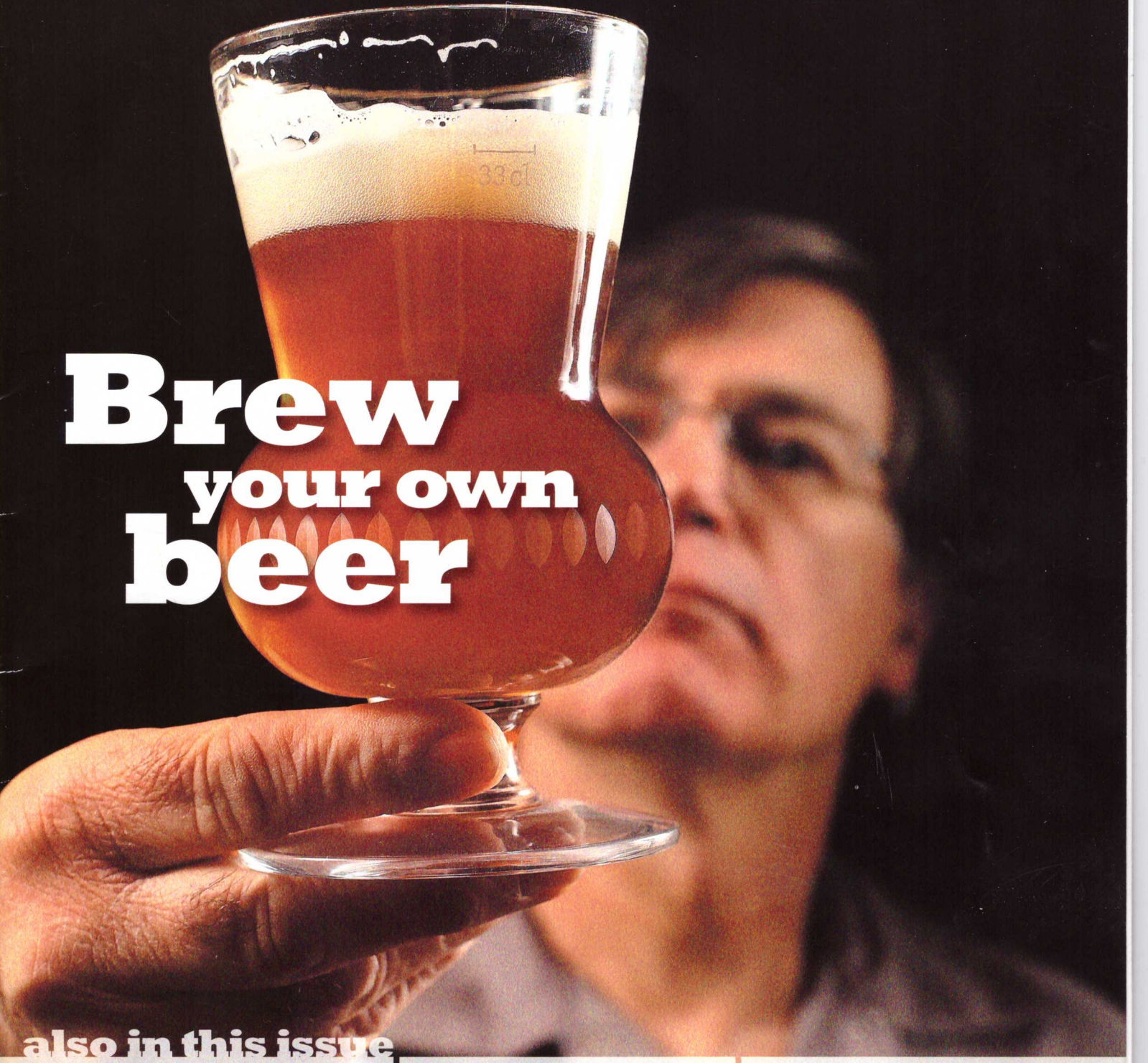


# heartland

January — February 2015

North Central Indiana lifestyle magazine



## Brew your own beer

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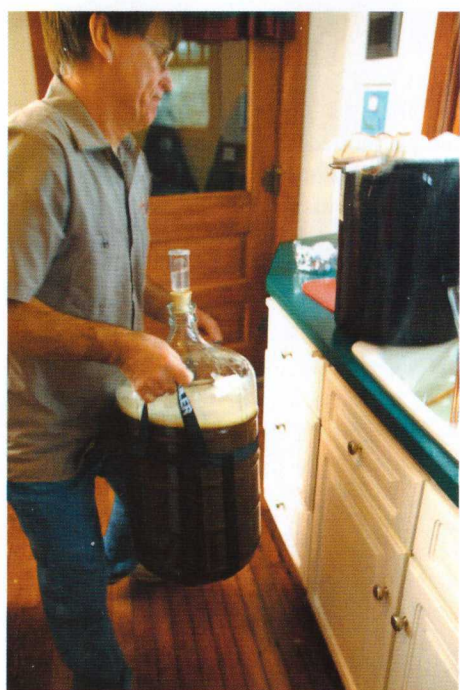
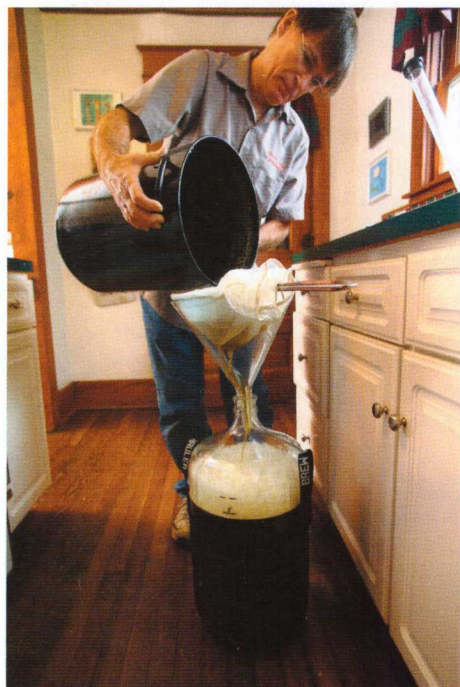
A man with glasses and a blue denim shirt is pouring beer from a homebrewing tap into a glass. The tap is mounted on a wooden structure. In the background, there is a framed picture of beer bottles and a sign that says "YOUR POISON". To the right, there is a large, ornate metal container, possibly a fermenter or a storage vessel, with a "MARIETTAVILLE" label. The scene is set in a homebrewing environment.

# For the love of beer

Club unites locals interested  
in home brewing

By Martin Slagter





**T**here's an old saying Larry Barnhart likes to use to describe his philosophy on brewing beer: Home brewing is my hobby, beer is my reward.

Perhaps nowhere in Kokomo is that philosophy more agreed upon than at a meeting of the Howard County Homebrew Club, where Barnhart and other enthusiasts meet the third Monday of each month to discuss pilsners, porters and IPAs inside Half Moon Restaurant & Brewery.



**THE PROCESS** Larry Barnhart goes through the process of creating his latest batch of beer. Barnhart is a longtime member of the Howard County Homebrew Club.

Inside Half Moon, club members discuss brewing techniques, share their own home brew set-ups and bring in their final products for taste testing, making the monthly

meetings a time to talk shop about all things home brewing.

Barnhart said the popularity of the club has grown with the public's increased



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awareness of craft beers, but at its essence, the art of home brewing is still very much for the “beer geek.”

“As far as techniques go, one of the beauties of home brewing is if you want to get geeky about things, you can get really, really geeky about it,” he said. “You can play with mash temperatures and how much you heat up the grains. You can play with how and when you add your hops and what hops.”

It's that trial and error and curiosity to try new brewing tricks that made the club a success in 2007. It was a time when craft and micro breweries started becoming increasingly popular across the country, with their outputs appearing on shelves at some of the country's biggest retailers.

Barnhart, a self-described “pack rat,” is the epitome of obsessed home brewer. His passion is apparent at first glance inside his St. Joseph Drive home, where an all wood bar room decorated with beer memorabilia and three taps await.

The room is a treasure trove for any home brewer featuring recipes, old beer posters, a library of books on beer and other collector's items and more than 5,000 beer labels from brewers all over the world.

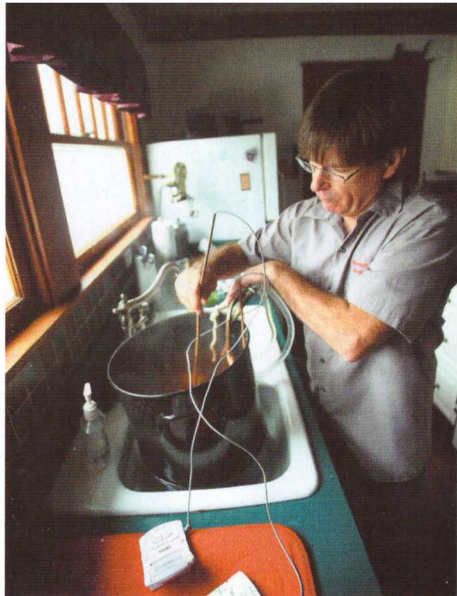
Barnhart himself has made and named 62 beers of his own since he started brewing in 1998, each one more quirky in title than the last. Among them are Thistle Dew Scottish Ale, Susie's Sweet Stout and Dr. Pavlov's Salivator doppelbock.

Owner of the Kokomo Schwinn Cyclery, Barnhart has even started his own home brew supply business out of the back of the bicycle shop. Since opening last winter,

**SCIENCE** Larry Barnhart measures out his latest creation. Barnhart has made and named 62 beers of his own since he started brewing in 1998.







**PRECISION** Larry Barnhart is a longtime member of the Howard County Homebrew Club, which meets on the third Monday of each month at Half Moon Restaurant & Brewery.

Backalley Brewing has provided many local home brewers with specialty grains and a wide variety of hops and yeasts to complete their pet brew projects.

Howard County Homebrew Club charter member Tom Ferguson said a number of factors have helped to put Kokomo and Howard County on the map as a respectable spot for home brewers.

"There were some clubs in the surrounding areas, but they were pretty far to drive," Ferguson said. "You'd have to drive all the way to Lafayette or Indianapolis. I think [the homebrew club] probably took off fairly quickly in the beginning because there were people brewing that didn't want to drive all the way to Indianapolis to see other brewers and talk about things.

"What's changed is that in the beginning it would always be the same dozen people at every meeting," he said. "Now there will be a meeting and there will be six people you've never seen before. It seems like there are a lot more people attending meetings."

Resurrecting home brewing in the area has been a mission of the Howard County Homebrew Club, hosting annual brews at Half Moon and more recently at Backalley Brewing, in addition to appearing at First Friday events and the Kokomo Humane Society's annual Ales for Tails event.

But home brewing had been a part of Kokomo's culture since the Bull and Stump club many years back, Barnhart said.

It returned to the public in the mid-2000s when The Marketplace on Sycamore

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#### Carol Ward - Administrator, Vice President-Indiana Hospice ViaQuest

I knew early on healthcare was my life's passion. When members of our community are face with complex medical challenges life can become overwhelming. Our primary role is to link our community with appropriate resources and provide necessary support as needed. We are blessed with an amazing team of hospice experts which include RNs, Masters prepared Social Workers, Health Care Assistants, Clergy, Volunteers and Bereavement. Through the years I have never experience such personal humility and felt so honored to serve our patients and families on their hospice journey.

#### Mindy Molter - Volunteer Coordinator

As we know, the impact volunteer visits have on our patients and their families is tremendous. The volunteer that are drawn to this work have a quality of selflessness that is pure gift to the patient and the family. Frankly, sometimes it moves me to tears. One volunteer who had developed a beautiful relationship with a patient was determined to make every moment with her count. Another longtime volunteer — one of the most joyful women I have ever known — visits 12 of our patients and tells me how they bring her joy. That's how it works, though — give and ye shall receive.



#### Nancy Distell - Community Liaison

My journey into hospice care began after my father passed away of congestive heart failure at age 61. I had a major misconception about hospice care and all the benefits it could have provided for him and our family. My goal is to educate our community on what hospice care really is and the great quality of life their loved one is entitled to. Hospice care allows the patient and family the opportunity to remain in control of their healthcare choices.

#### Alec Williams - Community Liaison

I often hear people say, "you must have a very difficult job," or "I could never do that job". What I've come to realize is that working in the hospice industry is one of the most rewarding and gratifying roles I could have. Daily we are entrusted with community members who have been diagnosed with complex medical issues. These individuals are fathers, mothers, sister and brothers. We serve them with care knowing this is their most vulnerable time in their life. We, as a team, work together to make this life stage the highest quality possible. At Serenity we will continue to provide the best care partnered with an innovative approach to hospice thus improving the quality of life for those who allow us to serve them.



#### Remington "Remi" Williams - Care K-9

They call me "Man's" best friend but I'm really more like everyone's best friend! Before earning the title, Care K-9 for Serenity Hospice I would lay around all day, hiding my bone and trying to catch squirrels. Now I have a new purpose! It's to provide love and comfort to those going through life challenges. My job is simple; show love and be loved on. You can pet me, give me kisses, even scratch my favorite places (behind my right ear). When you need the Care K-9, I'll be there! Just ask for Serenity Hospice!

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**HOPS:** Pictured are some of the hops Larry Barnhart has collected. Barnhart opened his own specialty grains and hops shop, Backalley Brewing, which operates out of the back of his Kokomo Schwinn Cyclery business.

Street in downtown Kokomo brought many of the hard-to-find beers to the area. That building was later transformed into the Brass Monkey Brewing Co. by owner Andrew Lewis before it closed in 2008, despite good reviews.

Since the homebrew club was formed in 2007, Ferguson said he's noticed new members learn the art of brewing quicker, which he attributes to the quality of beers created by more experienced club members.

"The beer is a lot better than it was in the early years, that's for sure," he said. "Anyone who was around the first couple of years could tell you there was a lot of beer passed around the table [where you thought] 'that's quite a bit I have in this glass.'"

"It seems like when new people join the club, they have a much steeper learning curve," he said. "Their beer gets a lot better, a lot faster than it used to."

Homebrew Club member Dave Goodridge said the support and input he's received from other members has been invaluable in helping him progress as a brewer.

"We all have different ways that we brew," he said. "There's no right or wrong way to brew beer. So by talking among ourselves, or when we go to an event like



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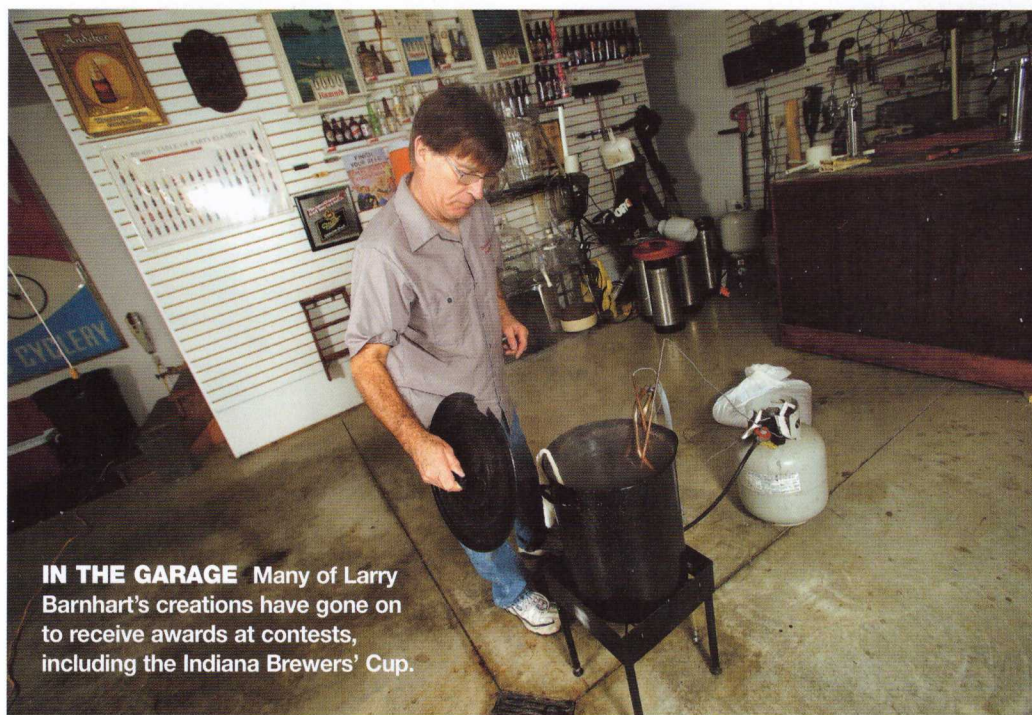
Connect with the Howard County Homebrew Club online at [hchomebrew.com](http://hchomebrew.com) or find them on Facebook. Backalley Brewing, which supplies area home brewers with materials, is located at 1500 E. Boulevard in the Kokomo Schwinn Cyclery.

the [Indiana Brewers' Cup], you learn how they do things. I'm sure it develops our own way [of brewing] from all of the other input that you get."

Perhaps the biggest and most obvious rewards to home brewing, Barnhart said, is the final output, which can typically cost a fraction of what it might cost to buy from the store.

Barnhart said he will typically brew 20 to 25 batches of beer a year, with each batch consisting of about 5 gallons of beer.

"Anybody who likes beer ... you can make this stuff for a whole lot less than



**IN THE GARAGE** Many of Larry Barnhart's creations have gone on to receive awards at contests, including the Indiana Brewers' Cup.

buy it," he said. "With the infinite variety of things you can do by tweaking it just a little bit here and there, it is going to make a big difference. Adding an extra type of spe-

cialty grain is going to make a difference. When you put the hops in and what hops you're using is going to make a difference." \*