



NEWS YOU CAN USE!

Monthly Newsletter for the Red Earth Brewers



BREWER OF THE YEAR AND VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION UPDATE

As we head into 2026, Red Earth Brewers is updating how we recognize the people who make this club special—both at the judging table and behind the scenes. The long-standing point structures for Brewer of the Year and Club Member of the Year have run their course and will not be used going forward. Instead, we're aligning our awards and recognition efforts more closely with the club's goals and values for the year.

BREWER OF THE YEAR: FOCUSED ON THE HIGH PLAINS CIRCUIT

One of our primary goals for 2026 is to win the High Plains Circuit as a club. To reflect that, Brewer of the Year will now be directly tied to High Plains performance. At the end of the season, the top three placing Red Earth Brewers members in the final High Plains standings will be recognized as our Brewers of the Year. To be eligible, a brewer must compete for the entire 2026 competition season as a Red Earth Brewers member.

If there is a tie in the High Plains standings between REB members, we will use the following tiebreakers, in order: most gold medals earned, then most silver medals earned. Because the award is now anchored to official High Plains results, members will no longer need to enter points online throughout the year. Prizes will still be awarded to Brewers of the Year, so there is plenty of incentive to brew, enter, and represent REB across the circuit.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: REFOCUSING ON SERVICE

Starting in 2026, Red Earth Brewers will no longer present a "Tom Challis Club Member of the Year" award. Instead, we're placing a greater emphasis on recognizing the individuals who keep our events, competitions, and community outreach running smoothly through their volunteer efforts.

since 2010

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p> Happy Hour:
Thursday, Feb. 5
6:30–9 PM at
Beer Is Good (BIG)</p> | <p> Happy Hour:
Thursday, March 5
6:30–9 PM at
Frenzy Brewing Co.</p> |
| <p> Club Meeting:
Tuesday, Feb. 20
7–9 PM at Roughtail
Brewing Co.
(New, Year, New Brew)</p> | <p> Club Meeting:
Tuesday, March 20
7–9 PM at Skydance
Brewing (Dunkles
Uncle Challenge)</p> |

The club depends on volunteers, but it's often difficult to find enough people willing to help when everyone understandably wants to participate in the fun parts of our events. To change that, we'll be doing a better job of highlighting those contributions throughout the year. Volunteers will be recognized at monthly meetings, and we encourage members to continue using the volunteer submission form at www.redearthbrewers.com/brewerofyear to log the events and tasks they help with—this helps the board see and appreciate who's stepping up.

RED EARTH BREWERS HAS BIG PLANS FOR 2026—BE PART OF IT!

After our 15th anniversary and back-to-back wins as MHP Club of the Year, we're stronger than ever. Membership is your way into Oklahoma's largest award-winning homebrewing community.

Members enjoy free entry into non-sanctioned club competitions, monthly meetings with educational sessions and guest speakers, and access to our members-only Facebook group filled with recipes, tips, and brew day camaraderie. You'll also have opportunities to collaborate on group projects, attend special tastings, and represent REB at festivals and competitions across the metro.

Your dues support club essentials like insurance for pouring events, educational programming, and competition resources. Whether you're brand new or a seasoned brewer, there's always something to learn, share, and celebrate with Red Earth Brewers.

Renew online or at the next meeting. Guests are welcome to attend up to three meetings—come see what we're all about!

redearthbrewers.com



A CASE FOR "BAD IDEAS" BEERS

Every brewer has that recipe they swear they'll brew "someday" but never actually do. You know the one: the smoked rye blueberry stout, the pickle gose, the "What if a margarita and a pilsner had a weird little baby?" beer. It lives in your notebook, in your brewing software, or in that late-night text to a brewing buddy that you quietly hope they forget.

This month, I want to officially declare 2026 the Year of the Bad Ideas Beer. Not because we want to drink terrible beer—but because so many of our best beers started as "Are you sure that's a good idea?"

Think about it ...

- Someone's "bad idea" gave us coffee in stout.
- Someone's "bad idea" put peppers, lactose, or pastry into anything.
- Someone's "bad idea" turned "too bitter" IPAs into the hazy, juicy stuff that wins tap handles and medals.

As homebrewers, we have the rare freedom to be wrong in spectacular fashion. A brewery has to worry about margins and taproom sales. We just have to worry about whether we have enough keg space and a backup beer if this one goes sideways. That's a luxury—and it's a shame to waste it always brewing safe.

SO HERE'S MY CHALLENGE AS YOUR PRESIDENT:

- Brew one beer this year that you'd be slightly embarrassed to explain to a German brewer.
- Brew something inspired by a dessert, a cocktail, or a dish you love.
- Brew the thing you'd never submit to a competition... and then bring it to a meeting anyway.

Will some of these beers be one-and-done experiments? Absolutely. But every so often, one of those "bad ideas" will turn into the beer everyone drains first at the club share. And when that happens, it's magic.

So dust off that wild recipe, give it a name that makes you smile, and mash in. If it turns out amazing, we'll all want the recipe. If it turns out awful, we'll at least get a good story—and honestly, that's pretty on-brand for us too.

FEBRUARY BREW CALENDAR: GET YOUR SPRING BEERS READY (AND WIN AT SPRING BREW OFF)

February is the sweet spot for brewing the beers you want to pour at the Spring Brew Off, with judging scheduled in April. By brewing now, you give your beers the fermentation and conditioning time they need to show at their best when they hit the judging table.

WHY FEBRUARY BREWING MATTERS

Most spring-appropriate ales (pale ales, blondes, wheat beers, saisons, and session IPAs) benefit from at least 2 weeks of stable fermentation plus 2–4 weeks of cold storage or serving time.

Working backward from the Spring Brew Off judging in April, February becomes the ideal window to brew, especially if you want to fine-tune carbonation and clarity.

Cooler ambient temperatures in garages and sheds support clean ale fermentation in the mid-60s Fahrenheit, especially for styles like kölsch, German ale, and some English strains.

STYLES TO BREW IN FEBRUARY

Think lighter body, high drinkability, and bright hop or yeast character for spring—and for judges' palates. Strong candidates for Spring Brew Off entries include:

Pale ale or session IPA: Hop-forward with moderate gravity (OG around 1.045–1.055) for quick turnaround and fresh hop expression.



American wheat or Belgian wit: Refreshing and approachable, with yeast and spice character that can really shine when properly conditioned by April.

Saison: Flexible fermentation profile, highly attenuated, and expressive—perfect for spring drinking and competition tables.

Kölsch-style or hybrid ales: Clean, delicate beers that reward extra cold-conditioning time before the competition.

You can also use February to brew one more robust beer—such as a stout, porter, or strong ale—if you plan to enter appropriate categories that benefit from a little age by April.



BUILDING A FEBRUARY PLAN AROUND SPRING BREW OFF

To time your entries for Spring Brew Off judging:

Start with the judging date in April and back up at least 2 weeks for carbonation and packaging.

Back up another 2 weeks for primary fermentation and cleanup.

For higher-gravity or more delicate styles (like kölsch or bigger IPAs), add an extra 1–2 weeks of conditioning.

That timeline lands your brew days squarely in February, with enough buffer to troubleshoot any issues and, if needed, rebrew a critical entry.

When planning your competition brewing:

Utilize the local home brew supply shops to order ingredients early so you can brew multiple test batches if you're dialing in a recipe for a specific BJCP style.

Use citrus zest, honey, or floral hops for spring-themed entries, but keep recipes focused—judges tend to reward balance and clarity of concept.

Take advantage of late-winter temperatures for lagers or cool-fermented hybrids if you're targeting those categories.

FERMENTATION AND TEMPERATURE TIPS FOR COMPETITION BEERS

For competition entries, fermentation control is one of the biggest differentiators between "good" and "medal-ready."

Match yeast strain to your space: lager strains for colder areas, cool-tolerant ale strains for 55–60°F, and standard ale strains for mid-60s.

Use simple insulation and gentle heat sources to prevent large temperature swings that can create off-flavors.

Prioritize a steady fermentation temperature within the yeast's preferred range and allow time for a proper diacetyl rest and full attenuation.

EXAMPLE CONCEPT: SPRING SAISON FOR SPRING BREW OFF

A saison is a classic "bridge" beer between winter and spring and a strong candidate for Spring Brew Off. A competition-minded spring saison might feature:

OG in the mid-1.060s, finishing dry for high drinkability.

A grist based on pilsner malt with some wheat and a small sugar addition for extra dryness.

A clean, citrusy hop profile with firm bitterness and late aroma additions.

Fermentation with a saison yeast that starts in the mid-60s and is allowed to free-rise into the 70s or higher to ensure full attenuation and expressive character.

Brew a saison—or any of the spring-forward styles above—in February, and your entries will be primed for the Spring Brew Off judging in April, giving you the best chance to bring home hardware for the club.



THE DUNKLES UNCLE

Tim Bickel and Nick Hodge present this internal competition celebrating dunkles beers. Choose from:

- 6C – Dunkles Bock**
- 8A – Munich Dunkel**
- 10B – Dunkles Weissbier**

People's Choice voting will take place at the March club meeting, where a winner will be crowned.

Questions? Contact Tim or Nick. Fire up the kettles and embrace your dark side.



GALENTINE'S BREW IS BACK!

Galentine's Brew returns this February, celebrating the creativity of our women brewers. Female members lead the recipe, brewing, and presentation, with one male partner allowed per team to assist.

Beers will be featured at the April 21 club meeting, where everyone can taste and vote in the People's Choice competition. Gather your crew, plan your brew day, and let's make Galentine's Brew 2026 the best yet because nothing says friendship like fermentation!



FRIENDLY REMINDER ABOUT INTERNAL COMPETITION RULES: Please remember that all entries must be handcrafted by hobbyist brewers using their own private equipment. Ingredients should be readily available to the general public, and entries cannot be made using commercial facilities, Brew-on-Premise operations, or other commercial supplies. Thanks for helping keep our competition fun, fair, and true to the spirit of homebrewing!



READY FOR NATIONALS? HOW REB IS TACKLING NHC 2026

The 2026 National Homebrew Competition is a great chance to get thoughtful feedback on your beer, mead, or cider, especially if you're entering for the first time. As a club, we'll work together so entries are brewed, packed, and shipped on time—and nobody has to figure it out alone.

HOW TO GET YOUR ENTRIES IN

- Registration opened on Feb. 3 at 11 AM on the Beer Awards Platform.
- You need an active American Homebrewers Association membership through the June 20 awards ceremony.
- Each brewer can enter up to 10 homebrewed beers, meads, or ciders; the fee is \$19 per First Round entry, plus \$10 more if that entry advances to the Final Round.
- After you register and pay, print your labels and attach them to two bottles or cans per entry, then pack and ship or drop them off so they arrive no later than the "must-arrive-by" date for your chosen site.

If you're new, ask an experienced club member to walk through registration, labeling, and packing with you once—it makes everything much less intimidating.

FIRST ROUND SITES (SORTED BY MUST-ARRIVE-BY DATE)

Plan your brewing and shipping around these must-arrive-by dates, and aim to ship several days before the deadline instead of right at the end of the window.

- San Diego: Receiving February 20–March 6; must arrive by March 6.
- Indianapolis: Receiving March 3–14; must arrive by March 14.
- Chicago: Receiving March 16–27; must arrive by March 27.
- Tampa: Receiving March 18–28; must arrive by March 28.
- Kansas City: Receiving March 15–28; must arrive by March 28.
- San Francisco: Receiving March 2–April 2; must arrive by April 2.
- Longmont: Receiving March 28–April 3; must arrive by April 3.
- Philadelphia: Receiving March 20–April 3; must arrive by April 3.
- Seattle: Receiving April 6–11; must arrive by April 11.

Judging at each site happens shortly after its receiving window, so earlier arrivals help your beer settle and reduce stress about shipping delays.

CLUB STRATEGY: WHERE TO SHIP AND HOW TO SHARE COSTS

We expect to hand-deliver a group of entries to the Kansas City site because it's convenient for the club, but we should avoid sending everything there. Spreading entries to other sites—like Chicago, Indianapolis, Longmont, Philadelphia, San Diego, and others that fit your schedule—keeps us from overloading one region and gets our beers in front of more judging panels.

The main goal, especially for first-time entrants, is to learn from the score sheets, have fun brewing toward a clear target, and do it together as a club. Medals are great, but brewing better beer and supporting each other is the real win.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS & MORE ...
 If you have an announcement or know of a festival, dinner, beer event, or whatever you think may be interesting to fellow brewers, please let us know at
 We are always looking for things to include in the newsletter.



THE COUNTDOWN IS BREWING: SPRING BREW OFF 2026

The 2026 Red Earth Brewers Spring Brew Off is almost here! This year, all judging and the awards ceremony will take place at Roughtail Brewing Company, which will also serve as the central

hub for shipped and local drop-off entries.

Your two-time Master Homebrewer Program Club of the Year is back with our annual 400 paid entry competition. Can we keep our tap handles and BOS barrel ends home again this year? Enter your best beers and find out!

REGISTRATION + ENTRY DETAILS

- Limited to the first 400 paid entries
- \$12 per entry
- 6 entries per entrant

Entries open Saturday, February 14, 2026 at Noon CST, and we expect the competition to fill fast – likely the same day. If you've entered before, your account should still exist, but account creation, judge, and staff sign-ups are open now. Verify your account ahead of time so you're ready the moment registration opens.

SHIPPING + DROP-OFF WINDOW

Entries may be dropped off or shipped March 6–20.

Main location:

Roughtail Brewing Company
320 W Memorial Rd
Oklahoma City, OK 73114

Additional drop-off locations: Learn to Brew and the Brew Shop. Gail has a fridge to keep entries cold, and we'll pick them up like normal.

JUDGING SCHEDULE (APR 10–18)

All judging will occur in person at Roughtail:

- Friday, April 10 – Afternoon (2 PM) and Late (6 PM)
- Saturday, April 11 – Early (10 AM) and Late (2 PM)
- Sunday, April 12 – Early (10 AM) and Late (2 PM)
- Tuesday, April 14 – Evening (6 PM)
- Wednesday, April 15 – Evening (6 PM)
- Friday, April 17 – Evening (6 PM)
- Saturday, April 18 – Early (9 AM) and Late (1 PM)

Best of Show judging is scheduled for Saturday, April 18 at 4 PM at Roughtail, immediately followed by the awards ceremony.

Judges and stewards can expect snacks during all judging sessions, cool gifts again this year, and a light meal between Saturday and Sunday sessions on the first weekend. With many judges heading to Kansas City for NHC First Round the following weekend, Spring Brew Off is a great warm-up the week before.

JUDGE NIGHT AT SKYDANCE

On Saturday, April 11, Red Earth Brewers will host an out-of-town judge appreciation night at Skydance Brewing. This is our chance to roll out the red carpet, thank visiting judges, spend time together, and show off a favorite OKC beer stop. More details on timing, food, and logistics will be shared directly with judges, stewards, and volunteers as we get closer.

AWARDS CEREMONY – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The awards ceremony will be held Saturday, April 18 at Roughtail and is open to everyone. With preliminary rounds, Best of Show, and awards all happening in one location, it will be an easy and fun day to celebrate together.

FULL DETAILS + REGISTRATION:

competitions.redearthbrewers.com/springbrewoff



IBU OPEN: CLUB-SPONSORED SHIPPING FOR REB ENTRIES

For the 2026 competition season, Red Earth Brewers is stepping up support for members by sponsoring shipping for all REB entries to the IBU Open. The Board has officially approved covering the shipment of our club's entries, and the competition field is already full, so if you secured entries, you are in.

The IBU Open is a well-regarded, BJCP-sanctioned competition hosted in Des Moines, with entries shipped in, sorted, and

judged by experienced judges. As always, entries must be properly labeled to match your registration, securely packaged (each bottle or can well-padded and separated), and ready to travel so they arrive in good condition and on time for sorting and cold storage before judging.

For members who want to take advantage of this club benefit, please reach out to the Board at redearthbrewers@gmail.com so we can coordinate collection and packing. Entries will need to ship by February 16th to arrive in Des Moines in time for sorting, so plan your packaging and drop-off accordingly. This is a great opportunity to represent Red Earth Brewers on a bigger stage while saving individual members the cost and hassle of shipping on their own.



COMPETITIONS REMINDERS:

Competitions Opening in February:

- National Homebrew Competition**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 3. \$19/entry limit 10
- Eight Seconds of Froth**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 1 \$9/entry limit 5
- America's Finest City**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 1 \$12/entry limit 3
- Alabama Brewers Cup**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 1 \$12/entry limit 3
- ASH Cactus Classic**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 7 \$12/entry limit 10
- Cherry Blossom Competition**—Beer opens Feb. 14 \$10/entry limit 5
- REB Spring Brew Off**—Beer, Cider, Mead opens Feb. 14 \$12/entry limit 6

Shipping Due in February:

- IBU Open**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving Feb. 20
- NHC: San Diego**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving Feb. 20–March 6

- Valkyries Horn**—Mead entries receiving Feb. 27
- NHC: Indianapolis**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving March 3–14
- Drunk Monk Challenge**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving March 6
- REB Spring Brew Off**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving March 6–20
- Alabama Brewers Cup**—Beer, Cider, Mead entries receiving March 7

Competition Results Announcing in March:

- Sweethearts Revenge**—Beer, Cider, Mead ceremony Feb. 7
- Bluegrass Cup**—Beer, Cider, Mead ceremony Feb. 21
- KCBM**—Beer, Cider, Mead ceremony Feb. 21
- SNAFU Winter Fest**—Beer, Cider, Mead ceremony Feb. 28
- Extravaganza**—Beer, Cider, Mead ceremony Feb. 28

High Plains Midwest Homebrew Circuit of America

Give yourself a reason to crack open a beer!



STOUT MONTH ALL FEBRUARY

Many craft beer calendars treat February as Stout Month, a month-long celebration of all things dark, roasty, and imperial. Breweries across the U.S. often release special stouts, run tap takeovers, or build mini-festivals around the theme.



SUPER BOWL SUNDAY, FEB. 8

Beer-themed holiday lists regularly call out Super Bowl Sunday as a de facto beer holiday because U.S. beer consumption spikes dramatically that day. And Monday has even picked up a reputation as the unofficial “call out day” at work, thanks to the celebrations carrying on a little past kickoff.