



ASHEVILLE, NC
JUNE 19-20

HOMEBREW QUICK-TIP CONCENTRATE

Rapid-Fire Tips for the
Short-Attention-Span Homebrewer





ASHEVILLE, NC
JUNE 19–20

Sequel to Zymurgy Articles

May/June 2022



Rapid-Fire Tips for the Short-Attention-Span Homebrewer

By Ron Minkoff

If you brew long enough, you'll eventually be surprised at how many bits of homebrew wisdom you've accumulated. What follows here is a vetted collection of some of the most useful techniques, in quick-tip form, never watered down, that are easy to explain and may even be instantly helpful to you. I, as well as several of my fellow Hogtown Brewers buddies, have long used these tips. Let's open a can of concentrate and get started!

STUCK FERMENTATION? BEANO TO THE RESCUE!

I think we've all been there. Your batch has completed fermentation, but its current final gravity is 4.6, maybe 10 points from the desired final gravity. Sure, you could rouse the yeast. Or perhaps raise the temperature to try and squeeze a little more effort out of your yeast. But if the gravity doesn't change (and many times it won't), now what? Well, you're likely out of fermentables. That's why it's stuck. Just add some Beano to your carboy. Yes, *that* Beano! Just add one crushed tablet per additional gravity point.

Beano contains amylase, which breaks down unfermentable sugar and makes it fermentable. Can you buy amylase from your local homebrew shop? Yes, yes you can. But Beano is sold everywhere making it very accessible. That makes Beano a true multi-tasker. It reduces the final gravity of your batch and saves your relationships on burrito night!

NO MORE CLOUDY STAR SAN SOLUTION

Like me, you probably keep a spray bottle of Star San solution around because it's handy for all kinds of homebrew tasks. But Star San solution is known for becoming cloudy after a short time, especially if you have hard water. To keep your solution clear, simply use distilled (or reverse osmosis) water instead of tap water. Do this, and it will easily stay clear for many months to come. (Tip courtesy of Hogtown's Master-Dr-Irish George)

Bonus tip: I also keep a half-gallon jug of Star San distilled water solution for post-brew-day tasks. The proper mix is half a gallon of distilled water to 0.6 teaspoons (3.0 mL), or a heaping half-teaspoon, of Star San.

QUICK AND EASY REMOVAL OF BEER BOTTLE LABELS

You're ready to bottle your best stuff for an upcoming homebrew competition and need some pristine bottles without labels. A quick and reliable way to remove labels from most bottles is to soak them in a solution of your favorite alkaline non-caustic cleaner (e.g., PBW, Bru-R-Ez, Call-R-Master, etc.). Do this and you'll find the labels fall off the bottle within two hours (maybe even just one hour). You're welcome.

THE RIGHT WAY TO OPEN A BAG OF WEYERMANN MALT

Since I brew often, I tend to buy full bags of base malt (pale malt, Pilsner, Munich, etc.). Rahr bags of malt are incredibly easy and intuitive to open. If only all bags opened that way! But bags of Weyermann malt are almost as easy to open if you know how to properly start that process. First, choose the side where the white string ends. Then cut the red and white "tangled" string near the edge of the bag. Then grab the tip of the white string and pull across to open it all up. That's one less hassle for you!

PITCH YEAST THE NEXT DAY

Many homebrewers strongly believe pitching yeast the same day you brew is very important. However, I long ago figured out that pitching yeast the next day is perfectly fine and offers the same quality of fermentation, if not better. It also provides several advantages. Pitching the next day has been my standard homebrewing process for more than 10 years, and as long as you practice appropriate sanitation (and don't sneeze in your carboy), all is good! Why do it? There are several reasons:

1. It saves ice (when chilling wort). Chill your wort as low as your tap water will allow, and then let your fermentation temperature control system finish the job overnight. By morning of the next day, the wort will be right at your desired pitching temperature.
2. It saves the hassle of procuring ice! This also saves the hassle of setting up a two-stage chiller, which we all can agree is a hassle, right?
3. Best of all, it saves time on brew day.

Make your own alkaline non-caustic cleaner

You may be thinking, "I really like having alkaline non-caustic cleaner handy, but I'd like it even better if I had a good coupon!" You're in luck because you can make your own. Here's how. Mix the following:

1. 10 ounces (285 g) Seventh Generation Dishwasher Detergent Powder, Free and Clear
2. 16 ounces (454 g) Red Devil TSP/90
3. 24 ounces (680 g) OxiClean Free (make sure to get the "Free" one with the green lid, which has no dyes or perfumes).

Enjoy your abundant supply and savings! (Shout-out to Hogtown's Joe Balliet for doing the research of other people's research!)



Cut and pull the white string to easily open bags of Weyermann malt.

Pitch yeast the next day to save time and resources.

Homebrewers Association



A reload of rapid-fire tips for the short-attention-span homebrewer

IF YOU WANT YOUR COMPETITION BEER TO TASTE LIKE PUMPKIN, USE SWEET POTATO.

A LITTLE HOMEBREW WHITE LIE IS OK

Let's start with a controversial topic right off the bat. I am not an anti-gourdite. And by that, I mean I like brewing pumpkin beer. Did I just lose half of you readers already?! Pumpkin itself doesn't have much flavor. Rather, it lends a certain mouthfeel and silky character. However, it's not uncommon for a competition judge to complain that they don't taste any pumpkin, only pumpkin spices. Then one day, I tried a commercial sweet potato beer. Immediately, I thought, "if I didn't know better, I'd think this beer has a flavor profile a pumpkin beer *should* have (if pumpkin had a flavor!)" So, I used sweet potato puree in my recipe instead of pumpkin the next time I brewed it. I threw it into a competition as pumpkin beer and was rewarded with bling and happy judge comments.

USE A 24-INCH WHISK TO STIR YOUR MASH AND EASILY BREAK UP DOUGH BALLS.

DOUGH BALL DISTINTEGRATOR

Most people use some type of steel or wood mash paddle for stirring when they mash in (I personally used the classic hardwood mash paddle for years). The problem with the standard mash paddle is that it's not particularly good at breaking up dough balls. A few years ago, a couple of my fellow club members demonstrated a better solution: use a 24" steel French whisk to stir your hot liquor and grist together when you mash in. Dough balls disintegrate easily using this tool compared to your typical mash paddle. I've been using one to mash in ever since.

DONATE A BREWING CLASS AND CLUB MEMBERSHIP TO A CHARITY'S SILENT AUCTION.

EASY PHILANTHROPY

Is a favored charity in your community holding an event featuring a silent auction? As a homebrewing superhero, you have a simple but terrific item you can donate to the auction so they can raise even more funds: a homebrewing class! Hey, you were going to brew anyway—why not double your brew day's usefulness and turn it into a fundraiser too? And if you are part of a club, throw in a free one-year club membership. The charity will often ask the value of the donated item so they can relay that value to the bidder. Whenever we donate a brew class and membership, we give the same answer each time: it's priceless!

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Denise Brake

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Beer Sample Pour!

Margarita Gose



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Quick-Tip Categories

- Cheat Like a Homebrewer
- Brew Day Nuggets
- BIAB Cheat Sheet
- Post Brew Day Sorcery
- Homebrew Club Easy Wins



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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Because you can!





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Boldly Do Embellishments Commercial Brewers Are Not Allowed To

- **Triple Sec** in your Margarita Gose
 - Lime and Orange peel last 5 minutes of boil
 - 750 mL Tripel Sec into keg before carbonating
- **Kahlua** in your Espresso Martini Mead
 - Sweet Mead and 1:2 Kahlua to Cold Brew Coffee





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Imperial Stout Overly Roasted or Bitter?

- Infuse Cinnamon Toast Crunch Cereal
- Stuff a bunch into a hop bag
- Steep in the keg at least a day





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Porter/Stout, Doppelbock, Barleywine Come Out Bland?

- Infuse with a Coffee Cold Brew
- 1:1.5 cups Coffee Beans (pregrind) to Water
- Steep for 12 hours in a French Press
- Pasteurize in a small pot
- Pour and gently stir in the keg
- Don't be afraid of flavored coffee beans!





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

One Cider, Many Flavors

- Juicy Juice
- You heard me!
- Infuse into your cider
- Strawberry/Banana cider was a multi-bling, Best-of-Show winner!



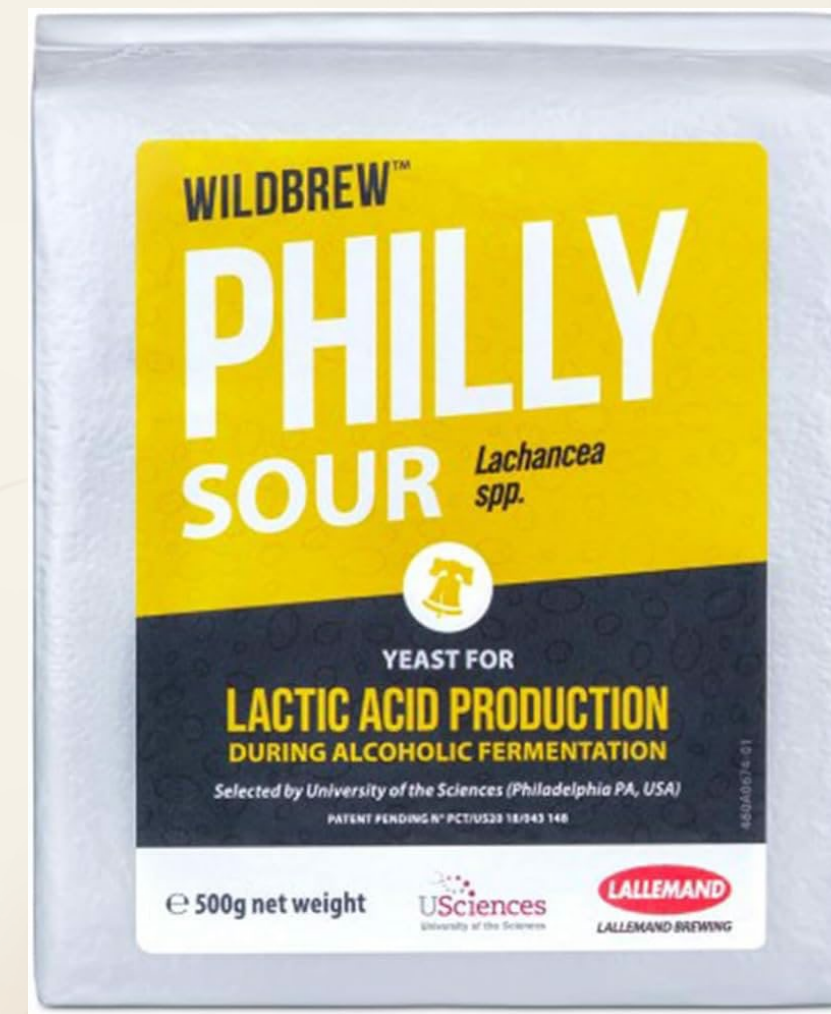


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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

“Easy” Sour vs Kettle Souring

- Kettle Souring is a common technique, but takes a bit of effort & time
- Use the Philly Sour “cheat” to more easily brew a tart refreshing sour beer (e.g. Berliner, Gose)
- Does it make award winning beer?
- Yes. Yes it does.





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Boost on Top of Flavors From Malt/Hops/Yeast

You wouldn't throw a literal banana in your Hefeweizen to get more banana esters. But you could put ...

- Grapefruit peel into your IPA (Dry-Peeling!)
- Raisin reduction into your Belgian Dubbel/Quad
- Peppercorns into your Saison





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Cheat Like a Homebrewer

Boost On Top of Flavors From Malt/Hops/Yeast

- **IPA:** Several Grapefruit peels into a hop bag, steep in your keg for about a day.
- **Belgian:** 3 lb raisins, 1.5 gal water. Reduce down to a quart (syrup). Pour in at flame out.
- **Saison:** Approx .5 oz Crushed peppercorns into kettle just before flame out.





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Brew Day Nuggets



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Brew Day Nuggets

Remote Control Power Outlet

- Having to lean over to turn on your brew pump is no way to live!
- Originally intended for yard lights and fans
- Many to choose from under \$20 on Amazon





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Brew Day Nuggets

Chiller Has a Dripping Leak?

- No time to fix root cause?
- Don't want it to spray into your wort!
- Simply wrap it with a towel





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Substitutions

- Ran out of flaked maize?
Substitute with grits
- Fresh out of flaked oats?
Quaker Oats to the rescue
- Plus, Minute Rice if out of flaked rice

Brew Day Nuggets



Substitutions

- Making a Belgian Wit or Saison?
- Using fresh orange peel imparts fuller, brighter aroma than packaged, dried orange peel
- No oranges to be found in the house?
Orange Marmalade works surprisingly well



Always Hit Your Gravity

- Design recipe to use aroma/flavor hops no earlier than 10 minutes from end of boil
- Check gravity 15 minutes from end of boil
- If gravity too low, extend boil as needed before pitching aroma/flavor hops
- Wort will not get noticeably more bitter
- Brew for gravity, not volume!



One Batch, Two Flavors

- Sure, there's already well-known ways (e.g. parti-gyle, same wort different yeasts, yada yada..)
- Here's another: **Brew 9 gallons wort of a big beer**
- **5 gallons used for big beer, 4 gallons used for smaller beer**
- **Dilute the 4 gallons to the appropriate gravity** (will make close to 5 gal)
- Example: Doppelbock/Munich Dunkel, Malt Liquor/Cream Ale
- Flavor hops/spices/dark malt can be steeped (150-170F) in flask during boil



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Beer Sample Pour!

Pepperoncini Cream Ale



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Brew-in-a-Bag Cheat Sheet

BIAB on the Stovetop..

Enjoy the air conditioning!

(or heater!)





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Brew-in-a-Bag Cheat Sheet

Two Burners

- Position pot on two burners to speed up boil
- Optimal to utilize pot that is wider and not so tall



Make Room in Kettle

- Standard BIAB process is spargeless
- Instead, hold back and set aside water (about 1.5 gallons)
- Benefit:
 - Allows more grain in pot to make 5 gal batch
 - Provides water for Poor Man's Sparge for more efficiency



Poor Man's Sparge

- Use upside-down metal colander (or metal bowl) in a bucket
- Place bag in bucket on top of colander
- Use water that was set aside (after being warmed to 130-140F) to rinse grain bag
- Let drip for several minutes. Less Messy. No squeezing needed! Pour drippings into boil kettle.



Brew-in-a-Bag Cheat Sheet

Hop Spider

- Hop Spider is ideal for BIAB for easy separation of hops/adjuncts at end of boil



No Chill

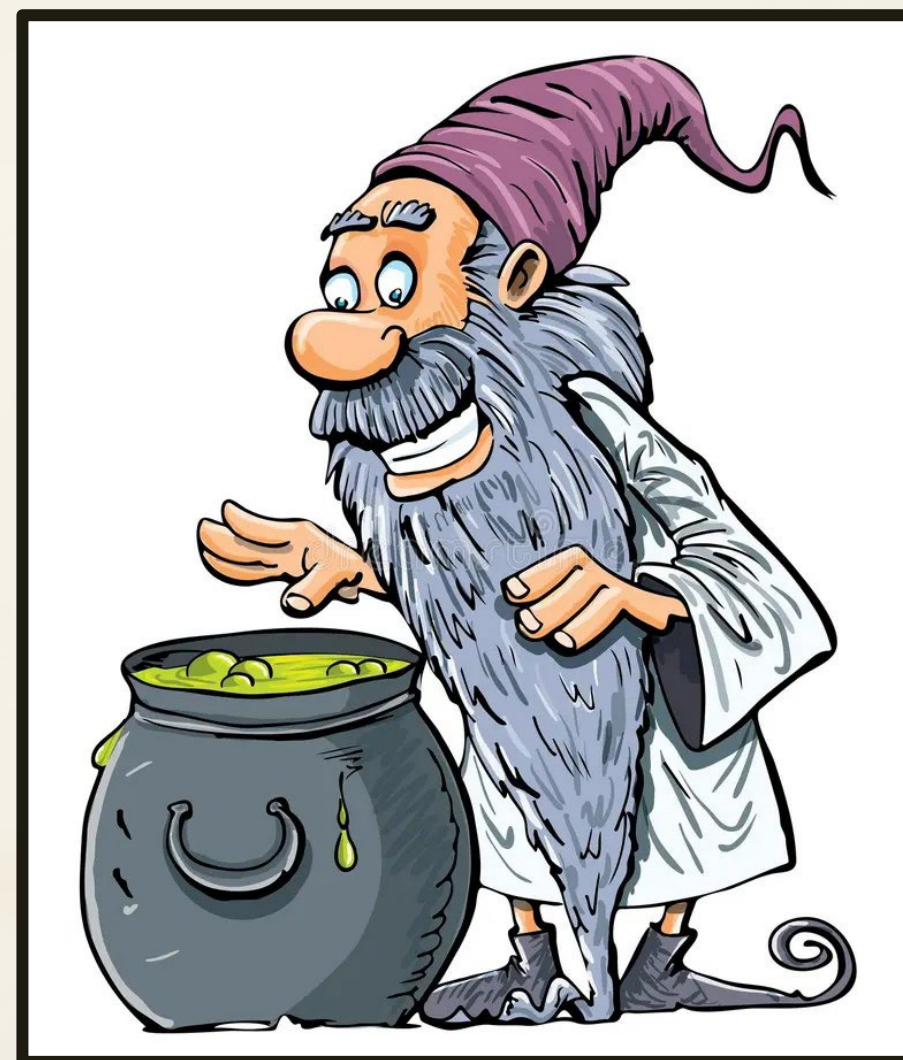
- To reduce significant time/hassle on brew day:
 - Pitch yeast the next day
 - Use the Australian No-Chill method
- Allow the kettle to sit overnight on your stove (you can crack the lid for the first few hours)
- Rack to fermenter in the morning
- A continent of Aussies can't be wrong!





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Post Brew Day Sorcery



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Carbonator Cap

- Not a one trick pony!
- Sure, it keeps your beverage carbonated
- With a 2 Liter bottle, it works great as a mini - experimental lab for new flavors and competition entries .



Carbonator Cap

- Infusing pepper heat (chipotle to mead, pepperoncini to Creme Ale)
- Adding chai black tea to mead
- Use fruit nectar from international aisle of grocery store, blend w/cider & mead (e.g. pineapple nectar)
- Try blending Diet Dr Pepper to a sweet mead (you heard me!)



Carbonator Cap

- Tinctures
- Have a collection of homemade tinctures ready to go in your pantry! (cinnamon, vanilla, various herbs, etc.)
- For a tincture of barrel -aged goodness, soak oak chips/spiral in Bourbon, wait a week, store liquid in tincture bottle





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Post Brew Day Sorcery

Carbonator Cap

- **Big Beer Blending Experiments**
 - Braggots (e.g. Barleywine/Mead)
 - Pastry Stout Lab
 - Winter Bock (Spice test)



Carbonator Cap

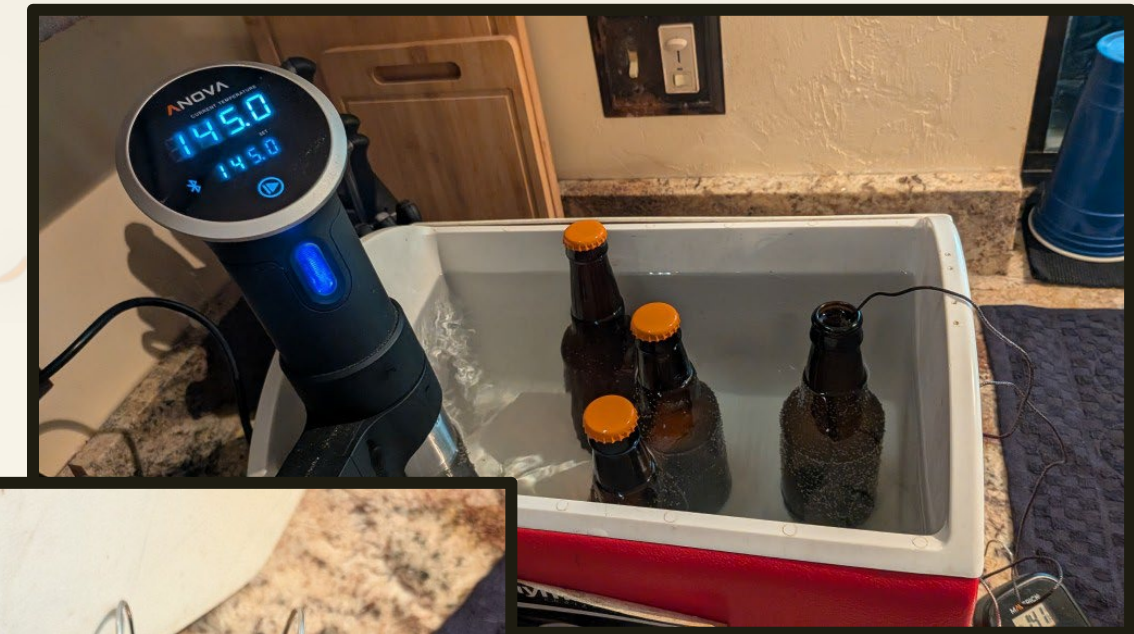
- **Big Beer Blending Experiments**
 - Braggots (e.g. Barleywine/Mead)
 - Pastry Stout Lab
 - Winter Bock (Spice test)

We Really Like Big Beers!



Worried About Bottle Bombs?

- If you kegged your beer, added a fermentable sugar, and then bottled it, a bottle bomb may be a concern.
- **Pasteurize with a Sous Vide**(tub of water set to 145F)
- Heat beer in the bottles to 140F
- Use test bottle with water uncapped with probe to confirm beer is heated
- Hold temperature for 30 minutes



What's in Your Airlock?

- Vodka? (old school)
- Star San Solution?
- Sure, they say “Don’t fear the foam”, but whatever is in your airlock **WILL** get into your beer.
- **Simple clean bottled water works dandy**
(food grade glycerin also a worthy option)





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Post Brew Day Sorcery

Put Your Bling on Display!

- You've won a nice collection of competition medals for your many tasty homebrews.
Good job!
- Consider using a wall mounted tie rack to proudly display them in all its glory!
- Available at Amazon and other online stores





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Homebrew Club Easy Wins



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Exec Meetings

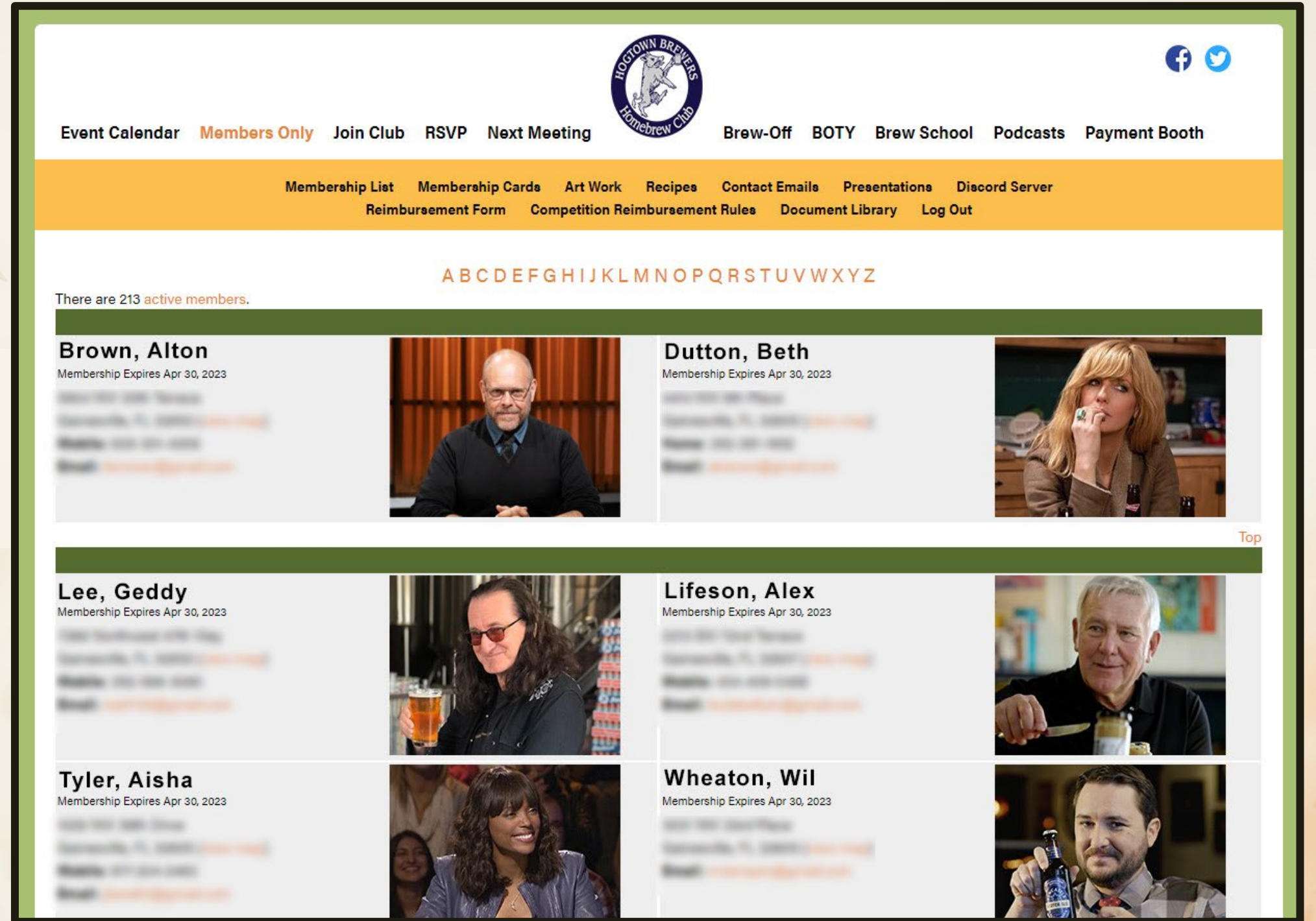
- Invite everyone, not just the officers
- That's how you find out who your future Superstar heavy lifters are!



Homebrew Club Easy Wins

New Members

- Send a personal welcome email
- Take photo for membership list



The screenshot shows the Homebrew Club website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Event Calendar, Members Only (highlighted), Join Club, RSVP, Next Meeting, Brew-Off, BOTY, Brew School, Podcasts, and Payment Booth. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links: Membership List, Membership Cards, Art Work, Recipes, Contact Emails, Presentations, Discord Server, Reimbursement Form, Competition Reimbursement Rules, Document Library, and Log Out. The main content area features a grid of member profiles. A header indicates 'There are 213 active members.' and a alphabetical index 'A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z' is visible. The member profiles shown are:

Name	Membership Expires	Photo
Brown, Alton	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Alton Brown]
Dutton, Beth	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Beth Dutton]
Lee, Geddy	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Geddy Lee]
Lifeson, Alex	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Alex Lifeson]
Tyler, Aisha	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Aisha Tyler]
Wheaton, Wil	Apr 30, 2023	[Photo of Wil Wheaton]

General Meetings

- Question of the Day
- Members write their answer on their name tag
- Example QoD “Favorite type of alcohol?”





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Homebrew Club Easy Wins

Charity Support

- Charity Support that requires no club funds:
 - Local river/creek cleanup
 - Blood drive
 - Food drive
 - Beer/Food Pairing event
 - Brew Day silent auction item
(offer a “how to brew” class)



Life Skills

- Your members have skills. Teach a personal development class to the membership
 - CPR
 - Self-Defense
 - Bee Keeping
 - Cheese Making
 - Sushi Rolling.....



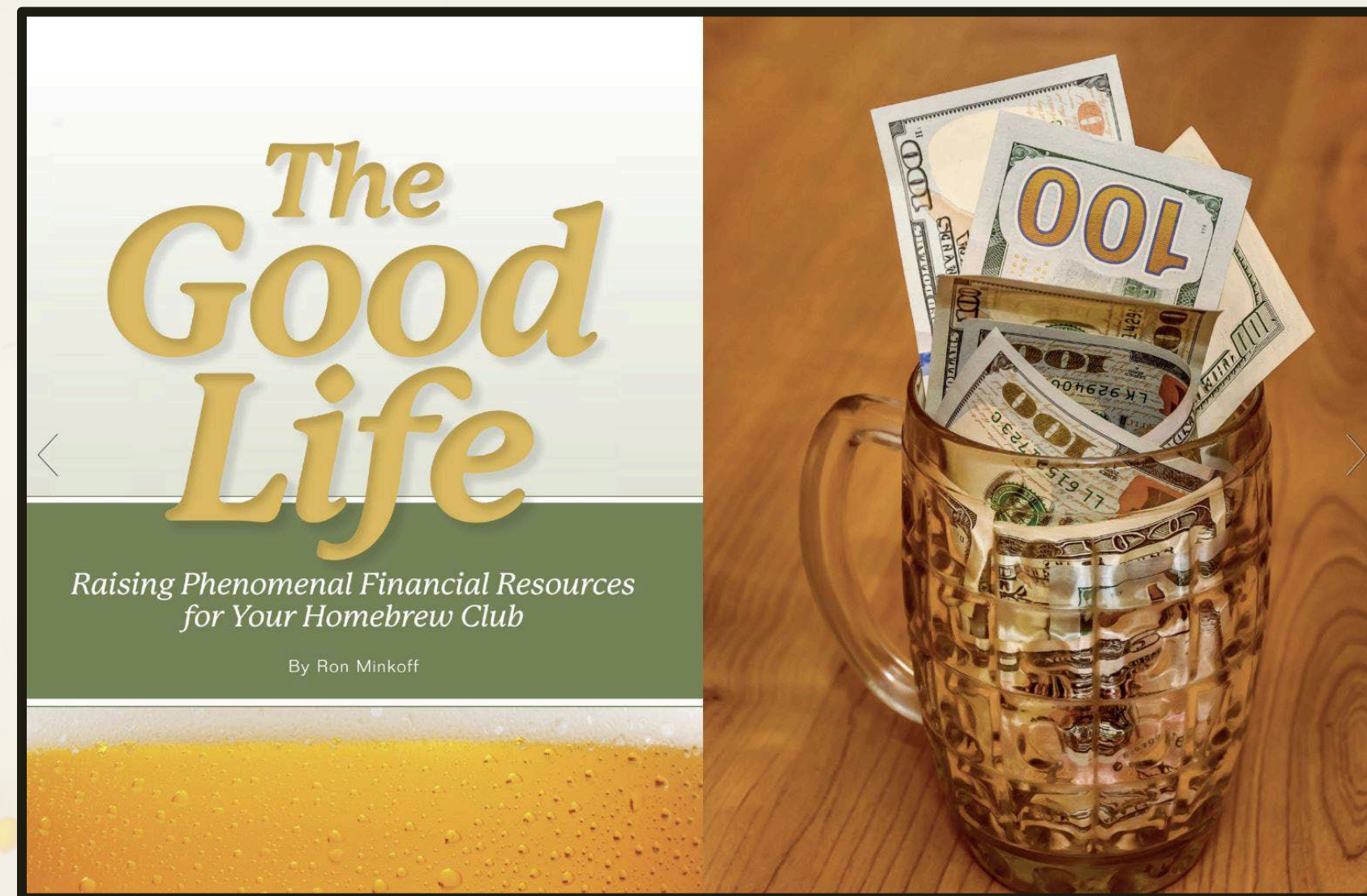


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Homebrew Club Easy Wins

The Good Life

- Step 1: Sell Beer
- Step 3: Profit!

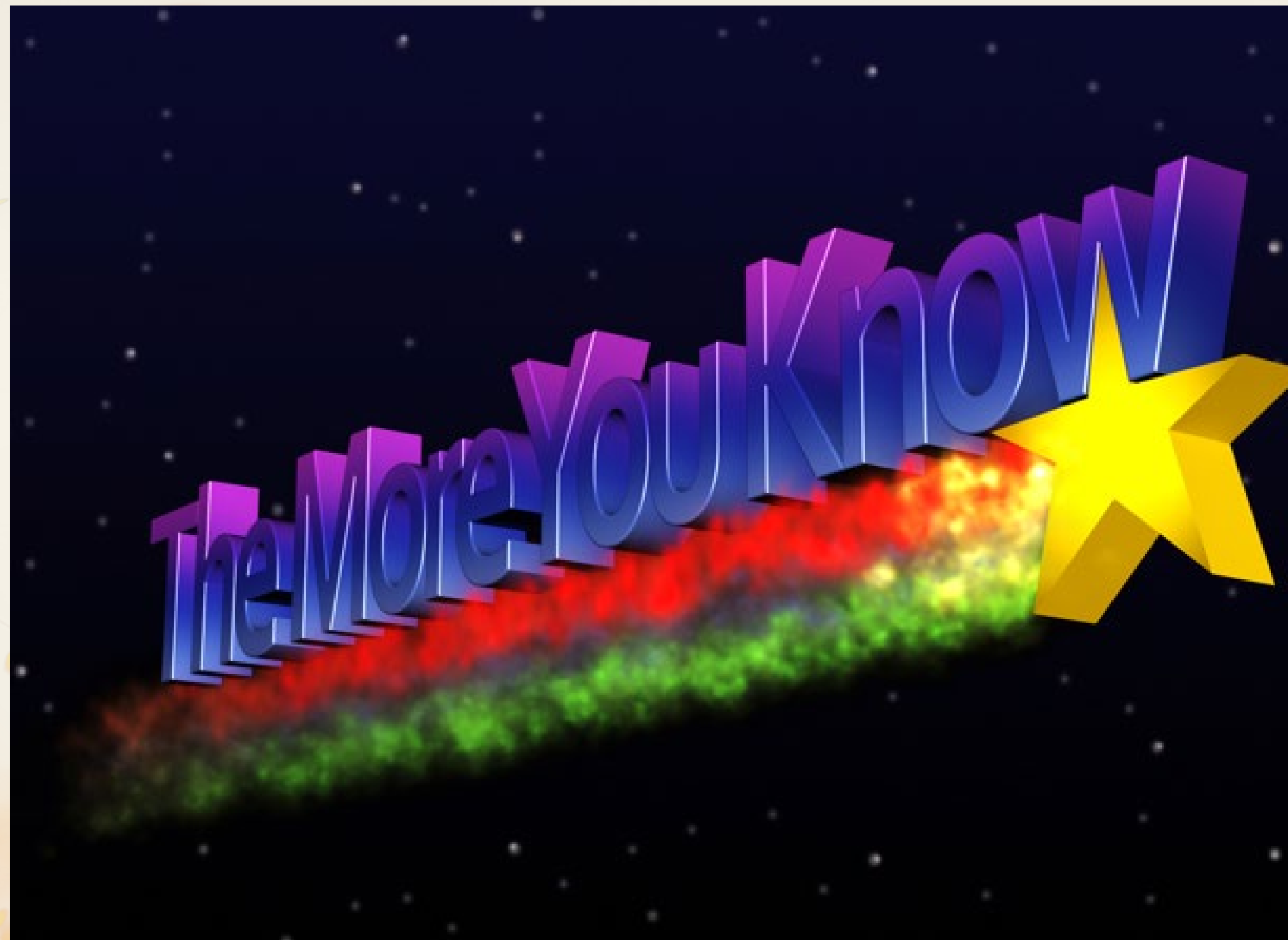


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Homebrew QuickTip Concentrate





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THANK YOU!

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HogtownBrewers.org/pdf/QT@HBC2026.pdf

