

# THE GRAIN MILL

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
SCIOTO, OLENTANGY & DARBY ZYMURGISTS, INC

## The President's Corner

### February 2012

By Ben Siefker

The months are really flying by for me. It seems like I just sat down to write last month's President's Corner, and I'm already under the gun to write this one. I've been staying busy brewing, judging competitions, and getting ready for the British Beerfest on Feb 25th. Sometimes I think, "Did we change anything for SODZ this month? Did we get anything done?" I can think of a lot that's happened over the past month – Alefest, Chris Allmont's last tapping at Gordon Biersch, the opening of Buckeye Lake Brewery – but it's easier to think back over the last year. We've bought some new club equipment, changed the website, added a PayPal account, brought back the Iron Kettle, and set up a lot of interesting talks at our meetings. I'm happy with what we're doing, but... are you?

You elect the board to do the custodial work – to keep the club running – but also to take the club in the direction you want. It's nice to just show up once a month and enjoy a meeting with technical talks, style discussions, beer tastings... you elect us to take care of all of that. Well, we need to know if you're getting what you want. Are there subjects we need to cover? Styles you'd like to hear about? Let us know. It's easy to phone it in and just recycle last year's program, but we try to keep it fresh and bring up new topics. Tell us what you'd like to see and we'll work to make it happen.

SODZ is made up of all kinds of homebrewers. Some members brew a couple times a year, and it's less about the beer than it is about having fun. Some brew regularly and maybe even brew most of the beer they drink. Some spend their days listening to brewing podcasts and cultivating contraceptive personalities. I, for one, am lucky that I am already married. But no matter where you fall in that spectrum, I'm sure you have questions. As I just mentioned, you can tell us what you'd like hear about, but you can also get involved and find those answers for yourself. With 130+ members and over 50 people attending monthly meetings, I know you are passionate homebrewers. With such an active club, I'm surprised that there are so few projects going on. Besides the guys working on the solara project and Dan and Richard's Utopias clone, I don't know of anything going on. You don't have to wait for the board to suggest one to get one started. Few of us in this club are experts, but knowledge is gained by experience and experiment. I have a few ideas I'd like to test to further my knowledge, and doing it as a club project will increase the club's knowledge as well. I'll need the club's resources to do them, but that's what a homebrew club is for. If you have an idea but can't pull it off on your own, reach out to the club. Ask other members, or bring it to the board. SODZ could help fund these experiments or help you to organize projects. It's not about sinking time into the group, it's about using the power of the group to get more out of your time.

See you all next week at Barley's.

Cheers,  
Ben

Volume 17  
No. 6  
2012



### Inside this issue:

**How to build a draft  
4 tap draft tower**

**Cool Homebrew  
Gadgets**

**The 'All Grain Brewer'  
gets a new gig**

**Meet the Brewer**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Membership Report**

**SODZ Contact info**

**Sponsors**

# My Four Tap Tower

Sean Dawson

First off, why are flat head screw drivers so damn sharp?!? My hands looked like I'm a novice snake handler and my kids learned some choice new words which I now have to explain away. It has to be chalked up to operator error, but come on, who doesn't use a screw driver and have a beer or two.

My project for this month was to turn my old kegerator double tap tower into a four tap thing of beauty. My wife bought me a gift certificate so I could get a four way gas manifold and not keep having to switch gas QD's all the time. The kegerator I have came from the old German lady who own Juergen's in German Village. Seems she didn't sell enough draft beer to make it worth her while. I bought it way before I homebrewed and used it with normal half barrel kegs. The great thing I found out after starting to keg my homebrew, was that it fit 4 corny kegs inside. Normally I would only have 3 and a co2 tank in there, or if my pipeline was really full I would have the fourth and then just hit the kegs with co2 once and awhile.

This was unsatisfactory. I was always opening the kegerator and getting a beer from inside or hitting the kegs with co2. This lead to major ice build up inside and made the 'ole fraulein work pretty hard. I decided things needed to change and that lead me to the manifold. I would have to open a hole in the side of the kegerator to run a co2 line into it. After poking around on the net for awhile and asking the group for their input (thanks Will) I got up the nerve to drill, baby, drill. Luckily there were no leaks made.

That solved the gas problem, well, not according to my wife, but that's another story. Now I wanted to be able to get at all my beers without having to access the kegerator's insides. That's when I found these jems on Homebrewtalk.com: <http://www.homebrewtalk.com/f35/diy-4-tap-kegerator-tower-7656/> and <http://www.homebrewtalk.com/f51/4-faucet-pvc-draft-tower-102986/>

The tower in the first link looked okay and really easy to build, but I didn't like the square look of the tower. The second link was much more in line with what I was thinking. After reading and re-reading all the posts, I changed a few things. The tower base stayed the same. A piece of 3 inch PVC pipe and plastic toilet flange. I change the cross bar from another 3 inch piece into a 4 inch piece. I decided that I didn't want to cut holes into the back of the structure if I really didn't have to and I didn't like how it was attached. Although the guy/gal said it was stable, I wanted something a bit more secure. I just cut a 3.5 inch hole into the center of the crossbar and was able to pound the two pieces together. After making sure it was level I drew some guide marks so when I put it together with PVC glue and epoxy it would be a straight forward assembly.

I used a 7/8 inch paddle drill bit to make the holes for the 4 faucets after eyeballing a straight line on the front of the new tower. I was able to get my hands on 2 perlick faucets and used 2 of my stout faucets for the other side. Not that they are attached to beer gas right now, I like the look of them and they didn't stick like the old style faucets I had been using.

After a few coats of silver spray paint I glued and epoxied the 2 tower pieces together and installed the shanks and faucets. Hooked everything up to a nice starsan keg and made sure there were no leaks.

Wish I could say that right off the bat it worked fine, but alas, it didn't. So after a few more turns of the wrench I stuffed it full of attic insulation and screwed it to the plywood top of the kegerator. I am pleased to say I now have 4 beers on tap at any one time. I know, not quite in the league of Jim, but it warms my heart to go downstairs and gaze upon my taps!

Prost!

## Parts list:

straight tower part: 15 inches of 3 inch PVC pipe

Crossbar part: 12 inches of 4 inch PVC pipe

kegerator attachment point: 1 3 inch PVC toilet flange

Can of Silver spray paint

PVC glue and epoxy ( not really necessary, but I like redundancy)

Extra insulation ( any type works, the guy in the post used a yoga mat I think!)

Shanks and 90 degree nipples (not to be confused with skanks and nipples)

Faucets ( I used 2 perlick and 2 stouts)

and of course the beer line and QD's needed to attach to the corny.







# Club Brewer Takes On The Internet

Dan George

Kind of like Mike Byrne, now Pro-Brewer, I too have extended my homebrewing to another arena. I was contacted back in the fall about a new website called, BeerLovers.com. It was an idea in motion at the time, and the developer wanted a weekly Homebrew discussion. The website is just not dedicated to homebrewing as it is dedicated to beer and beer culture all encompassing. I was interested, but for months not much happened. There was a website developer out of Vancouver working on the lay-out, and toward the end of the year the finished website really took-off. The developer (Scott) has set the website up to be a "social network" site for beer lovers. I now write a weekly article that gets published on Thursdays under my somewhat infamous self-proclaimed title "The All Grain Brewer". There are two other authors that publish weekly articles as well. The Beer Fox publishes on Mondays and she is actually a real journalist who has written about beer for quite some time. she seems really talented, and is a BJCP judge as well. She is out of Philadelphia. I have never met her. Heck, I have never met Scott for that matter, as he lives in Houston as well as the next author that I have never met - The Boracle. The Boracle, is an actual executive chef in Houston and he kind of writes about commercial beers and food pairings. So since I somehow suppose to write 52 articles a year, I'd love to hear about some topics that people are interested. I might even have to interview the new pro-brewer and his new employee.

[www.BeerLovers.com](http://www.BeerLovers.com)





# meet the BREWER

Phil Siewert

## **How many years have you been brewing?**

Four years.

## **How many years have you been a member of SODZ?**

Four years. Joined at a "Learn to Brew Day".

## **What is your favorite beer to brew/drink?**

I don't know that I have a favourite beer to brew. I simply enjoy the process. As for drinking, I tend to go with the seasons. I'm just now getting tired of porters and stouts and craving the citrus of an IPA.

## **How did you get into brewing?**

My ex-wife took me to a "Beer and Chilli Tasting Night" at a friend of hers from the Moms' Club of Westerville. The man of the house was Dan George. The beer was his. I was hooked.

## **What is your favorite hop?**

I'd have to say Willamette. It's middle of the road but diverse.

## **Do you have a favorite piece of equipment that you couldn't live without?**

My refractometer. It's definitely changed the way I brew.

## **What is your dream brewing set-up?**

I think I have it with my small batch (2 gal.) brew-in-bag set-up. Quick, simple, easy to clean, and keeps my trying new styles (18 bottles go fast).

## **What is the most important thing you have learned that improved your beer?**

Not to take it too seriously. Just have fun and relax (with a homebrew).

## **What is the best/worse beer you have ever made?**

The best was probably an ESP that took best in show at BBF a few years back (recipe was from Homebrewing for Dummies). The worst was a Blonde. A judge who I respect said "is tastes like vomit" on my Beer For Boobs score sheet.

## **Who or what are you biggest influences for brewing?**

The SODZ club is a great influence. The members have introduced me to all kinds of things I never would have found on my own...yeast culturing, DIY gear, numerous styles, limitless advice...yeah, the club is my biggest influence.

# Homebrew Gadgets

Stacey Groene

One of the things that many homebrewers (including me) enjoy about the hobby is repurposing items into a beer making or dispensing gadget of some sort. There are pages and pages on the HomeBrewTalk.com forums with gizmos, doodads and whatchamacallits that creative homebrewers have come up with to address some perceived gap in their brewing process. I've found descriptions of many many pieces of homebrew gear that I did not even realize I needed but am now drawn to create for my brewing set-up.

Group brews and SODZ club meetings also supply plenty of opportunity to get ideas on how to make use of that old stock pot, pump or electric motor sitting in the corner of the garage. By default, homebrewers are a creative lot with a decidedly technical lean, and based on the eye-roll reaction from the Home Depot plumbing guy, I know I am not the only brewer to walk their aisles with nothing particular in mind but rather looking for inspiration on what from their shelves could be incorporated into my brewing set-up. The same goes for the occasional yard sale, flea market, auction or (my personal favorite) the old-time mom & pop, wood-floor, crammed to the rafters hardware store.

Zymurgy dedicates almost an entire issue to various homebrew gadgets and I think the majority of my brewing gear could be classified as gadgets (or "useful junk") so I thought I'd share a few of my more recent home built thingamabobs.

None of these are really my own creation. As expected someone already took a crack at making something for the same type of issue and has shared it with the homebrew world, but by default, the versions I build end up unique in some little way, either due to steps to customize for my system or my impatience at trying to make nice clean solder joints. Where possible I will provide links to similar items on HomeBrewTalk or item numbers from Home Depot or other stores.

**Gadget 1: Beer Tap Line Cleaner:** I had been using a dedicated keg of sanitizer to flush through my basement bar tap lines each time I changed kegs. Overall this works fine, but I also needed to occasionally flush the lines with some sort of cleaner to remove yeast deposits and beer stone.

There are certainly commercial examples of line cleaner bottles available, but they are not exactly cheap and the fittings would require me to remove the taps each time I wanted to flush the lines. A quick search on HomeBrewTalk located a sweet little 2 quart set-up that could be built for between \$9 and \$20. The cost difference depends on whether you have an extra liquid out fitting for a Firestone type keg sitting around. The parts list consists of only 3 items and some teflon tape and you end up with a pump-up bottle that will connect directly to a ball-lock fitting on the tap lines. Due to the poppet I used I needed to add a small washer as a shim between the poppet and the brass connection, but even that was discussed as a possibility in the HBT forums.

**HBT Forum for this gadget:** [http://bit.ly/BLC\\_HBT\\_Forum](http://bit.ly/BLC_HBT_Forum)

## Parts:

FloMaster 4 pint spray bottle (~\$6.87): [http://bit.ly/BLC\\_FloMaster\\_Bottle](http://bit.ly/BLC_FloMaster_Bottle)

Firestone Liquid Out fitting (\$9.99): [http://bit.ly/Firestone\\_Ball\\_Lock\\_LO](http://bit.ly/Firestone_Ball_Lock_LO)

3/8" Flare x 3/8" FPT (\$2.34): [http://bit.ly/BLC\\_Brass\\_Adapter](http://bit.ly/BLC_Brass_Adapter)



## Gadget 2: Hop Sock for pellet hops

My brew kettle is a 20 gallon pot that started life as the outer shell of a medical liquid oxygen dewar. I configured the outlet with dual stainless steel screens that did a great job of filtering whole hops, but were all but useless for pellets. With many hops being more readily available in pellet form, I needed a solution that would work for my kettle.

Once again based on a similar discussion on HBT, I saw the opportunity to make something that the original manufacturers of the parts never intended. There are countless ways to do this, but for me a big hop sock consists of 5 gallon paint strainer bags, a big floor grate with the center cut out, a hose clamp and a stainless racking tube that was collecting dust.

I was concerned about hop utilization but that has not proven to be a problem as the big 5 capacity of the bags seems to allow for ample circulation of the wort thru the hops.

[http://bit.ly/paint\\_strainers](http://bit.ly/paint_strainers)

[http://bit.ly/green\\_floor\\_grate](http://bit.ly/green_floor_grate)



## Gadget 3: Magnetic Stir Plate

I have to credit Sean Dawson for enlightening me on how easy it would be to build a homemade stir plate for yeast propagation. I had mentioned to Sean that I was looking to purchase a stir plate and he told me about the one he had built from a repurposed computer fan and some old hard drive magnets.

After a few minutes of research on HBT I found copious examples of homemade stir plates. (such as the one linked here: <http://www.homebrewtalk.com/f51/my-stirplate-cheap-easy-build-86252/>) Some included clear housings with colored LEDs and others were made from old cigar boxes. I am pretty sure quite a few examples of these are in use in the group now, and each is probably just a little bit different. (I may eventually add racing stripes to mine)

I followed a parts list from the HBT with some modifications and in no time had a functional stir plate for making yeast starters. This may be one of the most notable improvements to my brewing system in quite a while and took all of a couple hours to source the parts and assemble. For the glassware, a lab beaker in the 2-4L range is probably ideal, but I use a clear growler with no problem. I just make sure it has a fairly flat bottom so that the stir bar does not drift off center too easily.



I found some 1" Teflon coated stir bars on ebay and was off and running. I use an extra hard drive magnet to secure the stir bar when pitching the yeast into the fermenter on brew-day. Probably one of the biggest variables when building this is the type of magnets you use. A single curved magnet from an old hard drive works for me while others use 2 or more round rare earth magnets. You will have to play with how you align the magnets, but I would suggest that for stability you keep the length of the stir bar you use smaller than the width of your magnets. (for me the 1" length is ideal) I've included a couple of photos from my stir plate and a link to a short demo video of it in action.

Demo Video: <http://stacygroene.posterous.com/demo-of-magnetic-stir-plate>



I look forward to learning about all the various gadgets that other people in the club have come up with or adapted to use in making great beer. I am always looking for ideas and would love to see gadget ideas shared in the newsletter. As for me, my next addition needs to be around temperature control for my conical fermenter (approx dimensions 21" high x 30" tall)...any ideas?

## MEETING AGENDA

7:00 MEETING START

OFFICER REPORTS

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

TECH TALK:  
BOTTLE CONDITIONING  
KYLE BULLOCK

STYLE SPOTLIGHT:  
OLD ALE - RICHARD SHEPPARD

CLUB ONLY JUDGING:  
STOUT

## MEETING LOCATION

BARLEY'S ALE HOUSE #1  
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467 NORTH HIGH STREET  
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(614) 228-ALES (2537)



## UPCOMING CLUB ONLY COMPETITIONS

March/April 2012 (February Judging)  
Stout it Out Loud!

May 2012    **\*BOTTLE A FEW FROM BBF!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**  
Scottish and Irish Ale

August 2012  
Porter

September/October 2012  
Light Hybrid Beers

November/December 2012  
Ant Hayes Memorial Burton (Old) Ale

**\*You must be an AHA and current SODZ member to enter\***

## UPCOMING LOCAL COMPETITIONS

SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.HOMEBREWERSASSOCIATION.ORG](http://www.homebrewersassociation.org)

### **SODZ British Beer Fest**

All entries must be pre-registered online by Friday, February 17th:  
BJCP Catagories 8,9,11,12,13,14,19,24,25,26,27,28  
<http://bbf.sodz.org/>

### **Bockfest Cincinnati**

Entry Fee: 6.00 +  
Entry Deadline: 02/24/2012  
Phone Number: (513) 759-2573  
Location: Cincinnati, OH, US  
Contact Email: [raysnyder@fuse.net](mailto:raysnyder@fuse.net)  
Organizer: Ray Snyder

**SODZ**  
**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**  
VIC GONZALEZ: MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

**New Members/Renewals**

Brian Mathias • John Schermerhorn • Margo Thacker • Dick Dauteuil  
• Jon Cueni • Eric Hatton • Katie Knotts • Aaron Thomas  
• Jon Cueni • Kevin Harrold • Jim Bossenbroek • Kevin Potter • David Curran  
• Chase Leibold • Scott McCurdy • Chuck Hilliker  
• Mike Colby • Adam Harms

**Number of current members** 131

**Number of members about to expire** #5

**Number of renewals sent** #5

**SODZ**  
**TREASURER REPORT**  
DAN FRANCE TREASURER

Fifth Third balance: \$ 5142.11

Paypal balance: \$ 534.07

No recent large changes to report



# SODZ INFO

The Scioto, Olentangy and Darby Zymurgists, Inc. (SODZ) meets on the third Monday of the month at various locations in Central Ohio.

Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. Membership dues are \$15 per year and are renewable during the member's anniversary month of joining SODZ. Members receive The Grain Mill, the club's monthly newsletter. Articles submitted for the newsletter should be received no later than 10 days prior to the next meeting date.

Articles should be submitted by email, preferably in MS Word, MAC PAGES or Google DOCS, with graphics in jpg format to **mgbyrne80@gmail.com**



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### SODZ Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Homebrewer yes/no \_\_\_\_\_ How Long \_\_\_\_\_



**Make Checks payable to: SODZ**

**Bring this application to the meeting or send it to: checks payable to: SODZ**

**Bring this application to the meeting.**



## SODZ PAYPALL INFO

The paypal account is **\*\*sodz.treasurer@gmail.com\*\***

To pay, please follow these instructions carefully to avoid paypal fees.

- Log into paypal.
- Click the “Send Money” tab at the top.
- Put in [sodz.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:sodz.treasurer@gmail.com)
- Put in the amount to send (\$15 is the cost of yearly dues).

### **Here’s the important part...**

- Under the amount box, click the “Personal” tab.
- Select “Gift”.
- If you are paying from an existing paypal balance, or from your bank account, no fees will be charged. BUT... Paypal charges transaction fees for CREDIT CARDS. If you are paying with a credit card, you will have the option of selecting who is required to pay the fee. Do not push fees to SODZ, or a request will be sent to you for the fee amount charged to the SODZ account.

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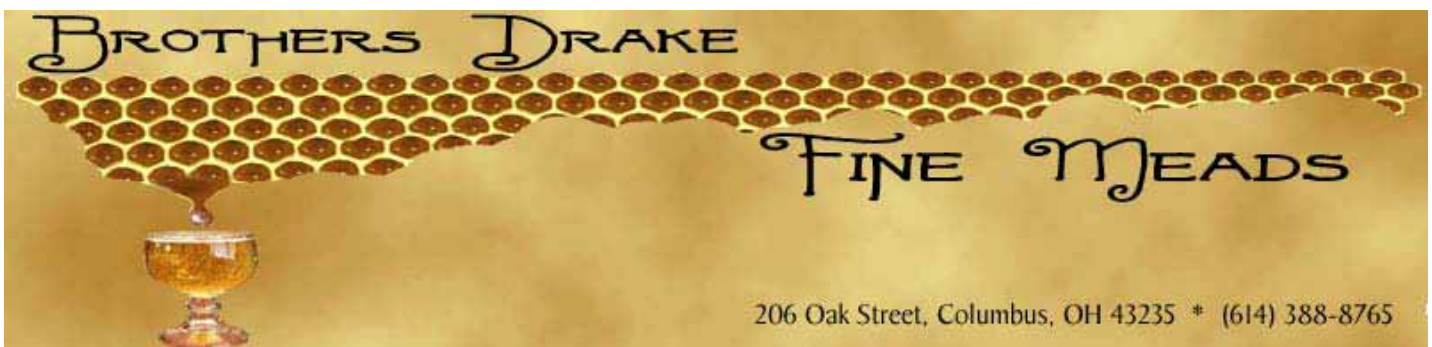
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##### Beer List 2010 Course Schedule

<input type="checkbox"/> JAN - BBL-Aged Porter III	101
<input type="checkbox"/> FEB - Mocha Plum Stout	110
<input type="checkbox"/> MAR - Imperial Witbier	201
<input type="checkbox"/> APR - BBL-Aged Barleywine	220
<input type="checkbox"/> MAY - Verano Mexicano Cerveza	300
<input type="checkbox"/> JUN - Blackberry Wheat	321
<input type="checkbox"/> JUL - Icebox Eisbock	401
<input type="checkbox"/> AUG - Over & Back Double IPA	420
<input type="checkbox"/> SEP - Oktoberfest	500
<input type="checkbox"/> OCT - Pumpkinweizen	550
<input type="checkbox"/> NOV - Winter Warmer	601
<input type="checkbox"/> DEC - Vic's Barleywine #5	612

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##### 2010 BEER LIST COURSE SCHEDULE

<input type="checkbox"/> JAN Belgian Strong Dark Ale	675
<input type="checkbox"/> FEB Chocolate Cherry Wheat	700
<input type="checkbox"/> MAR Irish Red	725
<input type="checkbox"/> APR Milk Stout	800
<input type="checkbox"/> MAY Poor Richard II Ale	850
<input type="checkbox"/> JUN Mark's Hard Cranberry	900
<input type="checkbox"/> JUL Homebrew Winner	925
<input type="checkbox"/> AUG Froch w/Honey Ale	975
<input type="checkbox"/> SEP Smoked Porter	1000
<input type="checkbox"/> OCT Abbey Dubbel	1150
<input type="checkbox"/> NOV Oud Bruin Ale	1350
<input type="checkbox"/> DEC Wheat Wine	1500

Elevatorbrewing.com



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