



# The Herald Tribune

Volume # 13 Issue # 12

Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Brewers' Guild

December 1999

## December Meeting

This month's meeting of the Ann Arbor Brewers Guild will be Friday the 10th at 7:30 p.m. and will be hosted by Rolf Wucherer. See the map for directions. The featured style is **Winter Warmers**.

*See you there!*

## 1999 Meeting Schedule

Date	Host	Style
Dec 10 ...	Rolf Wucherer	Winter Warmers

## 2000 Schedule

Jan .....	Barleywine Style Ale*
Feb .....	Stout
March .....	Belgian Style Lambic*
April .....	Weiss*
May .....	Stephen Krebs ..... Helles
June .....	All Pilsners
July .....	Meads/BeerBQ
Aug .....	Pale Ale*
Sept .....	Oktoberfest*
Oct .....	Bock
Nov .....	Historical Beers*
Dec .....	Winter Warmers

\* Denotes AHA Club Only Competition Style

## Credits

Most of the "filler" articles about winter beer were taken from the Michael Jackson Beerhunter web site. If you've never been there, check it out at [www.beerhunter.com](http://www.beerhunter.com)

## AABG Pico System

The home of the club's Pico system is Chris Frey's residence in Saline. Anyone wishing to rent it should contact him at:

734/944-6618 or e-mail:  
[crispy275@aol.com](mailto:crispy275@aol.com)

The system may not be available, but Chris can help you schedule it's use and return.

## Style of the Month

### 22. Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer

**Aroma**—The character of the particular spices, herbs and/or vegetables (SHV) should be distinctive in the aroma. Overall the aroma should be a balanced combination of malt, hops and the featured SHV(s) as appropriate to the specific type of beer being presented. If the base beer is an ale then general fruitiness and other fermentation byproducts such as diacetyl may be present as appropriate for the warmer fermentation. If the base beer is a lager, then overall less fermentation byproducts would be appropriate. Some malt aroma preferable, especially in dark styles; hop aroma absent or balanced with the SHVs used, depending on style. The overall aroma should be balanced and harmonious.

**Appearance**—Appearance should be appropriate to the base beer being presented and will vary depending on the base beer. For lighter beers with spices, herbs or vegetables that exhibit distinctive colors, the colors should be noticeable.

**Flavor**—The character of the particular SHV(s) should be distinctive in the flavor profile. Hop bitterness, flavor, malt flavors, alcohol content, and fermentation byproducts, such as diacetyl, should be appropriate to the base beer and harmonious and balanced with the distinctive SHV flavors present.

**Mouthfeel**—Mouthfeel may vary depending on the base beer selected and as appropriate to that base beer. Body and carbonation levels should be appropriate to the base beer style being presented.

**Overall Impression**—A harmonious marriage of spices, herbs and/or vegetables and beer.

## Phil's Pils

### Congratulations !!!

Phil Wilcox won two gold medals in the CABA contest for his CAP and a Bohemian Pils. This also qualifies him for the MCAB in both categories. Bravo Phil!!

*Submitted by Tom Plunkard*

**Comments**—Overall balance is the key to presenting a well-made spice, herb or vegetable (SHV) beer. The SHV should complement the original style and not overwhelm it. The brewer should recognize that some combinations of base beer styles and SHVs work well together while others do not make for harmonious combinations. The entrant must specify the underlying beer style as well as the type of SHV(s) used. If the base beer is a classic style, the original style should come through in aroma and flavor. Additionally, whenever multiple spices, herbs or vegetables are used each should be distinctive in their own way.

**Vital Statistics:** OG, FG, IBUs, SRM and ABV will vary depending on the underlying base beer.

Original Gravity (°Plato)	1.030-110 (7.5-27.5)
Final Gravity (°Plato)	..... 1.006-30 (2-8)
% Alc./Wt. (Alc./V.)	..... 2.0-9.5 (2.5-12.1)
IBUs	..... 5-70
SRM (EBC)	..... 5-50 (10-99)

**Commercial Examples**—Harpoon Winter Warmer, Ed's Cave Creek Chili Beer, Buffalo Bill's Pumpkin Ale, Anchor Our Special Ale, Wild Onion Pumpkin Ale.

## When and Where

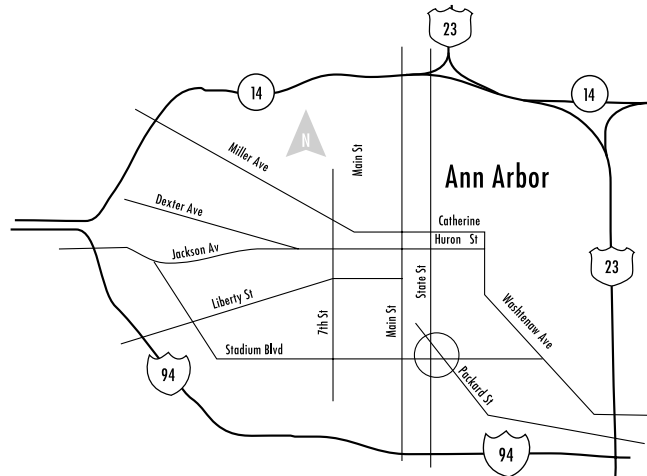
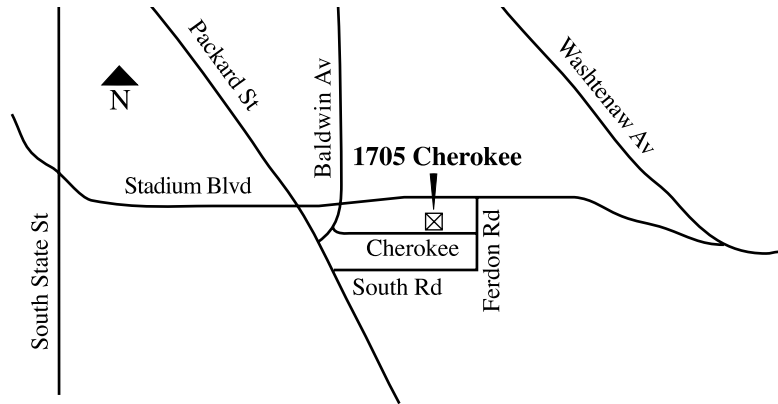
Friday, December 10,  
7:30pm  
Rolf Wucherer  
1705 Cherokee Rd  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

### Directions

Be careful when driving to and from the December meeting. This meeting is frequently accompanied by severe winter weather. So far the weather has been mild and we should have safe conditions.

### Guide for New Members

Bring 1–2 bottles per batch of your beer that you'd like to share, or an interesting commercial beer. Bring tasty munchies to cleanse the palate and sop up the alcohol. Feel free to share and sample with other members and make and accept constructive comments. Please use good judgment while imbibing and don't drive while intoxicated.



## Apparent death of Santa Claus

On December 6 (St Nicholas' Day) there will be a day of mourning over the decision to end production of Samichlaus ("Santa Claus", in Swiss-German), the world's best-known Christmas lager. This extremely strong (14 per cent), creamy, peppery, warming, brandyish, chestnut-coloured was launched in 1980 by the Hurlimann brewery, of Zurich. The beer has since been brewed on the saint's day every year, and released 12 months later, with a "vintage" date on the label.

In 1996, the brewery was acquired by a rival, Feldschlosschen, in the spa town of Rheinfelden, near Basel. Wishing to concentrate on its mass-market beers, Feldschlosschen has decided that the batch of Samichlaus brewed in 1996 and released in 1997 will be the last example of this speciality. They claim that sales are uneconomically low - although it is widely celebrated by beer-lovers outside Switzerland. At least one other brewer in Switzerland would like to revive Samichlaus, but no agreement has been reached.

## Three Winter Brews from Diverse Locations

**Grozet**, the name is a Scottish word for gooseberry. The beer is wheat-based, spiced with bog myrtle (a traditional bittering ingredient), with Scottish gooseberries in the secondary fermentation. It was created by Bruce Williams, already known for his Fraoch Heather Ale, and produced under contract at Maclay's Thistle Brewery, in Alloa, Scotland. Grozet has an enticing depth of color somewhere between old gold and amber. It starts soft, developing a perfumy, faintly tart flavor, very spritzy on the tongue, with a long, lingering, dryness. Is there a hint of fruit-skin gooseberry character, or did I imagine it? This is a most drinkable beer, contriving to be refreshing, appetizing and sustaining, all in one. 4.0 per cent alcohol by weight; 5.0 by volume.

Among some lighter-tasting, sweetish, lagers from Nile Breweries, of Jinja, Uganda, is the **Chairman's ESB** ("Extra Strong Brew"; it is a golden lager, not a bitter ale). Firm, very dry, with some vanilla-like maltiness, and hints of lemon rind bitterness in the finish. A hefty 5.6w; 7.0v.

The Mexican brewing company, Moctezuma, produces a winter edition of a **Nochebuena**. This strong (4.8w; 6.0v) dark lager has a very attractive, deep amber to claret, color. It has a smooth, slightly oily, body, and a light, toasty, maltiness, with lots of length.

## West Coast Seasonals

From Washington state, Thomas Kemper's **Winterbräu** is mahogany in color, with a huge, dense, head. It has a lively aroma of both malt and hops; a smooth body; and lots of flavor: toffee, licorice, and, in the finish, orange-zest.

From Oregon, Saxer's **Three Finger Jack Frost**, a doppelbock, has a ruby color and, again, a dense head. It has a juicy maltiness in the aroma and a very fresh maltiness of flavor, developing "dusty," cinnamon-like notes in the finish.

From California, the classic holiday beer, Anchor's "**Our Special Ale**", has a garnet color and a distinct aroma and flavor of powdered dark cocoa, developing raisins-in-brandy notes in an astonishingly long, soothing, warming, finish.

## Tasted recently on a wintry visit to Sweden

An “American-style” reddish-brown lager called Ross Creek (alcohol by volume, 5.0), from the national brewer Pripps. Slightly toffeeish, but lacking in hop. From the same brewery, a surprisingly dry, slightly grainy, Extra Strong (7.2) Premium Lager. Less estery and candyish than similar Scandinavian products such as Carlsberg Elephant or Special Brew.

Two from the Nordsjys brewery, run by a husband and wife in the dairy of a farm 170 miles south-west of Stockholm, at Motala, near Linköping, in the mainland province of East Gotland. One, at 5.0 per cent, is called ...stgota ...rt ...l (East Gotland Herb Beer). It is made with herbs which translate from Swedish as “marsh tea” (botanically, *Ledum palustris*) and “southernwood” (*Artemisia abrotanum*). This golden, hazy, brew has a talc-like aroma and a very drying, lemony, palate. A second, at the same strength, is called Bl’bärs (a pun on berries and beer). It is made with forest-picked blueberries. It has a lovely cerise colour, a Pinot Noir aroma, and a beautiful balance of sweetness and fruit-skin tartness.

Two from Zeunerts, acquired and closed by Sweden’s second biggest brewer, Spendrups, and reopened by members of its staff. An Export type, at 5.6, is malt-led, but well-balanced, with some vanilla notes. An Alt caramel-ish, with a slightly burnt astringency. The brewery is in the north, at Sollefteå.

M’rten Trotzig’s ... is a ginger-spiced lager from the Sofiero brewery, in Laholm, in the far south. This bright, pale copper, brew, at 5.6, is lightly chewy and rounded, with orange-skin flavours.

Ahlfors Ljusa (the second word means “pale”). This brewery takes its name from its home village, more usually spelled Alafors, north of Gothenburg. The Ljusa is light-bodied, dry, Pilsner-style (5.0). It is produced by Patrick Holmquist, 1992 Swedish Homebrewer of the Year.

Falcon Lagrad Gammel Brygd (“Old



Reserve”). This was the 1992 edition of a winter special (5.5) from a major brewery in Falkenberg, in the west. A burgundy-coloured brew, with well-combined aromas and flavours of malt and chocolate, and a warming finish. The brewery is jointly owned by Carlsberg and the Finnish company Sinerbrychoff.

Gellivare Stark. From a revived brewery, the northernmost in Sweden, at Gällivare. The 5.3 Stark (“strong”) lager, clean, soft, light, but unexceptional.

### ’96 Winter Brews to Remember

The 1996 Joulul (Yule) Porter, from the Saku Brewery, near Tallinn, Estonia, came in at 8.0 per cent by volume. It had an aroma of freshly-sawn wood, or perhaps a fresh log fire, with some smokiness. The huge head looked like that on a milk-shake. The palate began

with mouth-filling, toasted marshmallow, notes, but slipped away to a quick, silky finish. A sweetish interpretation of the Baltic Porter/Imperial Stout style.

The 1996 Weihnachts (Holy Night) Bier, from the Ayinger Brewery, near Munich, Bavaria, had 7.0 per cent by volume. Both the color and flavor reminded me of dark chocolate, and the texture was smooth and fudgy.

A batch of No. 1 Barley Wine, produced at the Bass Museum, in Burton, England, had a gravity of 1105 (28 Plato), producing an alcohol content of 8.4;10.5. Only pale ale malt is used, but a 12-hour boil creates enough caramelisation and evaporation to produce a dark chestnut colour. The beer has 6 lbs of hops per barrel, and is matured in cask for 10–12 months. The result is surprisingly light-bodied for the high gravity; firm, smooth, and oily; its sweetness remarkably curbed by earthy hoppiness tannic wineyness and oakiness.



Ann Arbor Brewers Guild  
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