



Official Newsletter of Forest City  
Brewers  
April Edition

Next Meeting will be held at **Prairie Street Brewing  
Company**

Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

**Beer Trivia Question**

What is the style of beer developed in London in the early 18th century that uses brown malt? The style was named for people known for carrying objects, as this style of beer was very popular with this profession.

**HOW TO CONTACT FOREST CITY BREWERS**

**Homepage: [Forest City Brewers](#)**

**[forestcitybrewers@gmail.com](mailto:forestcitybrewers@gmail.com)**

**[Facebook: Forest City Brewers](#)**

## Forest City Brewers

Welcome to the Forest City Brewers!!

**NOW TAKING 2026 MEMBERSHIP DUES!**

**\$35 – SINGLE // \$50-CO-HABITATION**

Hey everyone! Here's a short update on our homebrew club's membership and activities to boost them. We're currently at 55 active members, which is fairly good based on what's happening in the brewing community these days. There are some great discounts available to active members as well as GREAT bus trips!!

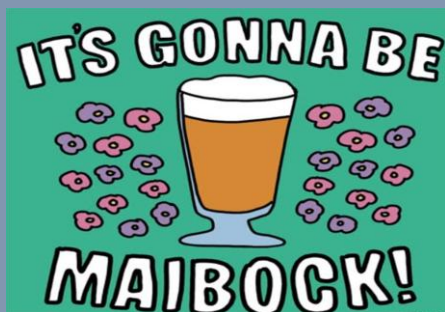
## April Meeting Notes

President, Scott Walker, started off the meeting welcoming everyone. We Welcome all new members to the club and our monthly brewer meetings are open to the public.

Next, we talked about the past / upcoming events for the Forest City Brewers. There are upcoming beer events such as Spring Bus trip, Big Brew and Great Taste tickets.

Spring bus trip was discussed; Wishful Acres has offered to open early to accommodate us and then we will continue on the Northwest Illinois Ale trail. If you want a stress-free way to visit new breweries please plan on joining us, tentatively scheduled for April 25th. There quite a few breweries to try and visit.

As always, if you have any suggestions or would like to help with a club event, contact any one of the board members.



## Monthly Style Table Competition

### April 2026: Fruited Sour

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

Mark Davis - Raspberry Sour

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

Ryan Petty - Blueberry Sour

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

Hazel Bergmann - POG Sour

### April Open Table

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Mark Davis – Neapolitan Stout

2<sup>nd</sup> Place– Mark Schandelmeier – Almond Horchata Mead

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place– Three-way Tie

John Majchowitz-Winter Seasonal Beer

Scott Walker-FestBier

Dave Benson-Citra Pale Ale w/Honey

#### Honorable Mention

Mike Aston – Belgian Wit

### Current Point Standings

<https://forestcitybrewers.us/index.php/contest-points/>

\*Please remember to preregister your beers for the Brewer of the Year contest by registering your beer thru the Forest City Brewers web page.

<https://forestcitybrewers.us/index.php/pre-register/>

## Upcoming Competition Styles

May 2026: Helles Bock

June 2026: Low to No ABV Beer (0%-2%)

July 2026: IPA - Any Style

August 2026: Hefeweizen

September 2026: Kentucky Common

October 2026: Fruit Beer – Any Style

**And The Answer is....**

**Porter**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### UPCOMING TASTERS' GUILD

April Tasters Guild will be at Famous Dave's  
February 15th, 2026 5:30 – 8 pm

May Tasters Guild – 5 Bines Brewery – Thursday night  
June Tasters Guild – Hairy Cow

### UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS



#### **Forest City Brewers Spring 2026 Northwest Ale Trail**

When: Saturday, April 25th, 10am to 10pm (times subject to change, but plan on being gone all day)

Pickup/Dropoff: Old Kmart parking lot on East State Street

Where: Breweries in Northwest Illinois

Bus Trip – April 25th trip to various breweries. \$40 per member, \$45 per member guest, \$50 for each non member (Paypal fee will be extra \$3 per seat)



The BIGGEST brew day of the year is almost here.

Now officially in its 37<sup>th</sup> iteration, the American Homebrewers Association (AHA) has held Big Brew Day annually on the first Saturday in May since 1988.

Big Brew was created to celebrate and encourage home brewing around the world. Whether you're used to cranking out 5-6 beers a month, it's been several months since you've brewed, or you've never brewed - we welcome ALL!! Join us for a day that will include a group brewing session from start to finish, socializing, and information on becoming a club member.

**When: May 2nd – Urban Forest Brewery  
10AM – 3 PM**

## TASTERS GUILD



April Tasters guild will be held at Famous Dave's located at 3303 N Perryville Rd, Rockford, IL 61114 on Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm – 9pm. Club members receive \$5 off the bill, like eating and getting a beer for free!!

## Volunteer Oportunities



Well, if you didn't know Forest City Brewers are looking for a few good beers to serve at Old Settlers Days on June 19<sup>th</sup> in the VIP tent. If you are interested; provide your information and type of beer to the club via email and receive more details.



#### **Forest City Brewers 2026 Great Taste of the Midwest Bus Trip!**

Once again, we'll be chartering a bus as a club and heading up the Great Taste Of The Midwest Beer Fest in Madison, the Mecca of Beer.

Don't wait to sign up!

Ticket sales will be open to the general public after the next club meeting, starting Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.

## NEW FOREST CITY DISCOUNTS

We have a new **DISCOUNT** being offered by Welders Supply Company located 3485 Brick Dr, Rockford, IL 779-208-4055

Forest City Brewers is being offered the opportunity to participate in Co2 tank **exchanges**. If you need Co2 Monday-Friday 7:30 AM till 4:30 PM, please stop by and give them a try.

- 5lb and 20lb tanks always available
- 2.5lb and 10lb tanks, please call-in advance to verify availability
- Co2 tanks are exchange only
- Just mention you are a member of "Forest City Brewers"
- Cash On Delivery – Pay when you exchange / pick-up

[Welders Supply Rockford Map Location \(Link\)](#)

### The Music Box

We have another **NEW FCB DISCOUNT** being provided to us by The Music Box located 218 E State St, Rockford, IL 61104. This great place has an intimate live music venue offering comfy vibes, original music and affordable craft cocktails & beers. Some music shows are free and others require a ticket. FCB members are being offered a 10% discount. They offer a Happy Hour on Tues, Thurs & Friday with \$4 off house pour mixers and \$2 off signature cocktails, wine and beer. Please stop by downtown Rockford and immerse yourself in a cozy ambiance and enjoy some craft beverages and an engaging musical experience.

### Famous Dave's

We have a new FCB **DISCOUNT** being offered by Famous Dave's located 3303 N Perryville Rd, Rockford, IL 61114 815-636-0300. We are being offered \$5 off your meal. Please stop by with the family and enjoy some good food.

## New Brew Equipment Idea

Our very own club President sometimes utilizes a nifty little brew system called 'PINTER' from a UK company of the same name.

It's got to be the simplest way to make 12 pints of beer in a single vessel measuring about 10" diameter x 15" long, so it fits in a fridge. You first sanitize the vessel with a vial of sanitizer, fill it with cold water, add a sachet of pre-hopped liquid malt extract (they call this a 'Fresh Press' and have 20 or 30 different recipes), add the provided dry yeast, close the cap, give it a shake, connect it to a 'brewing dock' and leave it at room temperature for 5-10 days to ferment. Then remove the brewing dock, leaving behind the spent yeast (this is accomplished with no exposure to air, like a conical fermenter with a bulb), and put it in a fridge to condition/carbonate for 5-10 days. It's then ready to tap direct from the vessel. Key point, there's no mash or boil involved - which is good if the smell of malt and hops aren't super popular in your household! - and no utilities are required. The unit is well engineered and built, and it looks really sharp too; you could set it on a counter for a party and it would be a talking point! From talking to him and a few other brewers that have one their opinion is this device could be fun for someone who'd love to make beer at home but doesn't have the space, time, inclination or whatever to invest in a typical Homebrew set-up, or maybe an experienced brewer who's just looking for a smaller, simpler, occasional, no-fuss approach. The unit costs about \$200 and each brew is about \$30.

For more details see [Pinter](#)

**BUT as of this writing, This damn thing is**

**FREE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**Cheers!**

## The Best Adjunct Grains for Beer Head Retention

When you pour a beer and see a thick, creamy head form at the top of the glass, you are looking at more than just foam. That head plays an important role in the overall drinking experience. It carries aroma, contributes to mouthfeel, and gives the beer a polished, professional appearance. If your beer tends to pour flat or loses its foam quickly, there are a few subtle adjustments you can make in your recipe that can dramatically improve the result. One of the simplest techniques involves the use of adjunct grains that support head retention.

Adjuncts are ingredients that you add alongside your base malt to influence the finished beer. In all grain brewing, the majority of fermentable sugars come from malted barley. Adjuncts are additional grains or ingredients that modify texture, flavor, color, or alcohol content. Many brewers associate adjuncts with ingredients that lighten beer, such as corn or rice, but adjuncts can also be used to improve specific structural qualities of the beer. Foam stability is one of the most useful examples.

Two of the most effective adjunct grains for improving head retention are wheat and oats. These grains contain compounds that stabilize the bubbles that form when beer is poured. Foam is created when carbon dioxide escapes from the beer and forms bubbles at the surface. Without stabilizing compounds those bubbles collapse quickly. Proteins and complex carbohydrates help strengthen the walls of those bubbles so the foam remains stable and persistent.

Wheat is particularly effective because it contains a higher protein content than barley. Typical malted barley contains about 9 to 11 percent protein, while wheat malt often contains 12 to 15 percent. These proteins contribute to foam stability and help create a dense, lasting head. This is why traditional wheat beers such as Hefeweizens and Witbiers often produce large, creamy foam that lingers throughout the entire pour.

Oats contribute to head retention in a slightly different way. Oats are rich in beta glucans, which are complex carbohydrates that increase the viscosity of the beer. This creates a smoother mouthfeel and helps support a thicker foam structure. When used in moderation, oats can give your beer a fuller texture and a soft, creamy head. Oatmeal stouts are a classic example of this effect, but smaller amounts can improve many other beer styles as well.

When using these grains for foam stability, they function as adjuncts because they are not the primary source of fermentable sugars in the recipe. In most cases you should substitute them for a small portion of your base malt rather than simply adding them to the grain bill. A typical adjustment would be replacing about 3 to 5 percent of the base malt with wheat malt, or about 5 to 8 percent with flaked oats.

For example, if your original recipe uses 10 pounds of pale malt, a five percent substitution would look like this.

9.5 pounds pale malt

0.5 pounds wheat malt or flaked oats

This keeps the total grain bill the same while allowing the adjunct to improve the beer's structure. Substituting rather than adding grain helps maintain your original gravity and keeps the alcohol level and balance of the recipe consistent.

Even small percentages can have a noticeable effect. Brewers often find that as little as three percent wheat malt improves head formation. Around five percent is a common target because it enhances foam without significantly altering flavor or clarity. Oats can be used at slightly higher levels, typically between five and eight percent, before their creamy texture becomes dominant.

While adjunct selection is important, other factors also influence foam stability. Oils and fats are one of the biggest enemies of head retention. Ingredients such as coconut, peanut butter, or certain chocolate products contain oils that break down foam almost immediately. If these ingredients are used, the beer may pour well at first but the foam will collapse quickly.

Fermentation health also plays a role. Healthy yeast produces proteins and other compounds that contribute to a stable foam structure. Poor fermentation practices can result in thin beer with weak head retention. Pitching the proper amount of yeast and maintaining stable fermentation temperatures improves both flavor and presentation.

Carbonation is the final piece of the puzzle. Foam is created when carbon dioxide escapes from the beer. If carbonation levels are too low, even a well designed recipe will struggle to produce a lasting head. Most beer styles perform well between about 2.2 and 2.6 volumes of carbon dioxide. Proper carbonation allows the foam stabilizing proteins and carbohydrates from your adjunct grains to work effectively.

For many brewers, improving head retention does not require major changes in technique. A small substitution of wheat or oats in the grain bill, combined with good fermentation practices and proper carbonation, can dramatically improve the way your beer pours. These are subtle adjustments, but they often make the difference between a beer that looks homemade and one that pours with the dense, persistent head you expect from a well crafted brew.