

# w·i·z·a·r·d·s

*Worcester Incorporated Zymurgists Advancing Real Draughts*



**Homebrew Club  
Worcester, MA**

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## Highlights from the year that was 2016

### April Club Meeting – The Start of the Yeast Series

April brought the club a bounty of activity. At our club meeting, we tried some non-local beers courtesy of Joey (Iceland), Bill (Cayman Islands), Craig (California), and Rob (Africa). Thanks to all – and sorry about the wet suitcase Bill – but we appreciated the ones that survived!



And if that wasn't enough, Dwayne started his "Yeast! Gotta have it!" series where he educated us by sharing his professional expertise on propagating, growing and storing yeast cultures. We look forward to Duane's next presentation in June: "The Care and Tending of your Yeast." Thanks again, Duane. It was REALLY Fascinating!

### Spring Pub Crawl

This year's pub crawl kept the local theme started in 2015 by starting at Jack's Abbey in Framingham for a light lunch and ending at Medusa Brewing in Hudson.

## WIZARDs 2016 Year in Review

Stops along the way included Cold Harbor (one of my new favorites) and the Horseshoe Pub. As hard as it is to believe in this day of cell phones and cameras, no one remembered to take any pictures that day. Oh well, still a good time was had by all.

### [Summer Swill-Off 2016 - Malternatives](#)



Keep reading for Pat's chronicle of the night's events.

### [New England Homebrew Jamboree, Tamworth Camping Area, Tamworth, NH](#)

2016 brought another strong showing for the Wizards at the New England Homebrew Jamboree. In what has become a fine tradition we shared a tent with FOAM and put out a whopping eighteen beers between us (four more than last year).



## WIZARDS 2016 Year in Review



I would encourage everyone to give it some thought - you will have a good time. It is always held the weekend after Labor Day. The jamboree is Saturday but you can easily make it a whole weekend event. It is held at the Tamworth Campground in Tamworth, NH, Sure it's a bit of a drive but what are weekends for? Make it a day trip (bring a DD) or stay for the weekend. If you're a camper, you can camp with the jamboree or reserve a site at the campground. The campground also has rental campers that may be available. The event is definitely kid friendly. There's a homebrew competition you can enter or judge. We'll have a spot in the beer tent with FOAM. We could even serve your beer! Failing that there will be plenty of it around. For more information on the Jamboree, you can read about it on the website at <http://wizards.tringali.org/nehj2009.pdf> or see the jamboree's web site at <http://www.homebrewersjamboree.com/index.html>.

## WIZARDS 2016 Year in Review

### September Club Meeting – Oktoberfest



### Holiday Party 2016

Once again the club gathered at Bill's for our annual holiday party. Once again, and perhaps a good thing, there don't seem to be any pictures, which might be a good thing as it was time for the club's barleywine night.

More on the barleywine tasting from Pat below, right after he tells us about the Oktoberfest tasting and right before he tells us about the Swill-Off.

## The 2016 Wizard's Oktoberfest Write Up!!!

Greetings Wizards,

It's autumn, the leaves are changing colors and so are the beer cans. A time when the beer shelves themselves start to turn orange with the offerings fall signaling an end to summer. A time when we Wizards see what this new season's offering will hold for us. When we go out and collect the bounty of Oktoberfest. What a wonderful time to be alive!

First off I know I'm late. I was late to the meeting, I'm late posting the write up. Late. Late. Late. Why do you people still put up with me? My write ups must be that important to you huh? Second I won't be able to bash Bill all that much this time as he took several pictures of me in compromising positions during meeting (wearing that stinking wizard's hat) and has threatened to post them all over the internet if I speak the truth. Always a pleasure to see you Bill 😊. So with that let's go over the ground rules shall we?

As usual the scoring was done by the Wizard's time-honored tradition of finger rating (1 being awful, 5 being sublime). I've rounded to the nearest hundredth (.00) which may be a full decimal higher than last year but I guess I'm just lazy and tardy these days. We'll just go right down the list in the order we had them. And remember I only write what I hear. So if you don't see any comments of your own written down it means you need to speak up!

Well that's enough from me. Let's put on our lederhosen and jump in feet first to the 2016 Wizard's Oktoberfest write up!

1. Berkshire Oktoberfest- A hardy prost came out from the crowd! ~~Bill~~ Someone else said cheers. This beer was 7.5% alcohol which I'm not sure qualifies it as an Oktoberfest. That doesn't seem like it would be good for a long session of drinking. Comments I heard from the crowd included: Good head, nice color. Too fruity, big orange character. " Lots of apples and pears. And I don't know what pears taste like" Berkshire Oktoberfest did ok with. 32 points- 2.13 average.

2. Weltenburger kloster anno 1050- All the way from Bavaria! This beer had an amber – gold color with a light body and did a little bit better than Berkshire with comments of: "Good in a creepy way. A little bit cardboard, mustiness. You can taste the boat ride. Good grain character. Fruity aroma. Suffering from import." This began one of our classic intellectual discussions on how we need more boats or less stops. Blame customs! With the problems Hanjin Shipping is having these days I doubt we'll see any resolution to this problem soon. But that won't stop us from trying! 41 pts 2.73 fingers.

3. Goose Island Oktoberfest- Some said this was the Budwiser of Oktoberfest. It was drier but some malt as Berkshire. There were those that said they could taste apples, and smell an apricot aroma. "Too fruity" some said. "Wouldn't want two of them. " 28 points. 1.86 fingers

4. Goose Head (Dwayne's World brewery) Oktoberfestbier- Poor Dwayne. He's worked so hard on his own logo and name of Goose Head only to have us savages come along and rip it all down. The world may someday know him for Goose Head, but to us Wizards he'll always be Dwayne's World.

Luckily for Dwayne he doesn't have to worry about what we say because he can make one mean Oktoberfest beer. "Not in a shipping container but it was in the trunk of the car". Dry, nice. Is this your Vienna lager? One sneaky wizard asked trying to get an inside jump on the November comp. Drinks nicely! Well doe Dwayne!  
58pts 3.87 fingers

5. Blue point brewing Co Oktoberfest- Too bad we didn't follow up Dwayne with one of the nicer offerings. "Tastes like American lager". Non-descript. Old yeast flavor only a month old? That's about all we had on this one. 33 pts 2.2 fingers.

6. Von Trapp Oktoberfest – And we continued our decent back down. "This is an American beer!" "Go see the castle, not the beer." Several comments of "Bitter" (followed by the bitter beer face). Astringent, Very bitter. Both bottles we sampled had different colors of beer inside. Did I mention it was bitter? 30 points, 2 fingers

7. Left Hand Brewing Oktoberfest- "Just as pleasant as last year (Sarcasm)". "I brought this last year and felt bad" said the same dude that brought you four loco. This is awful, somethings bad behind's this. "This metallic aluminum taste". This was followed on what the proper pronunciation should be the American of British way. About all we settled was there isn't a k in aluminum. Go Us! Super disappointing. 20pts 1.3 fingers.

Ok, let's just stop for a moment. This isn't the swill off, and we haven't liked this beer at all in two years' time. Last year they scored a 2.357 somehow and this year they fell back over a full finger. If Left hand isn't going to put forth any effort into this beer than I make a motion we stop drinking it. Next year if a Wizard shows up with Left hand Oktoberfest we leave it in the bottles and move on. Our time is far too valuable to be wasting on this.

8. Spaten Oktoberfest- Thin taste. People were more worried a but sample glasses than commenting on the beer at the moment. Lighter body, hoppy cloy finish. Tettninger hops aroma. Apparently this beer is better or of kegs from Cambridge. Also we found a purpose for Bud light! Bud light is for the zombie apocalypse due to its staying power. Good to know. 43 pts, 2.87 fingers.

9. Sierra Nevada Oktoberfest- "This should be good." Beautiful color. Clear, light body light that's about it. Stones opening a new brew pub in atl?!?! We got really quiet for some reason. 32. 2.13

10. Wormtown Oktoberfest lager. Wormtown woke us up a little bit. Nice color, nice body. No off flavor Scottish people like whisky! Weird floral finish like hopes fruitiness, something's fighting itself in there. Astringent finish. 44pts. 2.93 fingers.

11. Samuel Adams Octoberfest. In a can!!! – sweet, body light no carbonation buttery, very sweet. Buttered caramel corn. "I love caramel corn" "I love butter" . 31 pts 2.07 fingers

12. Firestone walker Oak toberfest. There's no oak! What the Hell?!? We all were expecting a nice oaky Oktoberfest. It's just named after some crappy town in CA (not Oakland) whose name loosely translates to something that has oak in the name. Holy six-degrees of separation. I'm going to brew a beer and name it Peppermint Lager. It'll be a Russian imperial Stout but I'll name it Peppermint Lager because in the town I grew up in my dad liked to drink peppermint schnapps, and I once flew into Detroit that has a bar in it called PJ's Lager house so that makes sense right? Yeesh.

Nice beer though. "I like this I can drink this one, I can have more You can taste the high earth metals."

Also this is the beer where you hooligans knocked me off my game. All your snaky comments and finger waving finally got to Old Pat and I wasn't able to get an accurate count. I needed to use a range of estimates. 38-43 2.53-2.87. You Hoodlums better savor the flavor because this will not happen again!!!!

13 Jack's Abbey Copper legend. – This was a very nice offering, and much improved from last year's Copper legend. Soft Mouthfeel Pretty tasty. They have a good house lager. "Wow" "I like Jabbybrau" 58 pts 3.87

14. Two roads Oktoberfest- "This is good, very good."

The comments we getting fewer now. I think the length of the night was getting to us. Bill stated "we've now lost all objectivity". He said I could print that so it's ok. No internet pictures. "Sure is beer" Then we got into a long talk about how to measure fg and og. Also we found out that Dwayne likes hydrometers that float. 53 pts 3.53 fingers

15. Victory fest bier- Unfortunately we ended the night on a rather low note. "Not Munich in the aroma. Smells like an oxidized candy. Slight roast. Burned, astringency The darkest festbier. Very roasy which one did I like less It doesn't taste flawed it tastes not good." By this time we had had enough . 24 points 1.6.

Well that was about it. After Konrad's Lunch bag started leaking on the table we knew it was time to pack it up. We had some good, some bad, some misleading and some homebrew. Big shout out to Dwayne who once again this year went up against the pros and won.

Also there were some comments throughout about the declining quality of Oktoberfest beers over the years. I went back and compared last year's results to this year and I found out that overall this may not be the case. The average overall score last year was 2.29 while this year's was 2.51. Although not a big difference it was in the direction different than expected. I wonder if this has to do with the actual beer quality, or maybe our improved tasting abilities, or may be a false perception? Discuss.

Whatever the case may be it was fun once again. I'm pretty sure we all had some good laughs. I'm always fond of this meeting as it marks my anniversary for joining the wizards. Six years and counting. Thanks for a fun night!

-Pat

## Holiday Party and Barelywine Tasting , by Pat

Greetings and Happy Holidays Wizards,

Boy do I have a special treat for all of you! Almost guaranteed to be better than any other present that you'll receive today; a gift that would only come in second to receiving a Red Rider Carbine-Action Two-Hundred-Shot Range Model Air Rifle with a Compass in the Stock. It's a rare Wizards Holiday Party Barley Wine Competition Review! Wow! You all must have been very good boys and girls this year to receive such a treat.

Now I know what you all must be thinking: "Oh crap, now I have to run out and get Pat a gift. I don't even like him." Before you try and repurpose last year's fruit cake I'm here to tell you that such a gesture will not be necessary. Just knowing I have your eternal admiration is more than enough for me.

Also you might be thinking: "Ummm Pat the party was over two weeks ago so this write up is pretty late, what's up with that?" You are right the party was a few weeks ago. It turns out drinking about three quarts or Barley Wine takes a toll on a human. I spent a good part of the week following the party just walking around in a haze wondering how I woke up with cheese whizz in my beard. Luckily I took notes! And they are an impeccable record of all the events that happened during our tasting. Also I thought what a wonderful Christmas/Chanukah gift this would be for all of you if I delayed it a little bit!

Finally, for this competition, we had to journey into the beast's lair, otherwise known as Bill's house. Now don't worry there was still plenty of Bill comments to be had. Just because we're in his house doesn't mean we have to be nice to him. In all seriousness we do have to give a big shout out to Bill and his lovely wife Darja for once again opening their home to us and hosting the Christmas party. Without them you probably wouldn't be reading this right now and would be forced to go spend time with your in-laws. Next time you see them be sure to give them a high five.

Before we get to the judging let's go over the ground rules. The theme of the evening was Barley Wine, didn't matter English, American or any other form. If you brought Barley Wine we were going to judge it six ways from Sunday. Scoring was done by the Wizard's never-fail finger system (1 finger=horrible 5 fingers =sublime (and if you're paying attention yes I did cut and paste this sentence from last year's write-up (And I just did it again! (Ho, Ho, Ho))))). I will list the beers as we had them to give you the chronological flow of the event. These entries were not commercial in nature; these entries are all from fellow Wizards so it was suggested to try and be nice with the comments. This was mostly followed. Also I will only reveal who the winner is (that's the only name Greg gave me). You should also share this with any spouse/significant other that came with you, and possible nice enough to drive you home. They probably have a better recollection of event that took place and will gladly tell you about them; only judging you slightly I'm sure. Lastly, in an attempt to make this even more festive, I've gone through and tried to pair a suitable Christmas song and movie for each entry based on taste and comments I heard.

Ok, opening comments and formalities are now out of the way. You've all been waiting patiently so I won't make you wait until after church to open your gift. Ladies and gentlemen I give you the 2016 Wizard's Holiday Party Barley Wine Comp!!!

Barley Wine #1- This entry was really well balanced. The malt flavors really worked well with the resinous hop aromas. Some of the comments I heard were: "I like this one. It tastes like Bigfoot. (I'm assuming the Sierra Nevada Beer, not the mythical forest creature.)" "I like the hops" Barley Wine #1 performed admirably Scoring 61 fingers (fyi that is a lot of fingers) for an average of 4.01. This Barley wine would go great with a timeless Christmas Classic such as **A Christmas Carol (preferably the 1984 version with George C. Scott as Scrooge)** or if you are listening to a song you may want to pair this with [Nat King Cole](#).

Barley Wine #2- This beer was another fine offering. Although it didn't have the same balance as BW#1 it was still well made. "this beer will get a five from me as well" is one of the comments I heard. Also at this

time there began a conversation about bees and which ones were the best. Not bees with super powers, just bees. Weird, huh? I also heard some people start to question my ability to count fingers and that it would be “Best to go last” because I’ll only see a blur and assume it’s a larger number. Let me assure you that I was able to see straight for at least 30 minutes after the competition was completed thank you very much. This beer received 45 fingers (exactly) for an average score of 3. If you’re looking for good movie to watch when your drinking this try **Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer** because people made fun of him just like they were doing to me. Look how that turned out. A good song for this beer would be [Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer](#) just to reinforce this fact.

Barley Wine #3- This entry was a very good example of the style with a nice malt flavor and slight warmth in the taste. The hop aroma was spicy but not overly bitter. Even though as one person pointed out “after a few of these they kind of blend together” This beer stood strong. Also, for some reason, the hipster conversation on bees continued to monopolize a large group of judges. You all will be happy to know that it was decided that bumble bees are the best with honey bees being a distant second. BW#3 did very well, almost matching entry #1’s total with 59 fingers for an average of 3.93. This beer is well deserving a classic movie from my childhood- **A Christmas Story**. Be careful not to shoot your eye out. For a song, please enjoy this beer with Hark the Herald Angels Sing. I couldn’t decide if I wanted to [post this version](#) or [this one](#) , I think they’re both great. Also why is Carrie Underwood’s version blocked on YouTube? If you want to play that version it’s fantastic as well. I guess I just like this song.

Barley Wine #4- While many thought that this beer was good, many also thought that it missed the mark for the category. This beer didn’t have the same dominant malt or hop profile with several other flavors coming through. Some flavors that came through were “bready” and “some chocolate in there”. Other comments mentioned were “Not as good as some of the others” and “Missed the mark”. Although this was true to style, it wasn’t disliked: “I’ll drink it with no complaints” and “Not bad” were also heard. Also this beer got some votes of only one finger, which is fine, but it was the finger that was used that got to me. (Southie Mike I’m looking at you big guy). While yours truly has broad shoulders and can handle such personal assaults, it still made me feel slightly dejected. Like how Joseph and Mary must have felt when they were turned away at the Inn. Never the less we go on. This entry received 43 fingers for an average of 2.9. For being good, but not entirely a barley wine you should watch this with **Gremlins**. While good, it’s not entirely a Christmas movie although some may say it is. A great song for this beer would be [Dean Martin’s Waling in a Winter Wonderland](#) . While it is a very nice song, if you listen to the lyrics it has absolutely nothing to do with Christmas.

Barley Wine #5= This beer was a bounce back that was more to style. It was very warming and probably needed some more time to settle before being consumed. Some comments I heard were “ Similar to #2”, “Boozy”, “Needed some more time to mature” (boy have I heard that before). Besides these comments many people started to notice that Bill’s basement was getting quite hot. “Turn off the heat, it’s almost 80 degrees in here”. The crowd started to grumble. This in turn made Bills own temper start to rise. (He was doing so well up to this point to). I guess it was all we could expect of him. At this point he walked by and gave me a shove while threatening poor John and Rob C. Besides Bill’s anger rising this beer did really well scoring 57 fingers for and average score of 3.8. Well done. Drink this beer while watching **Christmas Vacation** which has some good scenes of the host freaking out. For a good song try [Grandma got run over by a Reindeer](#) , which encapsulates how road rage can grasp us all.

Barley Wine#6 Ok, I’ll be honest. By this time the wheels started coming off the wagon. The first 5 samples of high-gravity beer, combined with first hour or two of the party started to take their toll on us. Barley Wine #6 scored very well at 52 fingers for a 3.5 average. The comments now started to mix the lucid with the wacky. “Smells like burning.” “It’s much better with your pinky up” “I think the yeast struggled at the end on this on” and the most honest comment on the evening “After the first five of these they’re all really

nice". It was also at this time when Bill and Darja's relationship hit the rocks. While Bill, still fuming about the heat complaints many of us Wizards took it upon ourselves to let Darja know she had options available to her if need be. "Bills out of touch" One person shouted. This got Darja thinking. Oh yeah, this beer should be consumed while watching **Four Christmases** as that is what it looked like was on the horizon for poor Bill. For a song go with [I saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus](#) . Look out Bill!

Barley Wine #7 While the wheels got shaky with the last beer, they pretty much fell off the wagon with our final offering. Barley Wine #7 will probably be better next year, it just was very new. Some comments were " Too New" and "It will be better next year". But by now beers were just a back drop to Bill and Darja's relationship. While the chants grew for Darja to leave Bill. She did mention "Ask him about his last job interview" to which replied "Let's say you have 12 beers a day". Take from that what you will. There was also some good hetero-male beard talk among the hold overs from no-shave November. Barley Wine #7 scored 26 fingers for a 1.73 average. This beer would be best consumed with the movie **Home Alone** mostly for the building relationship troubles. For a song try [I'll have a Blue Christmas without You](#).

Barley Wine #8 Ok, at this point there weren't any filters left. The chatter had degraded to small pockets of conversation on various topics on anything but the task at hand. I heard comments that ranged from "This is really good" to "This sucks" and "I don't care if it's a Wizard" This beer really was a divider in the wide range of scores. A lot of 4s and 5s but also a lot of middle fingers came my way. One unbiased quote I heard was "It's like a hoppy birthday". This beer came in with 46 fingers for an average score of 3.1. This beer was really divisive so I would recommend having it while watching any of this year's **presidential debates**. For a song I would try [The little Drummer Boy](#) for a more modern version try [this one](#). I find most people either love it or hate it, although I count myself in the former.

Well those are the eight offerings we had this year. I want to give a big thank you to all of you that entered a beer. You weren't expecting a full-scale Wizard's judging, but you stood up to it Kudos to you. I also want to thank both Bill and Darja for being such good sports. While we tried to drive a spike through their relationship I am happy to report that these two crazy kids are still together and stronger than ever! Go you two! Before the night completely descended into chaos, Darja wanted us to remember to bring a bottle of our barley wines next year to sample again to see how they've changed. So I guess we have a place booked for our next holiday party! Thank you Darja and Bill!!!!

### **And now for the night's big winner!!!**

By now you can add again ( I doubt you could've after 8 barley wines) and can tell that Barley Wine#1 received the most votes and is tonight's winner, which was made by:

DWAYNE, FROM DWAYNE'S WORLD BREWING!!! Or Goose head brewing if you will. Great job Dwayne, you once again showed your growing mastery of the hobby. Keep doing what you're doing (and make sure you keep brewing your imperial stout for me!) Because of this you get your movie and song upgraded to the best that Christmas has to offer! Your new movie is **Die Hard**, the most explosive-filled; kick-ass Christmas movie ever. Nothing says Merry Christmas like watching Bruce Willis take out the Euro Trash. Your new Christmas song is [Run DMC- Christmas in Hollis](#)! You may dispute this if you want but I'm pretty sure that science has proven these to be the best Christmas movies/songs of all time. No citation necessary. Go ahead and give it listen now, I'll wait

Four minutes and two seconds later:

Boy that was great. I haven't danced like that since high school. Well that's about all I got. If you have any grievances I'm sorry to report that Festivus was on December 23 so you've missed your opportunity. On a personal note I want to wish you all a happy, healthy Christmas/Chanukah/Kwanzaa/Festivus holiday season. Wherever you are and whomever you're with I hope you are enjoying yourself. If you get some time to yourself grab a barley wine, curl up by the fire place and reflect on the positives in your life. I'll see you all in 2017!

- Pat

PS. I'm not sure why but I can't get the hyperlinks to work while posting this so please below for the corresponding links.

Thanks!

Barley wine#1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwacxSnc4tl>

BW2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfWH2AVSrww>

Bw3 #1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xw38pGhPXIk>

#2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfWH2AVSrww>

Bw4 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

Bw5 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

Bw6 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

Bw7 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

Bw8 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

#2 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

Bonus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFPOVwpPRY>

## SWILL-OFF REVIEW, 2016 [Category: "Malteratives"]

By Pat Galvin

What up Wizards!

It's been awhile! Unfortunately my schedule has been keeping me from the meetings over the past few months. However there is one meeting you know yours truly would never miss. Like Salmon swimming upriver to their ancestral spawning pools. The one day a year when beer-enthusiast curiosity runs 1,000 mph head on into mass-produced repugnance. The resulting collision producing the God particle-esque meeting known lovingly to us as the Annual Wizard's Swill Off! Admit it; you just got goose bumps.

I know all of you wished you could be with us on this occasion. Sadly not all of you were able to because of work, or scheduling issues, or being too lazy to get off the couch or sheer fear of having to sample the very dregs of massed produce beverages. Even sadder still one of those that wasn't able to make it was good old Bill. Bill said he had to be out of town on business, I think he was too nervous to leave his house. Regardless of the reason we won't have his comments to help drive this show. So you'll just have to imagine him there in the back corner of Deja Brew, saying nothing and watching us. Just staring with an emotionless look on his face. Watching you. Creepy, huh?

Enough about Bills ghost, let's go over the ground rules! The theme of the evening was "Malterative". This meant pretty much any mass-produced beverage that wasn't made with malt, wine and hard liquor excluded. Scoring was done by the Wizard's never-fail finger system (1 finger=horrible 5 fingers=sublime (and if you're paying attention yes I did cut and paste this sentence from last year's write-up (And I just did it again!))). I will list the beers as we had them to give you the chronological flow of the evening. I'll also give you the beer's score, average and where it ranked from 1-6 (1=best, 6= the afterbirth of Lucifer (oh-we'll get into this)). One final note there was an unprecedented number of fists counted this year, which represented a score of zero. Why did we need them you say? Like my above description for our sixth place entrant you'll see.

But enough about the formalities. I'm excited, you're excited. Let's do this! Remember Bill's in the corner watching you! Ladies and Gentlemen the 2016 Wizard's Swill Off!

1. Truly Spiked and Sparkling with Pomegranate – This was little more than seltzer water with a shot of vodka and a squeeze of pomegranate flavoring. Very light body and very effervescent. Its main selling point being that it's only 100 calories for you waist-conscience Wizards out there. As this was our first sampling the comments were a little obvious: "low carbs!" and "Pomegranate flavor" were heard early on. We then wondered if it could be used to clean the counter tops and got really into the ingredient list. When it was discovered to be low in calories the proclamation was made that "I can drink this while I work out!" After this we upped our game and started thinking next level "We could add gin to this!" That's what I'm talking about people. Despite its lack of complexity and overall flavor Truly did really well for itself, scoring 27 points for a finger average of 2.45 which was good for showing on the evening because "It didn't hurt my mouth!" Unfortunately the night only got worse from here.
2. Coney Island Hard Orange Cream Ale- Although not terrible, Coney Island did not hold up to Truly. This orange cream ale was sweet, really sweet. Comments overheard were "Alka-Seltzer aroma", "just sugary", "Sassafras flavor", "maybe it's for little kids?" "Good with diabetic ice cream" and "medicine like" Coney Island scored 21 points for 1.91 average which placed it 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.
3. The Best Damn Cherry Cola- Now for as sweet as Coney Island was, This entrant made it seem dry. This cola was made with liberal amounts of sugar. This Cola had a Med-Med Heavy body and was really carbonated. "Kinda nice but artificial flavor." "More Mr. Pibb than Dr. Pepper." "Alcoholic Cough Syrup" "Holy Crap this is sweet" "Less drinkable than the orange!" As this beverage warmed it got even sweeter

still. Cries of horror came out over the crowd "It's getting worse!" was shouted. The Best Damn Cherry Cola finished with 20 points with a 1.82 average which landed it in 4<sup>th</sup> place.

4. Twisted Tea Hard Iced Tea Bourbon Barrel- Ok, this is where the wheels started to fall off of the whole thing. I'm not sure what twisted tea was aiming for, but I have a hard time believing that this was it. This was like someone "taking Jim Beam and watering it down with Snapple". That about sums it up. There was an artificial bourbon aroma and very light body, but that flavor was just off. Comments such as "That's just ugh" "eeeeW" "Oh it's bad!" "It's a brownish liquid that tastes like puke." "Bad Bad Bad". This was also one of those rare occasions that the average was lower than a 1. Score of a 10, 0.91 average landed this offering 5 overall. (At this point you thought it couldn't get worse, but just wait.)
5. Steel Reserve- Hard Pineapple- I know what you're thinking, but relatively speaking this beverage wasn't that bad. This drink was "ecto cooler" yellow. "It looks like Brian's Shirt!". This offering did provide my favorite comment of the evening "It smells like Cancer" Also "Good for 19 year old college girls" One also wondered if it "would lower your sperm count" After that the comments settled down, "like a jolly rancher wine cooler" "not bad up front". Over all this beverage scored a 24 for a 2.18 average which placed it second overall.

Brace Yourselves for.....

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!THE WORST BEVERAGE EVER CREATED!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

You think I'm exaggerating? Oh you have no Idea.

6. Four Loko Blue Hurricane. I could write ten thousand words on this monstrosity and not come close to encapsulating the sheer horror that it was. I am tempted to buy this again just to make sure it's as bad as it was when we tried it. I'm hoping that a mouse got stuck on the canning line crawled inside this one particular can and died. That is the only way I could explain the aroma/flavor of this drink. Otherwise I have to think of the alternative. That a group of people came together as a company, developed a recipe to offer the public, made said recipe, tried it and said "Oh yeah this is ready to go!" Because I can't do that. I can't fathom it. It would be like a brew master going to the company CEO and asking what they would like made and that CEO saying "I want you to bottle the essence of crushing disappointment". It literally tastes like the moment you realize none of your childhood dreams will come true. Like the first instance that you realize Santa isn't real. But enough from me, I don't want to skewer your judgement.

Some comments included "As blue as steel reserve is green. Could easily replace windshield wiper fluid" "Tastes like mouthwash" Really bad- like wasabi" "Smells like skunked dog" "Smells like burnt rubber" "ouch" "you'd have to be drunk to drink this" They should give this to prisoners in gitmo to get them to talk". It was around this time ghost bill doubled over in pain.

I went back and searched the previous markups and some older posts from the website but I could find anything that scored as bad as this did. One point. One. Point. Average of 0.09 to finish a distant 6<sup>th</sup>. If someone were to offer this to you, you punch them in the face and run as fast as you can the other way.

There it is, another instant classic. You all have braved your way through another swill off. Ghost Bill salutes you! Feel free to raise your glass of Truly to celebrate. I hope to see you all in September for our Oktoberfest, and I here there may be special plans for next year's swill off. Hope to see you all then!

Pat