

# The Worthouse News

A Publication of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

October 2004



## Upcoming Events

### October Meeting

October 4, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: India Pale Ales (AHA)

### November Meeting

November 1, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Brown Ales

### December Meeting and Potluck

December 6, 2004 7:30 PM

Alley Kat Brewing

Theme: Holiday Ales

## The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

### Executives (Sept 2004 to August 2005)

Acting President ..... Bob Boufford

Vice-President ..... Kevin Zaychuk

Secretary ..... Boyd Oberhoffner

Treasurer ..... Ray Duperon

Acting Competition Chair . Arnold Moerth

Newsletter Editor ..... Matthew Smolak

Bob Boufford

Web Administrator ..... Jim Whittome

### Guild Meetings

Edmonton Homebrewers Guild meetings are held on the first non-holiday Monday of a month from September to June, at Alley Kat Brewing, 9929-60<sup>th</sup> Ave in Edmonton.

Meetings start at 7:30 PM. A few meetings each season will be held at other local beer establishments.

Each meeting includes a theme or style session with a "mini-competition" where anyone attending the meeting can have one's beers tasted, evaluated and judged. Several meetings over the year will be AHA sessions where the winner is forwarded to an AHA event.

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The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

*The Worthouse News* is sent monthly to paid members, guild sponsors and WCBC member clubs. Past issues may be read at <http://www.ehg.ca>.

Original articles may be reprinted in other homebrewing club newsletters with credit to the author and The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild. Submissions welcome and may be sent to the editors.

## View from the Top of the Tun

by Bob Boufford, Acting President and Co-Editor

Ever have a fermenter start off slow and suddenly take off? That's the situation we were faced with assembling this year's Executives, slow to start but poised to become very active. After long chats and support from my mentor, I have agreed to be president of EHG for this year. I think we also have a fine Executive Board to carry on the great work begun by the previous board.

But first, it's my turn to give my thanks and praise to Roxy for the outstanding effort in bringing the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild to be one of the best homebrew clubs in Canada. With Roxy's effort in bringing together EHG, the Regina ALES, the Saskatoon Headhunters, the Lethbridge Worthogs and other clubs, Western Canada Confederation of Brew Clubs becoming a major force in Canadian homebrewing. And the momentum will continue as Roxy has agreed to an ex-officio position as Past President on the Executive Board. So my mentor will still be at my side with sage advice on keeping the fermentation going in the guild.

Because of my role as president, I need to relinquish many of my responsibilities as editor of *The Worthouse News*. Matthew Smolak has agreed to serve as co-editor of the newsletter. As we progress through the year, I hope to step aside to be Matthew's mentor, offering my sage advice as he takes the newsletter into new directions.

As with any fermentation where wort changes into beer, the role of vice-president has been changing from a "Where in the world is Dick?" to one of bringing new initiatives to the club. Kevin Zachuk has agreed to continue as vice-president. He has been attending the national AHA conferences and bringing back lots of new ideas while along with Bruce Sample and Glen Hannah, representing our club on the "international level".

Those very important roles for keeping the club going, Boyd Oberhoffner, master of note taking will continue as secretary and Ray Duperon will again keep the books balanced as treasurer.

(Continued on page 2)



**Support the Guild and attend the  
October Meeting  
Monday October 4, 2004 7:30 PM**

**View from the Top of the Tun - (from Page 1)**

Even though it is an ex-officio position approved by the Executive Board, Jim Whittome will continue to serve as our web administrator to also maintain our club at an "international level".

And finally, the competition chair, a very important position for the club, as this person manages our Aurora Brewing Challenge and the Canadian MCAB qualifier, which is the major competition in Canada, along with Canadian AHA First Round at Regina ALES. Andrew Moerth will be the new competition chair.

So we can avoid "slow starts" that we experienced this past month, my major goal for this year with the assistance of the Executive Board and you, the membership, is to revise the club's bylaws to allow for a smoother transition of the Executive Board. We will be looking at other clubs and their structures along with soliciting input from you. Some of the ideas already presented include moving the Annual General Meeting to the end of the year, expanding the board to include "members-at-large", terms on the board and electing the executives from within the board instead of the general membership. More details and discussion will be presented to you at upcoming meetings and the newsletter.

To accomplish this we need the support of you, the EHG membership. To start, at Monday's meeting, we need to finish up "old business" of last month's meeting with the acceptance of last year's club financial report and the current Executive Board. Once those items are behind us, we can move forward in making the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild the best homebrewing club in Canada.

I look forward to seeing everyone on Monday.

**Cheers,**

**Bob**

**From the Bottom of the Mash**

by Matthew Smolak, Co-Editor

It is amazing how much change can occur in just one month. At the end of last month's meeting, Roxy Hastings was president, Bob Boufford was editor, and I was a member in the audience. Now Roxy is going to occupy a new position as past-president, Bob is president (and co-editor of this publication) and I am the newest addition to the EHG executive as the other co-editor – all if the membership approves the changes at this month's meeting on October 4. With hope that all is ratified, I am very excited to be writing my first column "From the Bottom of the Mash"!

With Bob and I sharing duties, for a while at least, there won't be much changing in the newsletter – it is a fine publication already and my task will be to keep up the quality. To help do that, I encourage any interested member to submit items of interest. It's your guild and your newsletter and you can help shape its content and direction by getting involved.

With several people taking part in the BJCP course that Roxy and Neil Herbst are leading, I am hoping we can get some submissions from students in the course (including me) on various elements of brewing and beers. That could help us cover a variety of topics and provide some unique perspectives on brewing.

This month we kick off the newsletter with Bob's first "Top of the Tun" article. The newsletter also features a bit of tongue in cheek journalism/fiction from yours truly. On the brewing side of things, I have also put together something I planned for last month's newsletter: a description and some photos of the smokin' event Roxy and I took part in – read on to learn more! And, as always, dig in to find out the latest details on all of the upcoming competitions and events.

With a successful year behind us, for the guild and the newsletter, I look forward to another successful year ahead.

**Matthew**

## Important Upcoming Competitions

### Gambrinus Challenge Saskatoon Headhunters November 26-27, 2004

This is Saskatoon's third annual regional competition. It is important that we show support to the Headhunters as a member of the Western Canadian Confederation of Brew Clubs.

Entries should be sent to:

Paddock Wood Brewing Supplies Ltd.  
Bay 1 - 116 103rd. St.  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7N 1Y7

Entries must be received by:

Friday, November 19 at 5:30p.m.

Entries consist of two (2) bottles of any size or shape with the entry form attached with a rubber band ONLY.

Each entry is \$6, to be included with the entry.

We will be using the BJCP 1999 Style Guidelines for this competition (<http://www.bjcp.org>)

A new Saskatoon Headhunters web address and the entry forms will be available by the November issue of *The Worthouse News*.

### Dixie Cup Houston TX October 14-16, 2004 MCAB qualifier

This is the 21st annual Dixie Cup and it continues to be the largest regional competition in North America.

Date: Entries due 24 September to 8 October  
Fees: \$8.00 USD till October 1st (\$7.00 if register on line); \$10.00 USD till October 8th

Bottle requirements: three bottles

Further information:

<http://www.crunchyfrog.net/dixiecup>

Due to recent rules and regulations with US Customs and the FDA (Food and Drug Administration), it's much more challenging to ship beers into the States. It's recommended for everyone to send their beers as individuals instead of shared shipping in one box. This also includes avoiding shipping individual boxes on the same day through the same carrier.

## EHG Monthly Theme and Mini-Competitions

### Some Changes in the Guidelines

As announced last month, for this upcoming season, the Guild is continuing the Theme and Mini-Competitions at the monthly meetings. So check out what's scheduled and plan your brews accordingly.

On the months marked with **AHA**, the beer deemed the best of the night, will go forward to an AHA club-only event. Your involvement would be hugely appreciated and everyone will benefit!

For new brewers and experienced brewers, the theme and mini-competition can serve as a suggested brewing calendar for the upcoming year.

Because of the increasing number of entries we need to start running a more formal competition including sign up sheets for the upcoming months, deadlines for entries on the evening of the mini-competition, and completed entry labels. If you cannot make the pre-meeting entry deadline, you can fill out the form and have another member bring your entries to the meeting.

In return, we will work on arranging for judges and stewards to begin the evaluation early enough so they can also participate in the monthly meeting while providing you with a thorough evaluation of your entries.

### Guidelines for "Mini-competitions"

1. Enter as many beers within the style as you like - no restrictions on the number of entries.
2. **Beers must be entered by 7:15 PM including completed entry forms, as late entries will not be accepted.** Doors open at 7:00. Please come early or have another member enter your beer.
3. You need at least three to four 341ml bottles (or equivalent larger bottles) of each entry for the judging, evaluation and club tastings. You will need to set aside an additional two to three 10 oz to 14 oz (300-400 ml) bottles of beer if your beer is selected to go on to the upcoming AHA event.

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## Smokin' Good Time...

by Matthew Smolak

Previous to my joining the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild, I don't think I had ever heard of a smoked beer before. I might have seen it in passing going through one of Michael Jackson's beer books, but that would have been it. Shortly after joining the guild in January of this year, though, I got to try a smoked beer, brewed by Roxy, at one of the monthly meetings (now there's a good reason to come to the meetings!) Then, at the Hot Break conference in June, I had a taste of Frank Kuzemski's awesome peated Scottish ale – what a treat.

So, with the first meeting of the new "season" in September featuring an AHA-sanctioned, club-only competition for smoked beer, I wanted to tackle the challenge of brewing a smoked beer.



*Matthew stands proudly beside the "smoker". You can see the wood chips soaking in the blue container on the table beside a glass of Roxy's smoked porter. The smoke makes for nice malt but I doubt the neighbours liked it all that much!*

With only a little experience so far in brewing all-grain (or anything other than a Brew House kit for that matter), I just started guessing at the grain bill for my attempt at a traditional rauchbier. One thing I wanted to do, being a hopelessly addicted do-it-yourselfer, was smoke my own malt. With a few pounds of pale 2-row malt, some simple equipment, and assistance from my brewing dog Abby, Roxy and I set about making some homemade smoked malt in my backyard.

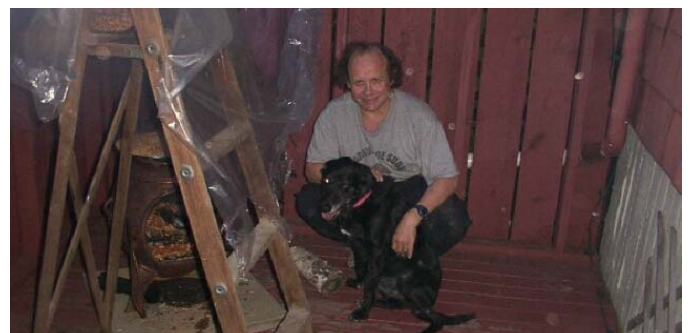
For smoking the malt, we used my chimenaya, available at Canadian Tire. The top half comes off leaving a nice wide diameter for smoke to come through. I got a fire going in the chimenaya, using birch firewood, and once it was going well, I let it ease up and simply smoulder. At that point we

simply began tossing apple and cherry wood chips onto the smouldering birch log. The wood chips were bought at BBQ Country in two decent-sized bags for a pretty reasonable price. We actually alternated putting on water-soaked chips and dry chips. We found it best to keep the log and chips smouldering, smoking and hot, but no flames. If it started flaring up, the malt, sitting above, was in danger of getting toasted or even roasted, not smoked.



*Here's the smoker. You can see the wooden sticks between the top of the chimenaya and the screen holding the malt. Inside the chimenaya there are no flames, only wood chips draped on birch logs. Note the hop vine creeping through the deck from behind.*

The malt was also soaked. We set it into a shallow container with water and took it out as needed, squeezing out excess water by hand. We then used a fine metal mesh screen with a handle to hold the malt – I got the screen for cheap at Canadian Tire. The screen is circular and just slightly bigger than the opening of the chimenaya. We set the screen right over the opening with a thin layer of soaked malt on it and let the smoke do its work.



*Late in the evening, here is Roxy with brewing assistant Abby.*

We quickly found that it worked best to insert a couple of sticks between the screen and the top of the chimenaya to create a solid updraft and pull the smoke up through and around the malt. To intensify it, and not waste any smoke, we draped a sheet of plastic over the area. To do almost four pounds of malt took us about four or five hours.

The results were as good as I hoped for and some of the malt went on to help me brew the winning beer at last month's mini-competition. Roxy brought a bag of her share of the malt last meeting for people to check out and for anyone who missed out, I'll bring what I have left this month.

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## S. uvarum vs. S. cerevisiae

### Journalism/Fiction

by Matthew Smolak

The rivalry between lager yeast (*Saccharomyces uvarum*) and ale yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) is hardly known but exists nonetheless. It is a deeply felt rivalry full of envy and so many of the other qualities that make for great comedic and tragic human stories, which makes this rivalry so poignant.

The rivalry developed out of the very distinction between lager yeast and ale yeast, wherein ale yeast, a top-fermenting yeast, resides in the top portion of beer wort, where it lives out its life converting sugars to alcohol, and lager yeast, a bottom-fermenting yeast, lives and works at the bottom of beer wort.

Although the rivalry is founded on an intrinsic difference in their natures, it is perpetuated on petty issues. In essence, it comes down to ale yeast's condescension towards lager yeast and lager yeast's reciprocal envy.

Lager yeast suffers from low self-esteem and an inferiority complex, which ale yeast has been all too willing to reinforce. Since lager yeast is bottom fermenting, there is a misconception of lager yeast as a "bottom-feeder" equivalent to the lowest of the sea creatures on the bottom of the ocean – unsophisticated in development and inhibited in capabilities. Meanwhile, it was suggested that ale yeast had climbed to the top of the evolutionary ladder for yeast.

In reality, there is no foundation for such a distinction between the two. Still, ale yeast entices lager yeast by exclaiming about the view from the

top of the fermenter, deriding the limited view lager yeast has at the bottom of the fermenter.

In turn, lager yeast has lamented the light coloured beers that it ferments compared to the various shades of copper, amber, brown and deep black available to ale yeast. Lager yeast generally feeds upon the varying degrees of gold and copper lagers. On a rare occasion it may get to dine on a dark lager, but otherwise it has envied the great variety of grains and malt that ale yeast eats.

Worst of all is the prevalence of bland beers brewed by the majority of North American breweries that lager yeasts are called into duty to convert. The abundance of lacklustre lagers in North America has very little to do with the yeast but reinforces the image of lager yeasts, and lagers, as humdrum and ale yeasts, and the respective ales, as exotic and sophisticated.

Interestingly, this rivalry, founded on misconceptions for so many years, has recently abated as lager yeast finally begins to take pride in itself. In mainstream beers, lager yeast's hearty character must salvage respectable beer out of otherwise mediocre ingredients. At the same time, a re-emerging interest in high-quality lagers has re-invigorated lager yeast's ego. Furthermore, lager yeast performs in wort that is stored at temperatures of 0-15 degrees Celsius while ale yeast works in the temperate 14-24 Celsius range.

In fact, it may be that we are on the verge of a reversal in the roles of this rivalry as lager yeast now flaunts its vigorous nature and derides ale yeast as a lazy, loafing sort of *Saccharomyces*. And so, the misconceptions go on and it appears that the sibling rivalry between these two shall never finish fermenting.



## The Beerstein

### Hoppy Beerday

by Greg Wondga

As brewers begin to experiment beyond the kit, they learn to enjoy the wonderful flavors associated with the different varieties of specialty malts, yeast strains, and hops. As brewers discover the unique flavors associated with the many strains of hops, they often go through a hoppy beer phase. And, hey ... why not? Hops are fantastic. For most consumers, say your friends, beers with a generous amount of hop character require some getting used to. Since this is the case, I tend to reserve my hoppy beers for only those who appreciate them and have a "company beer" around (such as a wheat beer or an ordinary bitter) for guests. If you like hoppy beer and would like to brew such a fine beverage, you'll be happy to know that it's quite easy to do well. The hops tend to hide off flavors, if any, and provide an anti-microbial effect, protecting your beer from contamination. Also, hop resins help improve head formation and retention. However, there are good hoppies and fantastic hoppies. Let's discuss how to make one that is so good you'll fall to your knees when you first try it.

#### Styles:

Any beer can be made with hop character, however, if you want to make an authentic style for competition, then more care needs to be taken. The hoppy styles are Bohemian pilsner, American pale ale, American amber ale, American brown ale, American Barleywine, and India pale ale. If you don't care about authenticity, that's OK. Some of the best beers that I've ever made had no style whatsoever – feel free to be creative!

#### Getting "Hop Character"

When I speak of "hoppy" beers, I'm referring to those with an abundance of hop flavor and aroma, but not necessarily bitter. Hop flavor comes from essential oils in the hop flower. These compounds are quite volatile, and therefore are vented off during the wort boil. Beer made with late hop additions will have more hop character because less of these oils are evaporated than if the hops were added earlier (late hop addition = less time in the boil = more essential oils in the wort). Different varieties of hops possess their own unique fingerprint aroma and flavor. For example, Cascade varieties are quite citric, while Fuggles is somewhat floral. The only purpose of choosing a particular variety of hop is to add a signature flavor and aroma to the beer.

Bitterness is the opposite. The bitterness from hops come from hop resins, in particular the compound humulone, an insoluble compound in water until its chemical structure is slightly altered through boiling (this process is called "isomerization"). The longer the hops are left to sit in boiling wort, the more humulone molecules are converted to a soluble form (isohumulone). Therefore, beers made with more early addition hops will have more bitterness (early hop addition = more time in the boil = more isomerization = higher bitterness). All varieties of hop give bitterness, but some are harsher than others. A rule of thumb is that hops with lower alpha acid content have a more pleasant bitterness associated with them.

#### How much hops to add?

To determine how much hops to add, first determine how much bitterness you need. Personally, I try to balance bitterness with malt as much as I can. I go to the BJCP style guidelines and check out the number of IBU's the style in question requires. IBU stands for International Bittering Units. To determine the mass of hops to add, refer to the article by Roxy in the April 2004 article of *The Worthouse News* at <http://www.ehg.ca>.

In general, I prefer to add as much hop material as possible for the amount of bitterness required. That means that I have plenty of bitterness from the late addition hops and I use hops with a low alpha acid content.

#### Alternative Hopping

There is more than one way to skin a cat. Not all hopping has to be done in 20 and 60-minute additions.

1. Mash hopping: Adding hops to the mash is said to have a stabilizing effect on the essential oils, preventing them somehow from being vented off during the boil. I have never tried this method, so I cannot attest to its effectiveness.
2. First wort hopping: This method surprisingly adds a vast amount of hop character to a beer. Add all of your hops right as the wort is being drawn from the lauter tun (during sparging) before the wort boils and keep them in for the entire boil. The flavor is wonderfully smooth. Match quantities to a 60 minute addition and go for it.
3. Dry hopping: After the wort has fermented into beer, and it has been racked to the secondary,

add a few ounces of hops into the fermenter. The essential oils will absorb into the beer giving it a pungent hop aroma. No bitterness is added to the beer using this method. The hops don't need to be sanitized, just add them. I just make sure to thoroughly wash my hands first. If you notice a grassy flavor in the bottled product, simply wait a couple of weeks and it will mellow out nicely.

Feel free to experiment with all of the wonderful permutations of varieties out there. I've found that like goes well with like (American with American or Brit with Brit) most of the time. However, a Cascade/Goldings mix can be wonderful too. The only way to find out is to brew it. Good luck!

**Greg**

[beersteincolumn@hotmail.com](mailto:beersteincolumn@hotmail.com)

<b>September</b>	Smoked\Wood Aged Beers - Cat. 22 <b>AHA</b> (entries due October 9, 2004)
<b>October</b>	IPAs - Cat. 14 <b>AHA</b> (entries due November 5, 2004)
<b>November</b>	Brown Ales - Cat. 10C and 11
<b>December</b>	Holiday Ales - Cat. 21B (theme only, no mini-competition)
<b>January</b>	Irish Red Ales - Cat. 9D <b>AHA</b> (entries due January 26, 2005)
<b>February</b>	Sour beers - Cat. 17 <b>AHA</b> (entry date to be announced)
<b>March</b>	Strong Beers - Cat. 9E, 13F, 18, 19 Belgian, English, Imperial
<b>April</b>	Extract beers - all classes <b>AHA</b> (entry date to be announced)
<b>May</b>	BURRP! 3 - "Squash and Underground beers"

\*Categories are from the new 2004 BJCP Style Guidelines. (<http://www.bjcp.org/styles04/>)

## EHG Monthly Theme and Mini-Competitions

(continued from page 3)

- Even though bottles are preferred, keg entries are fine as long as you can submit bottled versions to the AHA club-only competition.
- In the event that a winner cannot produce the required bottles for the upcoming AHA event, the second place entrant will go on the AHA event.
- A panel of BJCP judges and apprentice judges will judge the beers.
- After the beers have been formally judged the panel will lead the other members through a tasting session, discussing the qualities of all the entries.
- Brewers should be prepared to discuss their beers at the end of the tasting session to provide feedback to the judges and to help everyone learn brewing techniques. Bring your recipes to the event.
- Entrants will receive the BJCP score sheets from the judging panel.
- EHG will pay shipping and entry fees for the winning beer to compete in AHA club competitions.

### EHG Mini-Competition Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Theme/Mini-Competition: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Beer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Style Number (e.g., 2a): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unique / Unusual Ingredient(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please print legibly with pencil or water-resistant ink. Complete one form per entry. Not necessary to complete forms for all bottles in an entry.



# Edmonton Homebrewers Guild

## Membership Info

Membership in the Guild is open to anyone, from any place, interested in brewing better beer. The only membership restriction is one must be of legal drinking age in Alberta.

Member expertise ranges from the most basic of novices to distinguished experts who have been brewing for about 20 years including a few professional brewers. While many members enjoy all-grain brewing, some of our best brewers are extract specialists. The Guild simply encourages its members to brew better beer; no matter what path they choose to follow.

## Benefits of Membership:

- Monthly newsletter
- Savings on beer making supplies including a yearly hop order and discounts from some of the local homebrew shops
- Discount on the Beer Judge Certification program
- Learn to brew better beer!

## Group Brews

Organized group brews are also a featured activity of the club. Styles are selected months in advance and experienced brewers lead a brewing session to create the beers. On an appointed meeting night, a panel of judges evaluates the beers and leads the members through a tasting session.

## The Annual Hop Order

The club makes an annual hop purchase in November, available only to current Guild members. We purchase fresh leaf hops and plugs. The bulk purchase is a great membership benefit as it ensures we get the best available hops at a good price.

## Monthly Theme Nights

Theme nights at each monthly meeting provide an opportunity to learn about different styles of beer and provide members that are taking the Beer Judging Certification Program to judge some beers. It is also an opportunity for members to have their beers tasted, judged and evaluated before sending entries off to competitions. Several of the monthly Theme nights are designated "AHA" where the beer deemed the best of the night, will go forward to an AHA event.

## Membership Fees

Membership is \$25.00 per year and is renewed at the beginning of each brewing season in September.

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## Sign me up as an ongoing member of the Edmonton Homebrewers Guild!

For the membership year September, 2004 to August, 2005

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Addr: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email the newsletter to me to save time.

Note: Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to view and print electronic versions of the newsletter.

New Member,  Renewing Member

Membership Fees (per year): \$25.00

Please make checks payable to:

The Edmonton Homebrewers Guild  
c/o Alley Kat Brewing Company  
9929 - 60 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T6E 0C7