

Next Meeting: April 11, 7:30 p.m. @ Rock Bottom



BREW CREW NEWS

*"Adhere to Schweinheitsgebot. Don't put anything in your beer that a pig wouldn't eat."
David Geary*

Oregon's Oldest Homebrew Club

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obc@oregonbrewcrew.com
www.oregonbrewcrew.com

President

Abe Goldman-Armstrong
503.231.2948
president@oregonbrewcrew.com

Vice President

Brian Butenschoen 503.796.0434
vice-pres@oregonbrewcrew.com

Treasurer

Catherine Allen 503.699.3372
treasurer@oregonbrewcrew.com

Secretary

Russ Rainforth 503.533.2214
secretary@oregonbrewcrew.com

Burgermeister Committee Chair

Dick Pilz 503.235.0668
food@oregonbrewcrew.com

Communications Comm. Chair

Lisa Morrison 503.233.7947
news@oregonbrewcrew.com

Education/Competition Comm. Chair

Chad Kennedy 503.230.7015
edu@oregonbrewcrew.com

Festival Coordination Comm. Chair

Chris Irwin 503.538.5227
festival@oregonbrewcrew.com

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The Presidential Pint

By Abram Goldman-Armstrong

Got those hop rhizomes planted yet?

As the days get longer and spring beers are popping up like daffodils, it must be about time for the Spring Beer Fest at the Portland Expo Center, April 19-21.

I hope you've all signed up to volunteer, whether it's pouring, supervising, or selling tokens. There are still a few spots open. Please contact Kirstie Blake or Chris Irwin if you have not yet signed up for a shift, and you want to.

This month the illustrious Van Havig of Rock Bottom Brewery (210 SW Morrison in downtown Portland) has agreed to host our meeting for a second year running. The meeting will be April 11 and business will start at 7:30 p.m. Look for us in the upstairs pool room. Call (503)796-2739 for directions.

May 4 is Big Brew (see Bob Farrell's article inside -Ed.), formerly known as National Homebrew Day, when beer geeks like us band together to show others how to brew. We will be brewing at Steinbarts, and brewers are encouraged to bring their kettles and burners for a brew-a-long.

The recipes are a Maibock, designed by brewing science-guy George Fix, who recently passed away, and an Old Ale.

We'll be grilling dogs, tofu and otherwise and have a few other munchables for attending brewers and spectators.

So, happy April, and enjoy the spring.

Editor's Mash Tun

By Lisa Morrison

Top 10 Reasons E-Newsletters Are Cool:

10. Less to carry out in the recycle bin.
 9. Read my lips: No Dead Trees.
 8. Hey Kids! Create your own newsletter archive right on your computer desktop.
 7. Pet parakeet will no longer know more about brewing than you because you won't be lining his birdcage with old newsletters.
 6. Hot off the press: E-newsletters arrive in your inbox as soon as they are done.
 5. Two words: Postage increase. It's coming, but you can save the club some money by going electronic instead.
 4. Easy download. Adobe reader is free, a "standard" for online documents and available on our Web site <http://www.oregonbrewcrew.com>.
 3. It looks just like the one you used to get in your mailbox, but there aren't all those messy postage markings on it.
 2. You can still print your own hardcopy (the parakeet will miss the newsletter).
 1. You can be among the first to leap into the new era!
- If you want to sign up for the e-version, all you have to do is drop me a note at news@oregonbrewcrew.com

Miller To Acquire Oregon Brew Crew

By Abram Goldman-Armstrong

SWILLWAUKEE -- In another takeover of small brewers, Miller Brewing Co. announced it would purchase the Oregon Brew Crew, Oregon's oldest homebrew club.

The takeover bid of \$1 million includes free kegs of MGD at each Brew Crew meeting, retraining workshops on adjunct brewing, and disposable plastic cups at all meetings and SCP competitions. Additionally, competitions have now been narrowed to include only American Light Lagers, and "Premium" beers, Miller officials said.

Miller executives, who proudly brought about such Northwest brewery closures as Ranier and Blitz-Weinhard, formerly the nation's oldest continuously operating brewery, were unavailable for comment. They were allegedly celebrating the deal with the "chamagne of beers," according to a secretary, who wished to remain anonymous.

Oregon Brew Crew President Abe Goldman-Armstrong, accused of selling out, said simply "It's the (hic) water," from his plush new office at the Olympia Miller facility.

He added the catchphrase "Beer Meant More Here," before excusing himself to the lavatory.

APRIL FOOLS!!!



OBC Hosts AHA NW Regional Competition

By Mark Wilson

The Oregon Brew Crew is once again hosting the AHA National Homebrew Competition Northwest regional.

The event will be held at Columbia Distributing's Swan Island facility (6800 Cutter Circle) on April 27 and 28.

There will be two sessions each day, judging sign-in starts at 8:30 a.m., and judging commences at 9:30 a.m.

BJCP judges should have received a letter with this information already, but we are looking for other experienced judges, stewards, and other volunteer help as well.

If you are interested you can notify Judge Coordinator Chad Kennedy, Competition Organizer Mark Wilson, or register online at:

<http://www.oregonbrewcrew.com/ahanwregis.html>

Big Brew=Big Fun

By Bob Farrell

Be a part of Big Brew (National Home Brewing Day) on Saturday, May 4.

Again, we will be brewing at Steinbart's beginning about 9 a.m.

We'll have the Pilot System on hand, and encourage you to bring your brewing equipment, too. We would like to brew an extract batch, an all-grain beer, and two meads.

AHA has proposed two brews -- with both extract and all-grain recipes for a Strong Ale, and George Fix's Maibock. However, we're not bound to brew those styles or use those recipes. Additional information can be obtained from AHA: <http://www.beertown.org>

The meads will be an experiment to see if there is a difference in taste and aroma depending upon when fruit is initially added to the primary or secondary fermenter.

A worldwide simultaneous toast to the homebrewing community will be performed at 10 a.m. PDT. We will register the Brew Crew brewing site, which will make the club eligible to participate in a drawing for ALL past issues of Zymurgy.

Last year, we had about 20 participants, great weather, plenty of homebrew, and seared meat items from the barbecue.

If you would like to brew or attend this event, please contact Brian Butenschoen or Chad Kennedy.



March 2002 Meeting Minutes (3/14/02)

By Russ Rainforth

Meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m.

President Abram Goldman-Armstrong wished us all a happy St Patrick's Day, and recited a very short love poem by W.B. Yeats.

There was a brief guest introduction, followed by new member introduction.

A toast was made in memory of George Fix, author of many fabulous technical brewing books, who recently passed away.

AHA's Big Brew (aka National Homebrew Day) coming up in May. There are two AHA recipes; an Old Ale and a Maibock recipe from George Fix (see Bob Farrell's article in this newsletter -Ed).

Abe said we are proceeding with the Great Hop Experiment, and are looking for volunteers to help manage it.

Membership cards for all members are to be handed out at the next meeting, which is April 11 at Rock Bottom Brewery.

The style of the month was Porter, and Dan Anderson brewed a Baltic Porter, which was passed around during Gary Corbin's presentation on the style.

Gary covered much of the murky history of Porter, and the nuances of the style.

Chad Kennedy, who is our Styles and Competition Program chairman, discussed many acronyms; SCP, NHC, BJCP, and AHA.

Chad emphasized that there is a great need for judges, especially for our own club competitions. Chad is putting together a "little black book" of judges. See him if you can help him out.

AHA Regionals are going to be on April 27, 28. This is a very large event and many, many judges are needed.

The Beer Judge Certification Program is moving along pretty well. We have a

very large class under way, roughly 35-37 people. Classes are held Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. at Woodstock Wine & Deli.

The BJCP exam will be held on Saturday, July 20, which falls between the Portland International Beer Festival and the Oregon Brewers Festival.

Communications Chairperson Lisa Morrison thanked our new Webmaster, Dan Schultz, for his considerable efforts on the OBC Web site. If you haven't seen it lately, you really need to check it out.

Lisa also mentioned that Deer Island Homebrew Club is also sponsoring a Big Brew Day. Contact them for details.

Lisa and Caren Rockwood have been busy putting together the electronic version of the newsletter, and the test runs have been successful. So far, 15 members have signed up for the e-newsletter. If you're interested, contact Lisa.

Steve Woolard spoke to us about the upcoming Spring Beer & Wine Festival, and showed us the stylish new tasting glass. Steve said he's got SBWF coasters to spread around your favorite pub over St. Patrick's Day weekend.

Chris Irwin also spoke on the SB&WF, urgently seeking volunteers (especially for Saturday night). Volunteers get free admission for all three days, a free T-shirt, and some beer tokens. Kirstie Blake is in charge of managing the volunteers.

Preston Weesner announced the Suds On The Slope, to be held up at Mt Hood Skibowl, March 29, 30. He needs OLCC-licensed servers for the event. Also, Preston is "sponsoring" a keg of Collaborator, with money from each keg sold going to the Bob McCracken Scholarship Fund. See Preston if you can help in any way.

Noel Blake told us about the latest

Collaborator beer, Matt Hollingsworth's Hop Nation. Noel urged us all to participate in this subsidized brewing project. Not only do you get to brew for free, you can win a nice jacket and the prestige in having your own homebrew recreated by Widmer Brothers Brewing, and sold around town! Can't beat that deal.

Noel said they haven't decided on which beer to release for summer yet. Strong contenders are the Martin Wilde's La Vie Pale Ale, Curt Hausam's Pre-Prohibition Lager, and Noel and Marty's Belgian Wit.

Matt Hollingsworth gave us more information on the current Collaborator. There are only about 5 kegs left, so get some soon! It's on tap at Goodfoot's and the Widmer Gasthaus. Matt stressed that Hop Nation is not an IPA, and has around 50 IBU's, just a tad higher than Sierra Nevada Pale Ale. He used English Maris Otter malt, 1056 yeast and Chinook, Liberty and Columbus hops, with additional dry-hopping using the latter two.

Catherine Allen gave a quick Treasurer's Report. She said we're doing fine, financially speaking.

Eric Winters, from Oregon Free Spirits, told us about his "Neuter The OLCC" petition. They feel the OLCC has abused their power and that Oregon's liquor laws are antiquated. (No argument there.) He feels that free market economics should determine liquor prices. Eric is trying to get a ballot measure for Oregon for the next election. Oregon is one of 15 "controlled" states with regard to liquor laws, in which the state runs the liquor trade. Oregon has the second-highest liquor costs in the country! (Washington state is the highest). Eric said there is a lot of interest in overturning the OLCC, but they need to collect a lot of signatures, 89,000 in all! Eric brought his petitions with him, and many members signed them.

Continued on page 4

March Minutes, Continued

Fred Eckhardt made a few comments regarding February's Chocolate & Beer Tasting, which was held at the Dublin Pub on St Valentine's Day.

Fred referred to an "unpleasant episode" in which the Brew Crew Board, whom he referred to as "anal retentive," voted against reimbursement for one of Fred's volunteers.

The problem occurred when a request was made for an additional \$45 above and beyond the free admission normally given to treat-bringing volunteers. The Board felt that since this was not an official Brew Crew function, indeed it is a profit-making venture put on by the Dublin Pub, that it was not our place to subsidize said overspending. Other members have been providing treats for Fred's tastings for years and never sought reimbursement other than free admission to the events. Bob Farrell pointed out that part of the problem is that, since it is a public event and not an official OBC event, there is no budget set aside for it, and perhaps this needs to be addressed.

Angel Anderson added that perhaps we should remind members in the future that this is a volunteer activity, and not to expect reimbursement outside of free admission to the tasting event.

On a happier note, Steve Woolard told us that the Lucky Lab is hosting a Barleywine Festival on Tuesday, March 19 from 5 to 7 p.m. Thirty barleywines will be available, many of which are very hard to come by. Steve advised us to take Wednesday off.

Caren Rockwood asked if any homebrewers were interested in getting glassware with a logo on them. She said they can save money by going in on a large order, but there is a 72-glass minimum. See Caren if you are interested.

Robert Luehrs announced that Whole Foods Market is having a grand open-

ing celebration on Monday, March 18, 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Whole Foods specializes in organic foods, and Robert has gotten a job as a buyer for the extensive beer department. He urged us to attend, and said there would be free beer, wine and cheese. Whole Foods is located on the North Park blocks, at 13th and Burnside.

Lisa Morrison announced another "Suds Sisters" class to be held at Portland Brewing, Saturday March 30. It's a two-hour introduction to great beer. It's for women interested in an introduction to beer appreciation. Call Portland Brewing to sign up.

Burgermeister Dick Pilz announced an extensive lineup for our Mardi Gras meal: Linda Norton brought shrimp etouffee and jambalaya, Bob Farrell brought bread and Noel Blake provided red beans and rice. Lisa Morrison brought 3 different bread puddings and whiskey sauce. "Fuzzy" Fleischman helped with the food line as well.

Beers were provided by many volunteers as well. Dan Anderson brewed a Baltic Porter to demonstrate our SCP style of the month. Tim Glenn, from Yamhill Brewing, brought 3 kegs of their beers. Lisa Morrison and Mark Campbell brought a Vanilla Bean Porter, dispensed with a pretty trick draught setup. Merle Gilmore supplied us with a cider, and the last Steinbart's homebrewing class, led by Chad Kennedy and Brian Butenschoen, made available a Brown Porter.

Dick still needs food volunteers for the May meeting! You don't wanna end up with chips and dip for the next meeting, do you? Do your part and help out!

Business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m., and everyone herded into line for Cajun food!

A Drinker's Prayer

OBC member Craig Della Corte says he found this poem in an old brewing book:

The horse and the mule live thirty years,
Yet know nothing of wines and beers

Most goats and sheep at twenty die,
And have never tasted scotch or rye.

A cow drinks water by the ton,
So at eighteen is mostly done.

Your modest sober, bone-dry hen,
Lays eggs for nags, then dies at ten.

All animals are strictly dry,
They sinless live and swiftly die.

But sinful, ginful, beer soaked man,
Survives three score years and ten.

While some of us, though mighty few,
Stay sozzled till we are ninety-two.



My First Homebrew

Noel Blake: It was unremarkable, not to mention unremakeable. This beer has been lost in the fog of time.

However, I do recall that it was sometime around 1983, had something to do with amber malt extract, Eroica hops (now extinct, sniff!), and Vierka yeast.

My roommates thought it came out great, and we pretty much drank it all before it was ready. Since they only drank Heileman's Export, their judgement should be considered suspect in regard to homebrewed ales.

I made about 10 batches around then, then retired the carboys for 10 years before taking homebrewing in earnest in 1994.

Want beer? More OBCers share their first homebrews on p. 7

Noel Blake's Porter Robustly Heads To Nationals

By Chad Kennedy

Mark Wilson, Jim Woodruff and I had the pleasure of judging the nine porter entries for March's SCP competition. Noel Blake's Robust Porter took first place, with beers from Mitch Scheele and Duane Younger pulling in second and third respectively.

We also had entries from Brian Butenschoen, Greg Martin, Gary Corbin, Tom Irwin, Mike Szwaya, and the Mark Grieve-Jeff Fisher duo. This was a AHA club-only category so Noel's beer was also entered in the national competition.

Good luck Noel.

April's style is IPA. This is also a AHA club-only competition. Let's show the rest of the country why Oregon is known for some of the best IPA's in the land.

We need more judges for this year's SCP competitions. Everyone who signed up for the BJCP should take this chance to learn more about what it means to judge beer. BJCP judges should jump at the opportunity to taste some great homebrew and help out the club. Call me at (503) 230.7015 to sign up.

And remember: If you don't call me, I'll be calling you.

BJCP Exam

The BJCP exam is scheduled for July 20th at the Lucky Lab.

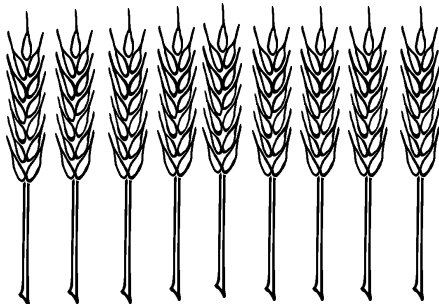
As of right now, the plan is to get started at 9 a.m. Schedule a few hours of your day for the exam. It's \$50 to take the test for the first time and \$30 for folks who have tested before.

We're requiring a \$10 deposit to hold your space. This money will go toward your exam fee come test day.

Please contact me if your are interested in taking the test.

SCP Calendar 2002

April	IPA (AHA Club Only)
May	Bock
June	American Pale Ale
July	American Lager (AHA Club Only)
August	Extract beers (No partial mashes but steeped grains are OK)
September	Strong Belgian (AHA Club Only)
October	Fruit and Spice Beer (AHA Club Only)
November	Northwest Winter Warmers and Meads
December	No Style, Holiday Party



Got Hops Shoots? Get Cookin'!

By Lisa Morrison

Spring has sprung! Those little hop shoots are poking out of the ground — a sure sign of great hop cones to come.

Now's the perfect time to whack those babies back down to the ground. That's right. There are two really good reasons not to let those first hop shoots start crawling up the trellis. And one reason is actually quite tasty!

If you have a hop rhizome that is fairly mature, you will have a number of starts coming off of it. You don't need those first shoots to grow hops. I have read in some literature that limiting the number of vines growing off your rhizome to just a few will channel the energy into those vines, making them larger and stronger (and hopefully, they will produce more cones). I tried it myself last year and it worked splendidly. I was a little worried that the vines wouldn't get the amount of time they needed to grow and produce the cones, but I had a bumper crop.

In short, you can spare some of those early hop shoots. Instead of throwing those little bad boys into the compost bin, though, try eating them.

Yes, young hop shoots (sometimes called "hop asparagus") make a fine delicacy. Top chefs around the globe clamor for this delicacy when in season. Because of their short season (usually around three weeks), hop shoots are considered one of the most expensive vegetable crops around (I saw a quote online for \$66 per 8 ounces!). Bet you never thought you had gold in your back yard!

The fibrous shoot is tender and delicate and can be eaten much like traditional asparagus. The shoots are often quickly boiled or steamed prior to sautéing or adding to soups and sauces. Hop shoots may be served simply with lemon juice and butter, a cream sauce or as an accompaniment to poached eggs — a delicacy in Belgium.

The taste is a cross between spinach and asparagus with a hoppy overtone.

Hop shoots have a decent shelf life if kept refrigerated. If they go limp, simply stand in cool water, like you would with celery or regular asparagus. I have heard that wrapping them with damp toweling before storing the shoots in the vegetable crisper can help keep them fresh, also.

One caveat: You will want to cut the shoots early as they are just popping out of the ground, before they get too tough and "thorny."

Here are a couple of recipes to get you hoppin':

Hop Salsa - Sandwich Topping

Yields 1 1/2 Cups

4 oz. diced hop shoots
 4 oz. water
 1 oz. capers
 4 oz. diced celery
 4 oz. diced sweet onion
 3 oz. diced red bell pepper
 1 oz. chopped sun-dried tomatoes
 1 tbsp. minced thyme
 1 tsp. cracked black pepper
 Olive oil and lemon juice to taste

In the microwave, steam the hop shoots in a small amount of water, in a microwave-safe dish, on "high" setting for about 4 minutes. Drain and let cool. Blend the other ingredients, and stir in the hops. Spread as a topping on deli sandwiches or toasted bruschetta.

Poached Eggs on Hops

Makes 4 Servings

4 eggs
 8 oz. hop shoots
 Water
 1 tsp. lemon juice
 2 tbsp. butter
 Salt and pepper to taste

Wash the hop shoots and place in a 2-quart saucepan, filled with salted, boiling water. Add lemon juice and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Run hop shoots briefly under cold water to halt the cooking process. Place hop shoots in a warmed serving dish and dot with butter. Place water in egg poacher and bring to a boil. Add eggs and cook for about 5-6 minutes or to taste. Place poached eggs on top of hop shoots. Serve with toast.



OBC Members Relive Their First Homebrewing Experiences

In the ongoing saga of beer discovery, we asked Brew Crewers this month to share their first homebrew experience.

What went wrong? What went surprisingly right? As usual the stories were a fine concoction of serendipity, silly luck, interesting timing -- and beer.

NEXT MONTH'S QUESTION:

Tell us your best story of something you did while brewing that probably wasn't the best idea. Maybe it worked out OK, or maybe it blew up your garage. Who knows? But, like they said in Kindergarten, sharing is a good thing.

Now, on to this month's stories ...

Gary Corbin: Almost 10 years ago, while I was living in Washington D.C., a friend enlisted me to help him move (in July!) with the promise of "all the Pilsener Urquell I could drink." When I arrived promptly and thirsty at 9 a.m. at his house, it was empty! Turns out he had gotten it all moved the night before and didn't get around to telling me.

So there I was, with an entire day ahead of me and a huge thirst for good beer; and I decided: Today was the day. I drove to BrewMaster's in Rockville, MD and bought Charlie Papazian's book and a homebrew kit. I made a "pilsner" that very day. In spite of being made entirely from the can and fermenting at 80+ degrees in the DC heat, it came out wonderfully and I was hooked.

Angel Anderson: July 4th, 1994. After a long day of family, friends, BBQ & a movie, I drove Dan to his apartment. He invited me in to try one of his homebrews. Prior to this, the best beer I'd had was Henry's (since members of my family worked there for years). Dan's was a very dark, creamy, rich tasting beer -- the beginning of a new venture in taste buds.

Two weeks later, I asked Dan out for a beer, and we've been together ever

since. This August will be seven wonderful years of marriage and eight years of brewing.

Kelly Jones: My first homebrew was a "bitter" style, brewed from extract. I was using an old homebrewing text by Byron Burch as a guide, and in it he mentioned that there were several categories of hops, and that they were, to some extent, interchangeable. For example, Fuggle and Chinook are both used as bittering hops. So, I'm in the homebrew store trying to find hops, and they didn't have the 2 ounces or so of Fuggles the recipe called for. Recalling from my extensive reading that Chinook was also a good bittering hop (and not yet having got to the section in the book which discussed alpha acid levels), I grabbed Chinook pellets, wondering all the time what that number "13.8%" on the package meant.

Well, the result was absolutely the most bitter beer you can imagine; this was the most bitter beer I've ever had. It seemed undrinkable at bottling time, so I took half of it, diluted it 50/50 with more boiled (unhopped!) wort, and re-fermented. The rest I bottled as is.

After they had aged a little (If we can call 6 months "a little"), both sub-batches were good, at least to my "any flavor is better than beer with NO flavor" approach to beers at the time. Since then, I've never been afraid of a bitter beer. None can hold a candle, IBU-wise, to my first homebrew.

Rob Hudson: My first batch was a stout from a kit. I got myself one of those plastic bucket homebrew kits along with a stout mix. After brewing and waiting for the wort to cool, I was trying to see how the top fit along with the air-lock.

I was pushing the air-lock trying to fit it into the little hole and stopper on the top of the plastic pale. After a good push, the stopper dropped right into the warm wort. I tried to fish it out with a spoon,

worrying about contamination. After 5-10 minutes, I just stuck my arm, more than elbow deep, into the beer, feeling the bottom of the 5-gallon bucket for the stopper. I pulled it out and continued like normal.

A few weeks later, the beer tasted like a normal stout. Surprisingly, it wasn't contaminated. I should have called it, "Dead Skin Stout". Ewww.

Bob Brewer: My first ever homebrew was when Alan Sprints was working at Widmer. He invited BCers over to help (witness) his efforts at making the biggest baddest Belgian ever. He kept tossing in different Belgian candi sugars in the wort until it just wouldn't dissolve any more. Initial gravity was something obscene.

Anyway, I got my 5 gallons of wort. My puny German lager starter hadn't really kicked in yet, but Alan said to pitch it anyway. I nursed that carboy day and night waiting for something to happen. In a few days it began to ferment very slowly. After a couple of weeks, it was still going slowly and the gravity was still above most initial homebrew gravities. I racked it to secondary for another week or two and then bottled it in some Grolsch citrate cap bottles.

After a month, the beer was lousy. After a year I couldn't give it away. After two years, some people liked it. After three years, I liked it, but it was gone! Damn! Another year later, I found one bottle that my Dad had taken and placed in his Texas garage right after we brewed it (read: freezin' ass cold and scorching hot), perfect Texas cellar temperatures.

I opened it with a friend that knew nothing about homebrew, so I thought I'd let him drink it first. I just knew it had to be sputum, but he LIKED it. To this day, it's still one of the best beers I've ever had! I only just wish I had just one more bottle to share.



Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month. Business starts promptly at 7:30 p.m.!

April & Beyond

Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming Events:

**Each Wed.
thru 17 April**

11 April

19-21 April

27-28 April

4 May

9 May

18 May

12-14 July

20 July

26-28 July

BJCP Classes @ Woodstock Wine & Deli (unless noted)

April Brew Crew meeting 7:30 p.m. @ Rock Bottom

Spring Beer & Wine Festival @ Expo Center

2002 AHA National Homebrew NW Regional Competition

Big Brew (AHA National Home Brew Day) @ Steinbart's

May Brew Crew meeting @ Steinbart's

20th Annual Oregon Homebrew Festival

Looking ahead ...

Portland International Beer Festival

BJCP Exam

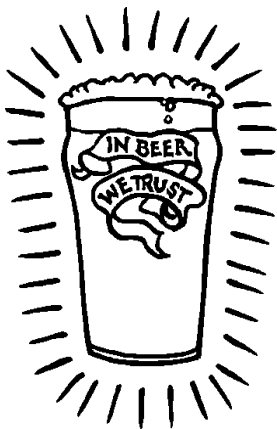
Oregon Brewers Festival

Do you have a listing for the events calendar?

Send it to: news@oregonbrewcrew.com



1923 SE 32nd Place
Portland, OR 97214



***“What’s that orange dot on my newsletter?”
If you have an orange sticker on your newsletter,
your dues are, well, due.***