a potential LABG began swirling a little over a year and a half ago. Raub and several other Los Angeles-based brewers attended a meeting of the Orange County-based Southern California Craft Brewers Guild, but respectfully declined to keep the L.A. entity separate.

“Our health codes and government entities are very different,” he acknowledged. “We thought it best to keep it as local as possible, focusing on where we live and work and versus spreading ourselves too thin. Opening and operating a brewery in Los Angeles involves keeping an eye on a lot of moving targets, and we want to have the strongest support structure we can have, both for existing breweries and fledgling new ones.”

Besides enabling brewers to have open discussions and share knowledge, the guild hopes to someday host events and festivals to build a stronger community. Reflecting on the local craft beer scene, Raub beams, “We’re in this perfect time in our infancy, and the culture is growing so quickly in L.A. People ask why we’d help our competitors, and it’s great that we’re able to say they’re not our competitors at all. Our market share is so small that there’s enough room for us to grow and flourish together. Like they say: ‘A rising tide lifts all boats.’”

Many restaurants, bars, vendors, suppliers, and even consumers have expressed interest in becoming members or otherwise supporting the guild, but so far, only breweries and brewpubs with facilities in Los Angeles can join. “It’s been great to get so much validation of what we’re doing, but we’re not ready to handle associate members just yet... perhaps in the future,” Raub suggests.

As anyone who owns a handful of growlers from different breweries can attest, the laws regarding refilling them can be tad prohibitive. The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) hath decreed that breweries may only refill growlers from their respective establishments, which must be clearly labeled as such. While I enjoy collecting beer ephemera as much as the next geek, it’s rather easy to quickly amass more growlers than you have room for. Wouldn’t it be easier to have one vessel that you could fill virtually anywhere? (Yes. Yes it would.)

At a California Craft Brewers Association workshop in February, a representative from the ABC stumped beer industry attendees when he very plainly announced that it wouldn’t be a problem for a brewery to fill any container so long as it contained approved labeling, even if that was some kind of sticker placed over the existing graphics on another brewery’s growler. A well-meaning industry member in attendance immediately took to Facebook asserting that there’d be some kind of policy change and now people could go to their local brewery with any growler and expect to get it filled.

“It caused a lot of confusion,” Raub intones. “Customers were coming in and getting upset that we wouldn’t fill another brewery’s growler. And we tried to explain that it still wasn’t that easy, but they’d get upset and reference that Facebook post. The guild members got together to discuss what all of this means—and didn’t mean—for us. Ultimately, we decided that it was too early and presumptuous of us to make any changes without fully understanding what we can legally do. We issued a statement explaining that LABG members wouldn’t fill other breweries’ growlers until we were able to meet with ABC representatives to ensure that we’re in full compliance with their regulations.”

“It really felt good to have us all come together at that meeting,” Raub continues. “Many of the brewers brought up potential issues that others hadn’t thought of, and lots of creative solutions were presented. Being able to unite like this is really going to help brewers and benefit consumers for years to come.”
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