



The Midnight Brewer

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Carroll County, Maryland

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Live and learn...then brew again!

By Steve Kranz

Lessons can be hard sometimes, like when you're brewing the next, best batch of beer you're ever going to brew, and something goes wrong that you could have prevented, had you only known...

I'll just get the lessons out of the way first:

- 1. Clean and dry your brewing equipment after each use (duh!);**
- 2. Check your wort chiller before each use, to make sure you didn't leave it outside in freezing temperatures with water still in it.**

Larry Hitchcock and I were at the end of a long brewing day at Big Brew 2003, getting ready to chill ten gallons of a Sierra Nevada clone in which we had invested considerable money and effort. My big, 50-foot copper coil wort chiller was in the kettle getting ready to do its thing, so we turned off the heat, connected the water and turned it on. After a moment waiting for the coil to fill with water and start spurting hot water, I turned the water pressure up to speed the process along, but still no water came out. Larry looked into the kettle, which appeared to be churning as if it were still boiling. Some other astute observer questioned (merrily, I might add) whether or not it didn't appear that the kettle was actually filling up.

One and one still equaling two, panic set in and we pulled out the chiller only to be sprayed with water gushing from a split in the copper coil. Upon inspection, the copper had actually burst open in two places.

Brian Flynn graciously lent us his chiller to cool our batch, but the damage was done. The best we could figure was that almost two gallons of additional (unsanitized) water had been added to our wort.

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Maryland liquor tax hikes defeated

...and what does the League of Women Voters have against beer anyway (i.e. a Kranz Rant)

By Steve Kranz

This year's Maryland legislative session featured a new round of attacks on consumers of alcoholic beverages. Delegates William Bronrott (**D**) and Salima Marriott (**D**) introduced House Bill 87 to increase the excise taxes on beer, wine and liquor by a nickel a drink, raising \$90 million a year. Senator Ida Ruben's (**D**) Senate Bill 384 would have tripled the excise tax on beer, and more than doubled it on wine and liquor. And delegate Marriott (**D**) also introduced House Bill 580 that would have doubled the taxes on beer, wine and liquor, to raise \$25 million for "alternatives to incarceration for drug offenders."

Thankfully, the session ended without passing any of the alcohol tax bills. Governor Robert Ehrlich (**R**) opposed all of these proposed tax increases.

However, that the League of Women Voters supported an increase in the Alcoholic Beverage Tax rates. According to the League's recorded testimony on the subject of Senate Bill 384:

"This tax meets several of the standards set by the League for a sound revenue generation system.

- First, it will contribute to adequate yield (*i.e. it'll raise a lot of money from those stupid beer drinkers — Ed.*);
- Second, the tax has a cost-effective administration component (*i.e. Comptroller Schaefer won't have to hire any new Tax Nazis to collect them — Ed.*);
- Third, it is simple for the public to understand."

Oh, yeah, it's simple enough: we pay more. Thanks for your input, girls. Now, shut up. I used to think that the L.O.W.V. was a harmless group that sponsors

[\(Continued on page 8\)](#)

Club Hoppenings

Clay Pipe hosts club for hop experiment

Gregg Norris had club members out to the brewery for a little hop flavoring experiment in April. He had been given a kit of various hop extracts and essences, used to isolate the different flavoring and aromatic qualities of hops. Using a very neutral base beer (Natty Boh), Gregg doctored samples of beer with the essences, and we sampled them one by one. Some (i.e. "citrus") were easier for me to detect than others, but if nothing else it limbered us all up for an evening at Maggie's where Gregg was promoting Clay Pipe's Backfin Pale Ale.

Big Brew 2003

Gary Cress hosted our annual National Homebrew Day celebration in May. About a dozen or so members attended as four batches of beer were brewed. Most fun was meeting and explaining the brewing process to several people from the public who came out after seeing the event notice in the Carroll County Times.

2003 National Homebrew Competition results

Steve Kranz's traditional sparkling mead took **First Place** in the East Region of the 2003 National Homebrew Competition, Traditional Mead category. His "Orange Blossom Special" mead achieved a score of 41 out of a possible 50 points. Three more bottles were shipped off to

the Second Round, which was conducted at this year's National Homebrew Conference in Chicago. Unfortunately, Steve's mead didn't win a ribbon in the finals...as of this writing he is still waiting for the final score sheets. There are only five bottles of "Orange Blossom Special" left. The recipe (and bottle label) are on [Page 7](#).

Steve, Melinda Byrd and Larry Hitchcock also entered a Chimay clone in the Belgian Dubbel category. While not winning a ribbon, their brew still scored 35 points, placing it in the "Very Good" scoring category and earning them a Silver Certificate.

June tasting in Freeland

Steve & Marisa Gorsuch hosted a tasting on June 21. The weather was...well, you know...but the beverages were great. Steve poured a year-old mead and it was super. Marisa's brother Peter (also a brewer) brought a strawberry ale, and another brewing friend Charlie brought a dandy Winter Ale. Larry and Steve Kranz each brought their halves of their Broken Pipe Ale, but since Kranz dry-hopped his and Larry didn't, it made for a very distinct comparison.

Updated Event Schedule

Neil Mezebish's annual Brew-Ha-Ha has been moved from July 5 to Saturday, August 2. This

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Benefits of Membership

Members of the Midnight Homebrewers' League get these benefits in addition to this newsletter:

- Priority registration for tastings and other events
- Nifty color membership card, good for discounts at local homebrew supply shops
- Purchase club-logo T-Shirts
- Membership Directory - get help from other members
- Library of "Classic Beer Style Series" brewing books to borrow
- Buy, sell, trade anything "beer" in free member ads

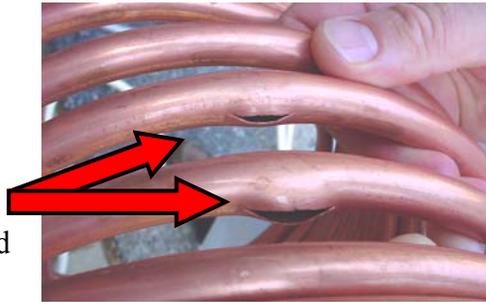
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So began the postmortem on my chiller. The only explanation that makes any sense is that it was put away with water still in it after its last use, and that the water had frozen (I store it outside in a mini-shed on the deck) and expanded the soft copper to the point of bursting it, just like a water pipe in an uninsulated exterior wall of a house. But with no reason to suspect any problems, I didn't inspect the chiller first before dunking it in the boiling wort to sanitize it.



After a good long sulk, Larry and I finished the day with about six gallons each in our fermenters, of what was supposed to be only a ten gallon batch.

Next came the autopsy. The following morning I used a tubing cutter to cut out the broken sections of copper coil, and headed to Lowe's to find some fittings to repair the damage. I came home with two 1/2"



compression unions (the chiller is made with 1/2" o.d. tubing), a fitting with a compression ring/nut at either end and a threaded body in the middle to connect two pieces of tubing. My plan was to repair the two sections and get away with only minimal damage.

But the diameter of the copper tubing in the wort chiller was slightly too large. I had the right size fittings, but apparently, when the water froze inside the coils of the chiller, it actually expanded the copper in a large portion of the chiller, not just the two small sections that burst. Dang it! I'd either fix this chiller or destroy it while trying, so I started cutting away sections of the chiller to try to find a section that hadn't expanded and would accept the compression fitting. I moved up one coil at a time, and after each cut I tried to get the compression sleeve over the tubing. After cutting out three coils, I found a spot where the sleeve actually fit.

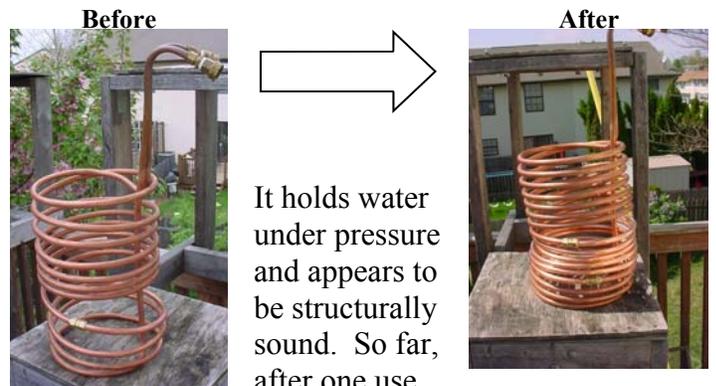
I still had to connect this portion of the chiller to the other open, cut end in order to make a continuous coil. So, I started cutting away sections of coil starting below the broken area and working down, hoping to find another section where the compression sleeve

would fit. After all was said and done, I wound up cutting away four more sections of coil before finding a place where the compression sleeve would fit.

Each coil of the chiller is 32 inches in length. Seven coils is 224 inches, or 18.6 feet. Putting it another way, I had cut out 37.2 percent of my chiller's digestive tract. When I screwed the fitting onto the second compression nut to connect both ends of the chiller, it looked kind of sad and naked.



I went back to Lowe's to get some new 1/2" copper coil tubing to replace what I had cut out. The stuff comes in a 20-foot roll, but it isn't coiled in the same diameter as my chiller, and since I was splicing this new tubing into the middle section of the chiller, it all had to be re-coiled widely and evenly enough so I could slide it over the existing coils and into place. Happily, it is soft enough to comply with gentle winding and unwinding to shape the coils, and after about an hour I had the new section spliced into the existing coils.



It holds water under pressure and appears to be structurally sound. So far, after one use,

the joints seem to hold up after being immersed in a boiling wort and then having cold water run through them. The repaired chiller took ten gallons of an English Bitter from boiling down to 75° in about 18 minutes.

Total cost of repair was about \$20, which is better than \$60 for a new chiller. I will probably have to continually check to make sure the joints remain tight before and after each use.



18.6 inches of copper cut from wort chiller

Treasurer's Report

By Larry Hitchcock

Sorry that it's been so long since my last report. Thanks for your trust in me that all's well in our Treasury. Since the beginning of the year, we've had the normal types of income — membership renewals, 50/50 raffles at club tastings, and tee shirt payments. The normal expenses have been incurred, mostly reimbursements for membership cards, mailing supplies, and postage. The bulk of the activity occurs in December each year, so 2003 has been rather uneventful so far.

The Club's subsidy of the holiday party in December came to \$186.90, after all reimbursements were received. Some memberships for 2003 were received in December, so we started the new year with a balance of \$903.58. Here's a summary of the activity

since then:

Balance 12/31/02	\$903.58
2003 memberships	\$107.00
Tee shirt payments	40.00
50/50 raffles	<u>55.00</u>
	\$202.00
Supplies/postage	<u>\$-29.05</u>
Balance at 6/17/03	\$1,076.53

As in previous years, the Officers have approved plans to subsidize Club events this year including the Brew-Ha-Ha (August 2) and the Holiday Party in December. The Treasury balance may seem high for this time of year, but that's because we have not been billed for our tee shirts from our vendor. When they were first delivered last October, I called and e-mailed regarding an invoice, but to no avail. I'm

estimating the total will be no more than \$450.00, so since members prepaid for their shirts, we'll still have a healthy amount of cash on hand after the payment is made. When the invoice comes, I'll give a final tally.

If anyone has any questions about the Club treasury, feel free to contact me.

Larry



There are over 7,000 brands of beer brewed in the United States. America has a beer tradition that goes back to the earliest days of American history.

American Beer Month is a grassroots campaign to promote American brewing and celebrate the diversity and variety of American beer.

Take time in JULY to sample some of America's brewing history. American beer traditions are the richest and most diversified in the world. Enjoy the summer and enjoy exploring the world of American beers.

Bad beer jokes

It was Halloween and three vampires went into a saloon and bellied up to the bar. "What'll you have?" the bartender asked.

"I'll have a glass of blood," the first replied.

"I'll have a glass of blood, too, please," said the second.

"I'll have a glass of plasma," said the third.

"OK, let me get this straight," the bartender said. "That'll be two bloods and a blood light?"

* * * * *

A hippo walks into a pub, goes up to the bar, orders a pint of bitter and hands the barman a twenty pound note. The barman decides to rip the hippo off so he hands him back a fiver in change. The hippo takes his pint and goes and sits down near the fire.

After a while the barman wanders over and starts talking to the hippo and says "You know, we don't get many hippos coming in here". The hippo says "I'm not f***ing surprised, at £15 a pint!"

THE ENTHUSIAST™ BEER TASTE TROUBLESHOOTING KIT

(Ed.— The American Homebrewers Association is making available to members at a discounted price of \$150 (yikes!) this very interesting Enthusiast Beer Taste Troubleshooting Kit. The idea is to dose a neutral beer with various flavor compounds to teach yourself how to recognize certain faults in a beer, and their sources. If you visit <http://www.beertown.org/education/flavor.html> you can follow additional links directly to the product manufacturer.)

Personally, this seems like a very cool and worthwhile thing to try...with someone else's \$150. If anyone thinks the club should buy one of these kits (👉) then speak up. What follows is from the product web site which describes the product and its use in more detail:

The Enthusiast™ is a beer taste troubleshooting kit, designed specifically for craft brewers and homebrew clubs. It contains examples of 8 different problem situations encountered in beer brewing. These situations are simulated using a combination of 14 different flavour reference materials.

These materials mimic the flavour that results when something goes wrong in the brewing process. Example: your wort boil was too short, giving you an odd, hard to pin down flavour. But, because you have trained using the “situation flavor standard” for the problem, you can instantly spot that



fingerprint mixture of grainy (isobutyraldehyde), onion (dimethyl trisulfide) and cooked corn (dimethyl sulfide).

To experience the symptoms of each of the 8 problems all you have to do is add the stabilized flavor to beer using the easy to use Easy-Dose™ device. The flavours contained in these devices have been stabilized using FlavorActiV's proprietary molecular encapsulation technology. As a result they are at just the right concentration - and they are stable for up to 2 years. Perfect for all styles of beer!

Each Easy-Dose™ capsule is sufficient to make 12 fl oz of beer at a strong flavor intensity, or 24 fl oz of beer at a low flavour intensity. Enough to provide all your friends and colleagues with a sample to try.

The kit contains 3 sets of Easy-Dose™ capsules for each of 8 different problem situations. That's 24 chances to learn how to recognize problem signs in your brewery before they get out of hand.

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year, it will be a combined event, since August 2 is also Mead Day.

Greg & Karen Lambrecht, whose tasting and pool party was originally scheduled for August, graciously offered to move their event up to July 5 to fill the void.

Club T-Shirt Reminder

There are not many t-shirts left — a couple large, a few x-large and one xxx. If you're interested, let Larry Hitchcock know now (410-833-4409) or larry@taylortechnologies.com.

A Club Video?

Anyone interested in working on an instructional homebrewing video? It would be fun to put together a humorous video for beginning brewers, perhaps having someone making all the mistakes — like a boil-over, too much hops, not sanitizing equipment — while another group does everything right. It would be good for our new members and possibly to sell on consignment at homebrew shops.

Is anyone good with a video camera? Does anyone know an aspiring filmmaker we could recruit? Anyone know how to edit film? If you have talent in those areas, or just have some ideas, let me know! If it works, we could continue the series for all-grain batches and wine!

Larry

Beer News

(taken from the Real Beer Page Mail and elsewhere)

Brewer elected Mayor of Denver television.

Denver voters overwhelmingly picked brewer and restaurant owner John Hickenlooper as their new mayor. He is a former Association of Brewers Board of Director member, and the founder of the Wynkoop Brewing Company, the first brewpub in Colorado.

"It's like having the finest glass of beer and wanting the flavor to linger forever," he said.

Current Mayor Wellington Webb said at a victory party, "Outta nowhere you elected a guy named Pena. And outta nowhere you elected some guy walking around the city named Webb. Now you've elected the Brew Man. Hickenlooper."

Idiocy over alcohol ads and labels not just limited to U.S.

The Irish government plans to require health warnings on alcoholic drinks and limit liquor advertising. Prime Minister Bertie Ahern said that young people shouldn't be exposed to saturation marketing of alcohol, which he said was fueling a "drink to get drunk" culture in a country where the pub has been the hub of life for generations. Ireland has the second highest per capita consumption of beer in the world, second only to the Czechs. He said the government plans to ban alcohol ads from buses, trains, cinemas and sporting events involving young people, while no ads for beer or other alcoholic beverages would be permitted before 10 p.m. on Irish

Molson's Bavaria ads labeled "sexist" by whiners

Candian brewer Molson has come under attack for its TV ads for its new "super-premium" beer from Brazil, A Marca Bavaria. The commerical which has irritated some women, features a lovely young woman (who's just earning an honest living — Ed.) in a string bikini whose actions are controlled by a man on shore manipulating a beer bottle. When the man turns the bottle, the woman turns to show her derriere (I closed my eyes — Ed.). When he puts it in a horizontal position, she gets down on all fours (I turned my head away — Ed.). When he peels the label, she begins to undo her barely-there swimsuit (I stopped the video in disgust — Ed). See the video: <http://www.amarcabavaria.com/main.php>

Drinking lowers diabetes risk

Light to moderate drinking can reduce the risk of diabetes in women, according to a Harvard study that echoes findings regarding men. The study involved 109,690 women ages 25 to 42 years. During 10 years of follow-up, women who had about half a drink to two drinks a day were 58 percent less likely than nondrinkers to develop type 2 diabetes, also called adult-onset diabetes. Those who had more than two drinks of hard liquor a day were found to have more than double the risk of nondrinkers.

A Baltimore's lecture on beer science

By Steve Kranz

Campgrounds are one of life's greatest equalizers. It's where people cutting across all socio-economic lines, from \$300,000 mobile homes to \$50 tents, share grass & dirt living space all for the love of the great outdoors. And it's where you encounter dolts and gomers of all sorts who, under the influence of a campfire and a few beers, become philosophers, imparting profound wisdom upon total strangers.

So it was when Paul Seegers and I spent a week camping in Gettysburg. A site adjacent to us was occupied by four Baltimoreans, two couples in a brand new mobile home none of them should have been able to afford. One chilly night while minding our own business, the idiots came over to bug us. We mostly stared into the fire while they talked loudly, laughed at their own jokes, and were generally rude. They eventually left, except for "Bill" who wasn't drunk enough yet. Since beer was the only thing he had in common with us, we heard the sum and substance of his knowledge on the subject of beer:

- Homebrew is strong stuff that can cause harm to mere mortal beer drinkers like Bill.
- All Germans brew beer.
- Regular beer is good, draft beer is bad. It causes hangovers. This effect is due to the method of carbonating draft beers.
- Bill can drink almost unlimited quantities of regular beer.

Recipes: Orange Blossom Special — traditional sparkling mead Broken Pipe Ale (all-grain, and a bunch of extra water)

Orange Blossom Special Traditional Mead

O.G. 1.094
T.G. 1.010
Alc %10.8

Ingredients for 5 gallons:

- 12 lbs orange blossom honey
- 1 pkg dry Champagne yeast (Lalvin EC 1118)

Bring 4.25 gallons of water to a boil for 10-15 minutes, then turn off the heat. Add honey, dissolve completely in the water, and return to a boil for 15 minutes. Cool as quickly as possible, transfer to fermenter, sprinkle the yeast on the surface and stir.

I never racked the mead out of the primary. Rather, it sat for six months before I bottled (in beer bottles) directly from the primary. I did not add priming sugar. The mead must have had lots of CO₂ dissolved in it because it carbonated by itself in two months.

Broken Pipe Ale American Pale Ale (all-grain)

O.G. 1.040
T.G. 1.004
Alc %4.6

Ingredients (for 10 gallons):

- 22 lbs Pale Malt (Amer. 2-row)
- 2 lbs Crystal 40L
- 2 oz Perle 7% BOIL 90 minutes
- 1 oz Cascade (Pellet) 5% BOIL 15 minutes
- 1.5 oz Cascade (Pellet) 5% BOIL 5 minutes
- 1 oz Cascade (Whole) 5% DRY
- 2 tsp Irish Moss
- 2 pkg Wyeast 1056 Chico Ale

Boil Time: 90 minutes
Primary Fermentation: 19 days
Secondary Fermentation: 14 days

Add 7.80 gallons of water at 161 to heat mash to 149°. Sparge with 6.75 gallons of water to yield 10.00 gallons to primary.

A broken pipe in the wort chiller allowed approximately 1.5 addition gallons of water into the boiled wort. The beer still came out, though much paler and lighter-bodied than it was supposed to have been. While it didn't turn out to be a Sierra Nevada clone as

intended, the lighter body allows for a very pronounced hop flavor from the dry hops.

O.B.S. 2000



Traditional Sparkling Mead

**Produced & bottled by Steve Franz
Westminster, Maryland**

**First Place winner in the
2003 National Homebrew Competition**

**Made with orange blossom honey,
water and champagne yeast.**

The Orange Blossom Special ran from 1925 to 1953, except during World War II. The OBS was a fast, luxury, all-Pullman winter season train that catered to wealthy travelers from the northeast to Florida's resorts. It was operated by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, and went from New York to Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond, Raleigh, Columbia, Savannah, Jacksonville, and Miami.

In 1939, two young fiddle players named Ervin Rouse and Chubby Wise took a promotional tour of the train while it was parked at Union Station. They went home, and in less than an hour had written a new song, "The Orange Blossom Special". Their fiddle song was geared to the sounds and rhythms of the train. The Rouse Brothers published the song that year, and in 1941 "The Orange Blossom Special" was a hit song for Bill Monroe, and again years later for Johnny Cash.

Events Calendar

For all tastings, \$5 per member (\$7 for guests) covers the host's costs. RSVP directly to the host, or as indicated. If you wish to schedule an event, contact Greg or Karen Lambrecht, or any club officer.

July

5 Pool party hosted by Greg and Karen Lambrecht

August

2 Brew-Ha-Ha and Mead Day hosted by Neil Mezebish

September

20/21 Maryland Wine Festival
25/27 GABF in Denver, CO.

October

16/19 BrewCamp @
Cunningham Falls State
Park
25 Halloween Party in the
haunted Mezebish barn

November

19 Klinger's Happy Hour —
Wed. Night Blues Fest

December

13 Holiday Party hosted by
John and Melinda Byrd

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candidate debates...**not!**

“More than 75 years ago, Carrie Chapman Catt, President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, proposed the creation of the League of Women Voters. This initiative occurred in 1920, just six months before the U.S. Constitution was amended to given women the right to vote.”

That's OK, but their web site is full of politically-correct rhetoric beyond helping voters make informed choices on election day. And dammit, why are higher taxes on alcohol on the agenda of the League of Women Voters? If this is what the League has come to, I say we take back the right to vote. Name me five good things that have come from it in the first place (Bill Clinton? You get my point).

This position finds full support in the **Spousal Unit**, who would give up her own right to vote if it would

keep all other women from voting. *“Most women vote based on whether someone is good-looking, or how they “feel”, or whether someone would take care of them in place of their mother. I already have a mother. I've got no time for all these women....”*

As you can tell, I was pretty fired up over this. But, for fear that someone might take this tongue-in-cheek diatribe a little too seriously, I didn't *really mean*... err...as Scotty once said to a really nasty Klingon in *The Trouble With Tribbles*, “Laddie, don't you think you should rephrase that?” So here goes:

The League of Women Voters doesn't represent the hearts and minds of all women. It has an extremely activist political agenda which belies its image as a neutral and benevolent, motherly-type group that just sponsors debates. They should just do that and shut up about everything else.

July 2003

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August 2003

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