

## Happy Hopheads Club Offers Place for Home Brewing

Contributed by Michael Stoiko  
Friday, 24 October 2008

The Happy Hopheads club is a brand new club in Sault Saint Marie, started by Carl Shopp, a Manufacturing Engineer in his senior year. The club had its first meeting On Thursday the 9th. The club membership is just starting out at 5, but Carl is hopeful for rapid expansion. Right now the club's main focus is teaching people to brew. Carl is attempting to teach as many people to brew as possible to get the club's knowledge base up before he graduates. He started the club because, as he put it, "its never been done here in the Soo before. No one's ever had a class or seminar or anything on teaching people to brew anything."

Carl, 23, started brewing after receiving a kit for his 21st birthday. He says he quickly got more in depth, "reading every book, every pamphlet, everything that comes in front of my face about brewing. I can't get enough." He says after he finishes his degree, and gets some job experience, his dream job would be to be a Process Engineer at a major brewery, which he says would be "absolutely amazing." After he graduates this year, he hopes to leave behind a strong member base, and knowledge base, to keep the club going long after he is gone.

His plans for the club, after he gets everyone up to speed on brewing, include encouraging everyone to buy a brewing kit and start brewing. He want to turn the club into a "typical American Homebrewers Association guild, where people can come and meet, and share tips, tricks, and things like that." He plans on having the club meet every to weeks or so, to sample newly finished brews, and discuss new techniques and recipes. He also hopes to encourage all members to join the American Homebrewers Association. The only other Homebrewers Guild in the UP is out in Escanaba. He hopes to attract brewers from all around the area, as the more brewers the club has, the more brews there are for everyone to sample.

He eventually wants his club to tour breweries around the United States. Also, some breweries in Michigan have allied with the American Homebrewers Association, offering free tours to such guilds. There are many homebrewing events, such as the Great American Brew Festival, National Homebrewers Conference, and other such events open to homebrewers clubs. There are many opportunities that he wants the new club to take advantage of.

The club also plans to sample various craft beers, from microbreweries all over Michigan. Once the home brews start getting done, the meetings will typically involve sampling each other's work, passing advice and ideas, and appreciating the variety of brews available. He wants everyone to sample as many different tastes as possible, and "try everything at least once."

Carl, the self professed "beer man", has friends with other specialties. He has a "mead man", and a "wine woman". He says they all have their fortes, making for a small yet diverse membership.

The club is open to all who wish to learn to brew in the Soo area. The Club meets every Thursday.