



# Hangtown Brew Noose

[www.hazeclub.org](http://www.hazeclub.org)

Hopfen und Malz,  
Gott erhalz!

JANUARY 2011

Volume 53



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



Hi fellow Hazers,

We stand at the beginning of a new year and I am looking forward to what lays before us. The holidays are behind us and it is time to start thinking about spring beers, team brews on the BBS, and the AHA conference. As we look forward to the new year I would like to have an open conversation about what people want from the club this year. I brought this up at the January meeting, and if anyone has ideas or comments they

would like to share on this subject I encourage you to email me at [arvsi3@gmail.com](mailto:arvsi3@gmail.com).

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank the 2010 officers for their service to the club.

Let's make this a great year.

-Alan

*"Filled with mingled cream and amber I will drain that glass again. Such hilarious visions clamber through the chambers of my brain - quaintest thoughts - queerest fancies come to life and fade away; Who cares how time advances? I am drinking ale today."*

-Edgar Allan Poe

### In This Issue....

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## H.A.Z.E. Club Officers for 2011

President:	Alan Vosper
Vice President:	Glen Franke
Secretary:	Joe Olivas
Treasurer:	Michael Frenn
Activities Directors:	Mark Fechter

HAZE is dedicated to fostering social and educational opportunities for homebrewers in the foothills.

Brew Noose Editor: Michael Frenn



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# H.A.Z.E.

Hangtown Association of Zymurgy Enthusiasts

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Check the calendar for all specifics [www.hazeclub.org](http://www.hazeclub.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 27:** Steering Committee  
7 pm @ the Brick Oven
- February 10:** Club Meeting  
7 pm @ the Brick Oven
- February 11:** SF Beer Week Begins  
Check out [www.sfbeerweek.org](http://www.sfbeerweek.org)  
for specific event details
- February 24:** Steering Committee  
7 pm @ the Brick Oven
- February 25:** Sacramento Beer Week Begins  
Check out [sacramentobeerweek.com/beer/](http://sacramentobeerweek.com/beer/)  
and the Noose for evolving info!

## Brew Years Resolutions

Happy Brew Year! Like Spring, this is a great time to reflect on last years efforts and prepare to reach new heights. One way to achieve this is to set a few resolutions, targets, if you will, that will advance your brewing knowledge and skill. Here are a few very simple examples;

*Learn about a new beer style and brew it.*

*Learn about a new brewery and try their beers.*

*Try one new brewing technique.*

*Write an article for the Noose.*

*Plan your brewing year.*

*Enter at least one brewing competition.*

*Learn about a new ingredient and brew with it.*

*Calibrate your brewing equipment.*

*Invite a friend to a HAZE meeting.*

*Learn about the BJCP Program.*

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### BUILDING A BREWING CALENDAR

Brewers, like farmers, are always thinking ahead. While we are here in the dead of winter, we should be thinking of spring (while we drink the Scotch Ale we brewed last winter! – See the [January 2010 Noose](#)). In particular, what do you want to drink in the spring? Are there special brewing events? A brewing calendar helps to organize your brewing at multiple levels. Most importantly, if done right, it keeps your cellar full of beers perfect for the season.

A good calendar is one that allows you see the entire year at a glance as oppose to having to flip through different pages. Start by filling in hard events such as competitions (World Cup is April 2, entries are due 2/18 – 3/12), National Homebrew Day (the first Saturday in May), National Mead Day, HAZE Campout, NCHF, etc. Next, break your year into seasons and contemplate the beers you would like to have then. For example, summer is perfect for pilsners, weissbier and Belgian wit.

Don't forget holidays or special events. For example, Marzen was originally brewed in March and then stored (lagered) in cool caves and ultimately became Oktoberfest beer. Maifest occurs (oddly enough) in May and (equally peculiar) is accompanied by Maibock. January and February would be good times to brew Maibock. Next, set your time frames for fermentation, conditioning and packaging. Work backwards and your calendar will soon emerge.

**Dues are due!**  
**\$20.00 per household - see the treasurer**



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## Calibrating Brewing Equipment

We here at the Noose want you to succeed and so we will help you achieve the Brew Years Resolutions you've just now committed to (that was quick, huh?). Let's start with calibrating your brewing equipment. To do this go to the store and buy a 1/2 gallon of distilled water and a six pack of good beer (I'd get Celebration Ale before it's all gone!). The water you will use for calibration, the beer you will drink.

The first piece of equipment to calibrate is your **thermometer** because the calibration of other pieces of equipment is best done at specific temperature. Thermometers are calibrated at 32°F (freezing) because boiling occurs at different temperatures based on elevation and the resulting partial pressure of the atmosphere (and that ain't a lotta hot air!).

Pour 8 to 12 oz of distilled water into a paper (preferred) or plastic cup and freeze it. Place another 8 ounces in the frig to get cold. Crush the frozen water into 1" size chunks (please, no calipers!) and add to the cold water. Go drink a beer.



Glass bulb (floating) thermometers: Place in the ice water bath and allow to equilibrate; 5 minutes should be enough. If you have multiple thermometers, do them all at the same time. Record their values. If they do not read 32°F you will need to note the +/- variance and then add or subtract each time you use that thermometer. Remember, a difference of 2 degrees in your mash can make a big difference in the resulting wort fermentability.



Dial thermometers: Place in the ice water bath as above (again, do multiple gauges at the same time) and equilibrate. If the gauge has a set screw in the back, turn the screw until the gauge reads 32°F. If not, you will again need to note the variance. Special note: If you have a dial gauge with a really long probe (8 inches or more), then you need to construct a tube with enough ice water to submerge the probe, otherwise ambient air temperature will interfere with accurate reading.

Drink a beer.





The next piece of equipment to calibrate is your **hydrometer**. Not all hydrometers are created equal and getting an accurate reading of gravity is essential to beer consistency. Pre-boil gravities will indicate mash efficiency, batch volume and hop schedule. Final gravities indicate fermentation progress, yeast health and alcohol content. Hydrometers are calibrated to 60°F (that's why we do the thermometer first).

Place your thermometer in the hydrometer tube and fill with distilled water. Place in the fridge or by a heater until you achieve a temp of 60°F (or whatever adjusted temp is needed based upon the previous thermometer calibration). When you have achieved 60°F, replace the thermometer with the hydrometer, spin it to remove any air bubbles and allow it to equilibrate to the 60°F temperature. Take your reading (remember, this is at the liquid line, not where the liquid rises up the side) and then recheck the temp of the water with the thermometer to make sure there hasn't been too much "drift".

Your hydrometer should read 1.000. If not, you will have to note the difference and factor it in to your future measurements. For example, if your hydrometer reads 1.002, you know it is .002 on the high side and that will need to be subtracted from your future measurements. Likewise, if it is 0.008, you will need to add .002.



While most **refractometers** are touted to be ATC (Auto Temp Correcting), it is a good idea to calibrate them at 60°F. Simply place a drop or two of 60°F distilled water on the viewing plate and take your reading; it should be zero. There should be an adjustment screw to enable you to zero out the instrument, if needed.

Tip: When using refractometers to check the gravity of heated liquids such as sparge run off or the kettle I first collect a small sample with my plastic spoon. I then drop this onto my large stainless spoon (which has NOT been sitting in the sun!). This dissipates the heat quickly and allows for a much more accurate reading. NEVER dip the hydrometer into hot liquid!

Drink a beer.

Finally, if you haven't already done so, your brewing vessels should be calibrated. Place the vessel on a level surface (use a carpenter's level to be sure). Add water (doesn't need to be distilled, but should be at 60°F to minimize the impact of expansion/contraction) using a calibrated and marked container such as a pitcher or a brewing bucket. Half gallon is probably the smallest useful measurement. Add to the vessel slowly, let the water settle and mark a stick, site gauge or measuring tool.

You're now calibrated, lubricated and ready to brew!



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## Brew A Gruit

Last but not least, let us help you with brewing a beer you probably have not brewed before, Gruit. The Barlow rule tells us that (barley + hops + yeast + water) = beer. But it was not always so and long before there were hops beer was commonly brewed with a variety of other botanical ingredients. The concoction of herbs and other plants, that was used to provide taste and, in some cases, preservative character, was known as grut or gruit, and was a particular feature of beer brewed during the Medieval period in the Low Countries, Scandinavia, northern France and the lower Rhine valley. While there is certainly a renaissance in so far as using spices is concerned, such as Jasmine (Avatar IPA), Ginger (China Camp Gingered Lager) and Peppermint (Snowshoe Thompson Winter Ale), these are relatively tame compared to the spices of yore. So step through the looking glass and brew it, a gruit!

### From Gruit Ales and Unhopped Beers

**Basic Gruit Ale - All Grain** (Extract brewers may email the Noose editor for a conversion)

5.5 gallons; Original gravity: 1.088; Final gravity: 1.028; 8% ABV

This beer is modeled on a Scottish Ale. The taste balances quite well between the maltiness, alcohol and gruit herbs. Be sure not to boil all herbs as delicate aromatics and properties will be lost in the process.

13 pounds / 6 Kg english pale malt  
4 pounds / 2 Kg crystal malt  
3 pounds / 1.3 Kg German pilsner malt  
(roasted at 350°F / 175°C for 20min)  
2 pounds / 1 Kg German Munich malt

Extra:

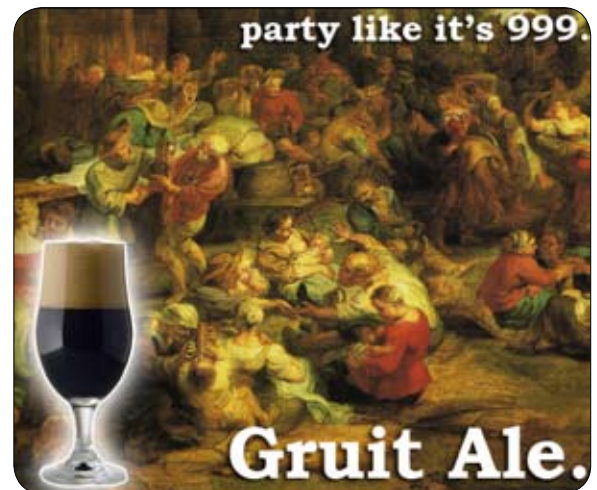
¾ cups corn sugar for priming  
1 tbs. irish moss

Herbs:

2 ounces / 50-60g of Yarrow  
2 ounces / 50-60g of Wild rosemary  
2 ounces / 50-60g of Bog myrtle

Yeast:

Wyeast 1028 London Ale



### METHOD

1. Mash in grains in 5½ gallons of water at 180°F / 80°C.
2. Perform saccharification rest for 85 minutes at 156°F / 70°C.
3. Mash out for 10 minutes at 165°F / 74°C.
4. Sparge with 6 gallons / 23L at 170°F / 76°C.
5. Collect wort into brew kettle and boil for 30 minutes before adding gruit herbs.
6. Add 1 ounce / 28g of each of each herb for a 30 minute boil.
7. Strain and cool to 70°F / 21°C, pour in fermenter and add yeast.

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