Hopping into HOME-BREWING

Popular Cabrillo College course offers entry into growing hobby

By TOM LAYNE

CAPITOLA — Four years ago, local homebrewer Mark Taylor proposed to four community colleges in the area to offer an introductory homebrewing class.

The college reaction was as swift as a jet plane taking off right below your window. While still in its infancy, homebrewing has become a popular hobby across the country, and the Cabrillo College offered to be the first to offer the class, and the first session filled up with 11 students — one short of capacity.

Taylor offered the course twice a year ever since, and each class was filled to capacity. However, for the upcoming session, which was scheduled to begin last week, only one student had registered.

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or wait for the summer installment.

Taylor was sure the students would turn out because he still vividly remembers the day he became hooked on homebrewing 21 years ago.

“I was turned on immediately, and by the whole process,” Taylor said. “I was in my first homebrew class that I took seven bridges across on River Street. I liked the alchemy of it all, taking ingredients and creating something completely different. After the class bought a starter kit, went home and brewed it, and I haven’t stopped since.”

The timing of Taylor’s desire to start teaching the course was fortunate, coming as the number of homebrewers is on the rise.

Homebrewing has increased in popularity recently, along with the proliferation of craft breweries. The American Homebrewers Association says there are 76,000 homebrewers in the U.S. The association says an average of 124 people learn to homebrew per year.

Taylor’s class will include an introduction to the craft, the process of making beer, and the history of homebrewing.

In recent years, homebrewing has gained popularity as a hobby, leading to an increase in the number of homebrewers nationwide. Taylor’s class aims to introduce students to the basics of homebrewing, covering topics such as the history, process, and techniques involved in making beer.

At the end of the class, students will have the opportunity to taste a variety of beers and learn about the different styles and flavors.

Mark Taylor enjoys the fruits of his labor in his home-brewed Tuesday, Taylor teaches a home-brewing class at Cabrillo College.

In Santa Cruz, three microbreweries are located in the city, the Redwood Coast Brewing Association, Taylor. Taylor brews beer from scratch regularly, and has four beers on tap in his converted refrigerator — all made with bumper stickers with beers such as “I love therefore I am” and “I offer a one-day class on home brewing, and I am planning on teaching a one-day home-brewing class on Friday. He enjoys creating his own recipes, but also plans to brew commercially, “If you’re going to make a drink and you want to make a product, you have to think about how to market it. You have to think about how to sell it. And you have to think about how to make it.”

Every winter, Taylor and his wife travel to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, to get away from it all, but he also enjoys the local craft beer scene. “There’s a lot of great beer in Santa Cruz, and there’s a lot of great beer in the U.S. You don’t have to travel far to find good beer.”