

Date: 04:55 PM CST, 12/26/2017

From: Urban Knaves of Grain Communications <communications@knaves.org>

To: Kevin <woj@kiltedhopbrewing.com>

Subject: Knaves Knewsletter - December 2017



Knaves Knews

UKG... Because home is where great beer is brewed!

December 2017

Contents

Welcome Address

Tech Sessions

Competitions

Festivals

Financials

Member News

Member Spotlight

Club Schwag

Board of Directors

Abbess - **Eileen Uchima**

First Lady / Head Penguin -

Mike Uchima

Master of Coin - **Darrell**

Welcome Address



Hopefully all of you are well prepared for your holidays. I'm feeling fairly well in control of mine. I still need to bottle a beer, make labels for another, bake

some more cookies, find one more gift for a hard-to-shop-for person, finish two quilts, and wrap everything. Oh, wait...there are still no ornaments on the tree or decorations in the yard! Okay, I take it back. I'm nowhere near ready!

If you were unable to attend the November meeting, you missed something really special. We had our first ever Knaves Chili Cook-off! The event was popular enough that we may consider making it an annual occurrence. There were

Proksa*Communications Minister -***Kevin "Woj" Wojdak***Chaplain of Education -***Andy Day***Sister of Events Planning -***Luann Fitzpatrick***Minister of Tournaments -***Jeff Landers***Retired Abbot - **Chuck Fort****Monk - **Bob Kay*****Communications
Channels**ukg.slack.com

[Click here](#) to request an invite
from a Board member.



ukg-

seven chilies entered, all of them delicious. Several (but not all)



contained beer and a plethora of other secret (and not so secret) ingredients too numerous to list. After trying all of the offerings, a secret ballot was held to determine the winner. My chili took third, Woj's came in second, and the winning chili was made by Andy Day. If you are looking for a new chili recipe, look no further than this newsletter where all three winning recipes are featured.



In case you haven't heard, we did get one sad bit of news this month. John's Tavern and Restaurant in Winfield, our meeting place for many years and the current home of our monthly Tech Sessions, is closing their doors on

December 23rd after 96

years in business. A sizeable group of Knaves met up there on Monday, December 11th to wish John farewell. The beer list was dwindling as the restaurant had just experienced their busiest weekend ever after the announcement of the

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(Membership requires approval)

Editor's Note:

Most images in the newsletter

can be enlarged to see further

detail. Simply click on the image

and it will open into a new

window.

closing. Interestingly, the two tap handles still pouring in the dining room both had ties to the UKG...a Dunkel from **Church Street** (Chuck Fort) and a cider from **Rushford Meadery & Winery** (Shane & Laurel Coombs). Several club members gifted John with a bottle or two of homebrew from their stash. John's will certainly be missed by UKG and the community as well.

That said, a new location for our tech sessions is in the works. Keep an eye open for the official announcement before our January Tech Session on the 11th.

By the time you read this newsletter, our Annual Holiday Party will be in the bag. I hope that most of you made it out as this party is always a great time! Whether you were able to attend or not, have a safe, happy and healthy end to your holiday season and see you all in 2018. Now I'm off to clean bottles, shop, wrap, sew, bake, decorate, and possibly have a panic attack.

Please remember that this is *YOUR* club. Your suggestions are always welcome! Please consider contributing a short article or photos for the newsletter, a suggestion for a Tech Talk, or a Social Night venue idea. Email **Knews@Knaves.org**.

Slainte,
Eileen

Welcome to Our New Members!

- None at the December meeting.
-

January Meetings and Events

- *January 11 @ 7:30 p.m., Location TBA -*
Topic: "Kegging: Getting Started and Getting it Right" by Jeff Landers.
- *January 31 @ 7:30 p.m., Alter Brewing,*
Downers Grove - Monthly meeting.

For more details on these events, see below or the **[Club Calendar on the website.](#)**

1st Place Andy Day's Chili Cook-Off Chili

(Adapted from "The Best Chili Ever" on Serious Eats

<http://www.serious eats.com/recipes/2010/01/the-best-chili-recipe.html>)

Ingredients:

Chili Paste:

- 3 Guajillo chiles dried
- 2 New Mexico chiles dried
- 1 Morita Seca chile dried
- 1 tbsp extra-finely ground coffee
- 1 oz dark chocolate
- 2 anchovy filets
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp fish sauce
- Small can of tomato paste
- 1 tbsp whole cumin, toasted then ground
- 1 ½ tsp whole coriander, toasted then ground
- 2 whole cloves, toasted then ground
- 1 whole star anise, toasted then ground
- 1 cup chicken broth, plus more to get a smooth consistency

Chili:

- 3 cans beans, any (dark red kidney, red kidney, pinto)
- 4 lbs bone-in short rib, trimmed of silver skin and excess fat
- 1.5 lbs pork country rib
- 1 qt chicken broth
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 1 jalapeno
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp Mexican oregano
- 2 bay leaves
- 28 oz can crushed tomatoes
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- ¼ cup bourbon
- 1 tbsp Frank's Red Hot Sauce
- 2 tbsp brown sugar

Garnish:

Jalapeno, finely diced

White Onion, finely diced

Scallion, finely sliced

Cooking Steps:Make the Chile Paste

1. In 15 sec bursts, microwave the dried chiles until they are soft and aromatic. Remove stems, seeds and ribs and roughly chop/tear.
2. Heat 1 cup broth in a pot to a simmer, add chiles and reduce by half, 5-8 mins.
3. Add chiles to a blender with anchovy, soy and fish sauce, tomato paste, ground spices, coffee and chocolate.
4. Blend to a smooth puree.

Make the Chili

1. Season meat with salt and pepper.
2. Heat oil in stock pot to smoking, brown meat on all sides.
3. Remove, cool and trim meat from bones and chop into ½" cubes.
4. Cook onions to soften.
5. Add jalapeno, garlic and oregano until aromatic, 1 minute.
6. Add chile puree, stir and cook until thick, 2-4 mins.
7. Add stock, beef/pork, bones and bay leaves.
8. Simmer and scrape to loosen bits from the bottom of the pot.
9. Lower heat, add beans, crushed tomatoes, cider vinegar and cook until tender, 2-3 hours. Add water if needed.
10. Remove bay leaves and bones.

11. Add bourbon, hot sauce and brown sugar. Season to taste with salt, pepper and vinegar.

Garnish and serve or cool and refrigerate.

2nd Place Woj's Firehouse Chunky Beef Chili

(Adapted from "Chunky Beef Chili" recipe from *The American Firehouse Cookbook* by Dave Corrigan)

For the cook-off, I doubled the recipe. Single recipe shown below.

Ingredients:

2-1/2 lbs. boneless beef chuck, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (if you buy chuck with the bone in, cut all the bone out and discard excess fat and gristle. Avoid buying chuck blade roast. It is way too fatty and requires tedious cutting to clean it up.)

1 cup coarsely chopped onion

1 green pepper, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

2 Tbsp cooking oil

1 tsp salt

1 can (28 oz.) Italian plum tomatoes, broken up

1 cup water

1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste

3 Tbsp Chili powder



1 tsp dried oregano leaves
1/4 - 1/2 tsp crushed red pepper pods (I use 1/4 tsp to give enough spice without overpowering.)
1 can (15-1/2 oz.) kidney beans, drained
Dash or two of Tabasco sauce

Garnish:

sour cream
shredded sharp cheddar cheese
chopped onion
avocado chunks

Cooking Steps:

1. Brown beef, onion, green pepper, and garlic in oil in a dutch oven or large pot.
2. Pour off drippings.
3. Sprinkle salt over the beef.
4. Add tomatoes, water, tomato paste, chili powder, oregano, crushed red pepper, and Tabasco sauce.
5. Cover tightly and cook slowly 1-1/2 hours or until beef is tender.
6. Add beans and continue cooking, uncovered, 30 minutes.

Makes two quarts, approximately six to eight servings. Garnish and serve.

Suggestion : When doubling recipe, use light and dark kidney beans for variety.

3rd Place

Eileen's Mojo Crockpot Chili

Ingredients:

1½ lbs lean ground beef
Large onion, chopped
16 oz can tomato sauce
6 oz can tomato paste
16 oz can dark kidney beans
2-4 oz cans diced green chilies
1 tsp. salt
3 Tbl. chili powder
3 cloves garlic, minced
2½ Tbl. unsweetened cocoa powder
1 bay leaf
1 Tbl. Worcestershire sauce
1 bottle beer (I used an Oktoberfest)



Cooking Steps:

In a large skillet, brown the ground beef. Combine beef and all other ingredients except beer in a crock pot. Add half of the bottle of beer. Cover and cook on low for 6 hours, stirring every hour and adding more beer as needed when chili thickens. If you like really spicy chili, you can substitute a can of chilies in adobo sauce for the canned green chilies.

Tech Sessions

Recent Past:

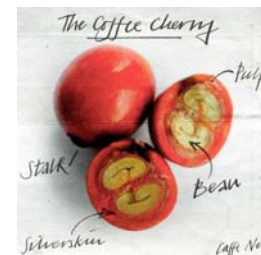
December 14th, Skeleton Key Brewing, Woodridge
 “Brewing Coffee and with Coffee” by Mike Zuro



Mike Zuro gave a very informative talk this week about coffee beans, roasting and brewing for everyday drinking and for use in your beer. Mike’s coffee nerdery goes deep and lead him to a side career as an owner at **Ten Drops Coffee Lab** in Plainfield. His perspective from the home and pro side gave great insight for aspiring coffee nerds and homebrewers looking to make killer coffee beers.

Background on Coffee

- Arabica is the variety for all of the good coffee you want because of it’s complexity. Robusto is the high octane, roasty stuff you find at the gas station.
- Most coffee is grown near the equator in warm climates with well draining soils. The only USA coffee is grown in Hawaii (Kona and others).
- Coffee is a berry and the bean is actually the seed!
 There are two full beans as we know them per berry. The berry (cascara) is removed either by a wet process (agitation and water spray, quick and clean) or dry process (sun or light dried, more natural and complex).
- Different roasters and temperatures give different flavors and the roasting process is customized for each coffee based on growing region, flavor profile, etc.
- Typically, darker roasts yield roastier “coffee” flavor coffee and lighter roasts yield fruitier, toastier flavors.



- Grind is very important to tailor the brew time and filtering considerations to different brewing methods.

Coffee Brewing Methods... Tips and Tricks

- For hot coffee brewing, a 15:1 to 18:1 water-to-coffee ratios are recommended (i.e. 25g coffee to 380g water), there is typically 22-23% absorption in the grounds.
- Water flavor and chemistry is critical and 205 degrees is the best temperature for the **pour over coffee brewing method**. The coffee should be around 180 degrees in the cup.
- For cold brew, a 6:1 ratio of water to coffee is used and steeping for 36-48 hours is ideal. Brew at room temperature, filter and crash cool for 2 days and decant to another container. Keep out oxygen and it should stay fresh for 1-2 weeks.

Coffee in Beer Brewing... Tips and Tricks

- For most beers, a concentrated cold brew is best to blend into finished beer. This gives control over the coffee brewing process (to keep out oxygen) and the dosage rate because you can taste the beer with different ratios.
- For light colored beers, whole beans can be added similar to dry hopping, preferably in a sealed keg to keep out oxygen, for less than 2 days. They can also be added in a hop sack so that they can be removed easily in 12-48 hours.
- The most critical goal is to keep out oxygen because that can oxidize the pyrazine which causes the dreaded green pepper flavor/aroma. Coffee selection will also have an effect on the amount of pyrazine that can be oxidized in the beer.

- A typical dosage is 1L of cold brew concentrate per 5 gallons of beer, but every recipe will be different. Flavor will seem too strong until it drops and mellows in about 2 weeks. This flavor should plateau for a few months depending on process and other factors.

At the meeting, we also sampled a few coffee beers as well...

- **Oddside Bean Flicker** - The added vanilla gave a sweetness and helped to balance some flavors
- **Goose Island Fulton Street Blend** - This blond coffee beer shows how light beers can work with coffee
- **Oscar Blues Hotbox** - Good coffee porter with more chocolate flavors
- **Lagunitas Imperial Stout (2)** - Mike dosed these bottles with cold brew concentrate or beans to show some of the differences between the two.
- Cold brewed coffees made with the interesting Kyoto method

Upcoming:

January 11th @ Location TBD

"Kegging: Getting Started and Getting it Right" by Jeff Landers

Whether you are still bottling and looking at getting started in kegging or you have some questions to get your beer to stop foaming, we'll try to get your beer flowing right. We'll go through the different parts and considerations of a kegging system, how to start from scratch and how to fix whatever issues you might have along the way. Bring your experience, questions and homebrew, see you there! We will send out a follow up e-mail when we have a location set and have a new home for our future after John's.

Written by Andy Day

Competitions

Competition Winners

December 2nd - **Northeast Brewers Alliance Homebrew Competition**, Minneapolis, MN



- **Kevin Wojdak** won 2nd place for his "Just Over the Border" Dunkelweizen with Co-Brewers Chris Havorka, Drew Sword, and Kristen Sword in the *Amber European Beer* category.

December 9th - **Happy Holidays Homebrew Competition**, St Louis, MO



- **Jeff Landers** won 1st place for his "Golden Eye" English Golden Ale in the *English Pale Ale* category.
- **Kevin Wojdak** won 3rd place for his "Apple Bomb" 2016 Cinnamon Cyser in the *Spice and Specialty Mead* category.

Upcoming Competitions

- January 20, 2018 - **Winterbrew** from the Square Kegs Chicago at Empirical Brewing. Registration now through Jan 5th.
 - Great local comp to judge and steward
 - BOS will be brewed by Empirical Brewing and entered into the 2018 GABF Pro/Am Competition
- January 23, 2018 - **2018 National Homebrew Competition!** The Online Competition Application opens Jan 23. Mark your calendars!
- January 27, 2018 - **Minnesota Mashout** Minneapolis MN from the Minnesota Home Brewers Association and the St. Paul Home Brewers Club. Minneapolis MN – Registration begins Dec 26th through Jan 12th.

- February 10, 2018 - **Great Northern Brew-Ha-Ha** from the Northern Ale Stars, Duluth MN.
 - Registration Jan 5th through Jan 29th .
- February 15-17, 2018 - **Kansas City Bier Meisters Annual Competition**. From KCBM Kansas City, MO -
 - Registration Jan 3rd through Feb 2nd
- February 16-17, 2018 - **Midwinter Homebrew Competition** from the Beer Barons of Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI. Registration is Dec 30th through Feb 3rd.
 - It's a bit of a drive, but many UKG and Chicagoland judges will make the trip to judge and steward. Some will come up for the Friday morning and afternoon sessions There are typically a few flights during the day on Friday followed by a great dinner paired with beers and meads. There will also be 3 flights on Saturday
 - Moonlight Meadery will ramp up the BOS mead. Michael Fairbrother, Owner and Head, typically attends both days, judges, and sometimes gives a lunchtime talk on Mead making.
 - White Winter Winery will ramp up the BOS cider
- February 24, 2018 - **Babble Brew-Off** from Babble of Lake County IL- No info yet
 - Great local comp to judge and steward
 - Typically the BOS beer will be ramped up by a local brewery
- March 10, 2018 - **Drunk Monk Challenge** – Entry Registration Feb 19th through Mar 2nd.
 - Sponsored by UKG
- March 24, 2018 - **Charlie Orr Memorial Chicago Cup Challenge** from BOSS - No info yet.
 - One of the better local comps to judge or steward
 - All volunteers can stay for rather nice dinner during the awards ceremony. Typically a well know professional brewer will give a talk



about beer and brewing. In the past, Jim Cibak, head brewer at Revolution Brewing and John Mallet, head brewer at Bell's Brewery have been featured guest speakers

- March 2018 - **Wizard of SAAZ** from the Society of Akron Area Zymurgists, Akron, OH - No info yet.

Written by Jeff Landers

Festivals

The UKG participates in several festivals throughout the year. Our 2017 participation involved pouring our homebrew at 3 different events in Lake Zurich, Lombard, and Racine (WI) bringing more awareness about our brewing and the club to the community.

Coming up May 11th and 12th, 2018 is the **Lake Zurich Craft Beer Festival** . In 2017, four members showcased their brews on the Friday night of the event and had a great time meeting people and sharing beer.

As the event covers two days, there's room for up to 8 participants from the club (4 each night). If you're interested in participating in an evening of the event in May, please contact Woj at **Festivals@knaves.org** for more information. All participants receive \$30 reimbursement towards their materials.

If anyone has a suggestion for an event we should participate in, please email Woj the details at **Festivals@knaves.org**.

Financials

Annual Dues



2018 membership dues will be collected at the January club meeting if you didn't make it to the Holiday Party. As communicated in prior newsletters, annual membership renewal dues are now **\$20**.

Cash or check payable to "UKG" will be accepted at club meetings. You can also remit dues via PayPal on the UKG website at <http://www.knaves.org/member.html> or click the link below.

[Click here to Pay Now.](#)

Questions about dues? Please contact Darrell at treasurer@knaves.org.

Member News

This section is for members making the news or who have been highlighted in the news lately.

Energy City Brewing

2 1/2 W. Wilson Street, Suite A-1

Batavia, Illinois

(Located just off Wilson Street in Downtown

Batavia. Behind and below Limestone Coffee. Free parking by the Walgreen's)

ENERGY CITY
BREWING



Energy City Brewing is a new Batavia Nano brewery launched by fellow UKG member David Files. Energy City is only open on the first Saturday of each month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Nano brewery opens for beer tastings and sells 22oz. bomber bottles of his brews.

Check out Energy City Brewing on their next open date, January 6th, 2018.

Written by Kevin "Woj" Wojdak

Member Spotlight

Each month, we'll introduce a different club member to you and discuss how they got into homebrewing.



Jeff Landers
Minister of Tournaments

Home Town (City):
Hoffman Estates

When did you start brewing? What got you into brewing?

I brewed my first batch sometime in the late 90's and then didn't brew my 2nd batch until the 4th of July weekend in 2013 and now, I brewed my 100th batch, an Eisbock, in May of 2017. I started brewing in the late 90's because there was a homebrew store next to the office building where I worked. I was curious so I stopped in and bought an oatmeal stout extract kit and the brew wasn't very successful. A few years later, I gave my brewing stuff away.

About 4 years ago, from boredom, I decided to give brewing another try and had better success with it. In 2015, I entered my first homebrew contest and also stewarded the contest. It was the UKG Drunk Monk Challenge and I won a gold medal for a Scottish 70. A few months later, I entered and stewarded the Sam Adam's Longshot and my Schwarzbier took 3rd Place Best of Show in the whole Chicagoland region (tied for 10th overall) and I was hooked. I now primarily brew for competitions.

When did you join UKG?

About a year and half ago.

What was the first beer you ever brewed? How did it turn out?

My first batch was an oatmeal stout extract with steeping grains. Only about 5 or 6 bottles exploded, while the rest were gushers. It's probably why it took me another 15-16 years to brew my 2nd batch.

Describe your brew system. Are you an indoor or outdoor brewer?

I'm on my 3rd brewing rig. I now brew on a Blichmann TopTier system with 3 burners and 15 gal kettles in my garage with propane. I built a HERMS system and I fly sparge all batches except for the occasional session British beer. For small British beers, I batch sparge. I step mash, or occasionally decoct, all of my German and most of my Belgian beers. For American beers, I do single infusion with a mash out. I mainly brew 5 gallon batches.

How frequently do you brew (times per month or year)?

I have been brewing about 35 batches of beer per year.

Do you brew alone, with friends or with someone you live with?

Mainly brew alone. Once in awhile I might have a newer brewer over to show them how I brew. I have my kids help bottle. They charge me by the batch.

What is your favorite style(s) to brew?

My favorite style to brew is any style that I have never brewed. Otherwise, German Lagers. I don't brew IPA's all that often, but if I am at a bar or a brewery, I almost always buy an IPA. I don't buy commercial beer often, instead I primarily drink my homebrew.

What's the most unusual ingredient you've ever used in a brew?

A few months ago, I brewed a non-alcoholic root beer from scratch with my son. We used Jamaican sarsaparilla root, licorice root, burdock root, yellow dock root, spikenard root, and star anise. It turned out terrible. The following week, we brewed another one with extract that came out perfect.

Are you a BJCP Judge? If so, what is your rank and how long have you been judging?

I have been judging/stewarding for about 2 years. I attended Steve McKenna's BJCP classes last winter and took the tasting exam over the summer. I just received the results and I passed and am now a "Certified" judge. I have

judged in around 20 competitions.

Do you have a good beer judging story you'd like to share with the rest of the homebrewing world?

Last winter, I brewed a German Pilsner. I loved the way it turned out and it was one of my all-time favorite beers that I have brewed. I entered it in a competition in January 2017 and it scored an 11.5. Then, at the Beer Baron's Midwinter Homebrew Competition, it scored a 33.5 and at the Drunk Monk Challenge, it scored 44.5. That single batch of German Pilsner is now my highest and lowest scoring beer ever and it never medaled.

Do you have a homebrewing disaster story you'd like to share? Or, Do you have a good homebrew club story you'd like to share?

My first all grain batch was a New Belgium Fat Tire clone. It did not seem to turn out right, so I threw it out and tweaked the recipe a little and tried again. The 2nd try still did not seem right so I also threw it out. A few weeks later, I was at a bar and they had it on tap. I ordered it and realized that I had successfully cloned it both times, but that I just hate Fat Tire. So, I stopped drinking the Fat Tire and ordered a Bell's Amber instead.

Do you have any other hobbies other than Homebrewing?

I run about 25 miles a week, read, and watch MMA.

How many medals have you won from homebrew competitions?

I won 10 medals in 2015, 20 medals in 2016, and 45 medals in 2017 for a total of 75. So far, I have won 6 1st place Best of Show's, 3 Runner-ups, and 2 - 3rd place Best of Show's.

In 2017, I have ranked the majority of the year in the Top 3 for the **Midwest Homebrewer of the Year**. As of today, they have not released the winner, but I

think I have a good chance.

To be featured in a future issue of the **Knaves Newsletter**, please **[click here to download a copy of the Member Spotlight form](#)**, fill out as much as you can, and then submit the information to **member-spotlight@knaves.org**.



Club Schwag

UKG Work Shirts

Our official UKG work shirts are Charcoal Gray Dickies brand work shirts with the club logo over the left pocket and a full back transfer of the woodcut graphic on the back. Optionally, you may get your name and/or homebrewery name embroidered over the right pocket.



Club work shirts orders are placed by special order with our vendor and custom made to order. We place a new order 1-2 times per year and need to order so many shirts to make the order happen. Woj is currently coordinating a new order to get shirts made before the 2018 Drunk Monk Challenge in March. Contact Woj at **marketing@knaves.org** if you want to get on the list for more information and/or to purchase a shirt.

Club woodcut graphic T-Shirts are also ordered at that time.

LogoUp.com Merchandise

We have an account at LogoUp.com for making UKG club logo embroidered shirts, hats, bags, and a whole lot of other cool products. The merchandise is top quality and you can even get a club logo on name brand products such as Nike, Izod, or Under Armor. There are no minimums for orders and we can place an order anytime. Go to LogoUp.com and pick out items you want. Then, email Woj at marketing@knaves.org with your item numbers and colors and he'll coordinate placing the order with you.



UKG Bottle Labels

We have 4 sets of UKG bottle labels available for immediate sale. The labels are vinyl, reusable, write-on labels and are available in Charcoal Gray or Brown. Labels come with a front-facing label and neck label. Labels may be written on with grease pencil for easy reuse. Each set of 12 labels is \$7.50.



PAID Products to Pickup - Contact Woj!

- Michael Flack - 24 Bottle Labels

Questions about Club Schwag or interest to buy anything? Please talk to Woj or email him at marketing@knaves.org.

Contact us.

If you have any ideas for content for this newsletter, please send them to
Knews@Knaves.org.



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