

First, let me say that I have nothing but respect and appreciation for the work Gordon and the current board have done for the BJCP. He has been an outstanding contributor on a wide variety of fronts. Given his record I doubt my own mother would vote for me, at least if she knew anything about the BJCP. But, every election ought to be contested, and Gordon deserves a chance to cut back some. I do feel I, if elected, could bring a new and unique viewpoint to the BJCP board.

My name is Alan Folsom, and I brewed my first beer in 1978. I became a judge in 1995 at the Baltimore NHC, and achieved National rank in 1997. I have co-founded the Keystone Hops club, taught introductory and intermediate brewing classes many times, run classes for aspiring judges, and organized the War of the Worts for most of its 15 years. Along the way I have won a ribbon or two, and find it an interesting challenge to brew specifically for contests.

Many of you may know me as the author of HCCP, a program for organizing and running home brew competitions. Counting only contests I know about, it has been used well over 100 times, for more than 30,000 entries, so there's a good chance you've either judged in a contest using HCCP, or been judged in one. It may be vanity, but I like to think it has made beer contests and judging significantly easier over the last few years.

I feel the BJCP has both some opportunities, and some challenges in the coming years. First, it is often seen by other brewers as some sort of exclusive club, members' noses in the air, looking down condescendingly on those they judge. I and you both know that that is not true, but I believe we could and should reach out through publications or other processes to make the accumulated wisdom of the BJCP more available to the general brewing community. We have documents designed for our use to make us better judges, and these could be tweaked or extended to be of benefit to those in the non-judging community. We can explore "canned" presentations on flaws, styles, or other aspects of judging which can be made available to clubs.

More specifically, the limited number of judge exam sessions available, with limited seating, makes the BJCP seem even more of an exclusive club. There are currently excellent reasons for this limitation, but it should be a high priority of the BJCP to find ways to expand the ability to handle those who have an interest in the program - we can't and shouldn't turn them away.

Thank you for your consideration. The BJCP has an outstanding array of talent guiding it. If elected I hope to maintain this level of commitment, and contribute my own talents as I may.

