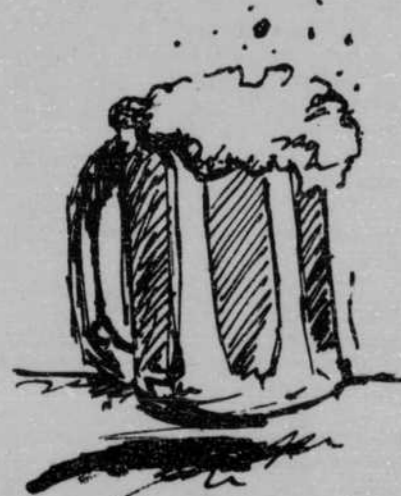


# Alternative Arts

By  
**Connie L. Sheehan**  
Senior Editor



## Homemade attempts teach brewer "weiser" lessons

Charlie Papazian's homebrewing bible, "The Complete Joy of Home Brewing," has only one commandment: "Relax, don't worry, have a home-brew."  
Joel Pedersen, a Lincoln assistant city attorney, has been following that commandment for the last two years.  
"Basically, if you're interested in home brewing, you're not a guy who sits down and has a Miller Lite and feels like he just had a great beer," Pedersen explained. "If you're the kind of person who goes and has a Guinness Stout and wants another one, you might be interested in home brewing."  
Pedersen said some of his complaints about commercially available beer is that a good one is "pretty hard to come by and there's not a lot of variety."  
American breweries do brew a

difficult beer, in terms of home brewing, said Pedersen. Pale, lightly flavored beer is hard to brew because any slight off-flavor will show through.  
"It's more a tribute to their process," he said.  
Pedersen said his interest was influenced by the European beers he had during his visits overseas.  
"When you get that German beer, then you come home and have a..." Pedersen just laughed, not completing the comparison between European and American beers.  
Home-brews have a full-bodied taste, and a lot of people don't like that, he said. They would rather have something they can drink easily.  
"Home-brew is like a good, imported beer," he added. "It's something you drink for the taste

and for the experience of it."  
Pedersen said brewing beer is like cooking. If someone cooks a meal, it's easier to appreciate and understand what went into the making of the final dish.  
"When you make beer, you begin to understand what flavor yeast adds, for example," he said. Brewers begin to learn how each ingredient will affect the beer's taste.  
And basically, beer only has four ingredients: hops, yeast, water and malt, Pedersen said.  
Asked about analyzing imported beers to achieve the taste he prefers, Pedersen said it's easy: "I cheat."  
"Most of beers I make come from kits," he said, "and I'm more of an intermediate home brewer rather than an advanced one."  
While a beginner would use an "already-hopped" kit, Pedersen said he uses an "unhopped" kit then adds hops according to his own taste. An advanced brewer would go as far as preparing his own grain mixture.  
A kit usually costs around \$10 and makes about two cases and a six-pack, Pedersen said.  
"It's not really, really cheap," he said, "but if you consider what you're brewing is basically imported beer... have you priced New Castle Brown Ale lately?" he asked, referring to his favorite imported beer. "It's a bargain when you look at it that way."

But if somebody is trying to make dirt-cheap beer, it can hardly be done, especially if one gives any value at all to their time.  
And it does take a lot of time, Pedersen said.  
"When I first started brewing, it was kind of an event," he said. "I'd have some friends over and we would brew beer on a Saturday afternoon."  
Pedersen said he has made about a dozen or more batches of homebrew and had only one failure.  
"What happened, I have no idea, it just didn't work," he said. "It's really easier to make a home-brew than to fail."  
According to "The Complete Joy of Home Brewing," the brewing process begins "given the right conditions where yeast will convert (ferment) the fermentable sugars to alcohol, carbon dioxide and the taste we know as beer."  
If one gets the right equipment and keeps everything clean, the process should go fairly smoothly, Pedersen said.  
Pedersen said brewing equipment costs about \$60 and includes items such as the carboy, or large bottle used to ferment the beer, hoses, other small items and the large pot used for cooking the mixture.  
"If the pots are thin, the malt tends to stick while cooking but it'll add a little flavor to the beer," he said. "It's happened before and

I just kept on going. I was worried I scorched it but it didn't make much difference."  
Cooking the mixture is easy, Pedersen said. Everything gets put in a big pot then you simply follow the directions. "I'm not a scientist and I'm not a good cook either."  
Pedersen starts with about one gallon of water, heating it to help the malt syrup dissolve better and adds the three-pound can of malt ingredients. Then the mixture is boiled from 20 minutes to one hour.  
"You do want to keep it warm for quite a while," he said. That ensures removing all the "nasty stuff" and also changes the character so that all the sugars and malt are dispersed throughout the liquid.  
"The fun stuff is the hops," he said. There are two kinds, boiling hops added during the boil and finishing hops added at the end. These are used in intermediate brewing techniques. Beginning kits are already "hopped."  
"The boiling hops will add hop flavor and some aroma and the finishing hops add primarily the aroma without adding the bitterness of the hop taste," he explained.  
The heated mixture is then poured into the carboy with the remaining water. The lager, or ale yeast, is added after the mixture cools to room temperature, he said.  
After the fermentation is com-

## Laws govern brewing fun

By Joel Schroeder  
Staff Reporter  
Tired of your same old domestic beer on the weekends and ready for a little adventure? Brew your own.  
According to federal and state law, it's not unlawful. However, certain restrictions apply.  
In November 1978, Congress passed a bill that repealed a portion of a 1920 federal law that prohibited the making of beer. It was signed into law by President Carter.  
The restrictions in the federal law provided that not more than 100 gallons per person can be produced in a year and the producer must be at least 18 years of age. Locally, however, many suppliers will not sell brewing kits to anyone under 21.  
The law also states that the beer be for personal use only and cannot be resold in any form.  
State statute 53-102 says that no one can "prevent the making of wine, cider, or other alco-

holic liquor by a person from (ingredients), by simple fermentation and without distillation, if it is made solely for the use of the maker, his or her family, and guests."  
Alcoholic beverages are defined as including, "alcohol, spirits, wine, beer and every liquid or solid... capable of being consumed as a beverage by a human being."  
The statute also adds that alcoholic liquor includes confectios or candies that contain more than one-half of 1 percent of alcohol.  
Beer is defined as the "alcoholic fermentation of an infusion or concoction of barley or other grain, malt and hops in water," and includes "beer, ale, stout, lager beer, porter and the like."  
It also defines beer as any beverage with the above conditions having more than one-half of 1 percent alcohol by volume.  
So, if you've finally decided your beer just doesn't have the same old gusto, go ahead and brew your own. It's legal.

## Sweatshirt of the week.

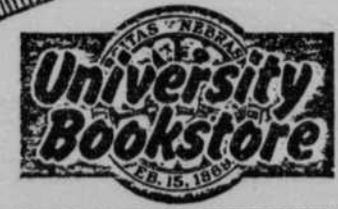


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## Brewing partners plan new drinking experience

By Dionne Searcey  
Staff Reporter

Plans to open a restaurant that sells homemade beer are brewing, local home brewers said.  
Kristina Tiebel, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln microbiology laboratory technician, said plans

to open the pub are still in the developmental stages.  
Such establishments, called brewpubs or micro-breweries that brew beer on site, can be found in cities such as Minneapolis. None currently exist in Lincoln.  
"Setting up a brewery takes a lot of big equipment," Tiebel said. "It's a bigger version of what people do in their kitchen."  
And the small problems that home brewers tackle are intensified, she said, when brewing is done on a large scale.  
Tiebel said equipment designed exclusively to make beer will be used at the pub.  
"That makes it more of an engineering feat," she said.

Materials for the brewing process, which Tiebel called "pretty intense," include machinery that can boil, store and steam the liquid.  
She said the brewing begins in giant stainless steel vats, so that once the process begins, extra grain, yeast and hops can be added.  
Tiebel's partner, Linda Vescio, associate director of Cedar Point Biological Station, said the pub plans to produce four batches — about 896 pints — of beer a week.  
Because the beer will be "micro-brewed," Tiebel said, the ingredients can be changed to make a variety of flavors.  
Vescio said four or five different beers will be offered daily at

the brewpub and other beers will vary according to the season.  
A wheat beer will be available in the summer, she said, and darker beers, such as a porters and stouts, will be brewed in the winter.  
Tiebel said the beer will be unfiltered to give it a "more wholesome taste."  
"It makes it a more pure product and is a more traditional way of making it," she said.  
The yeast that normally is filtered out of beer, she said, contains vitamins and minerals.  
Tiebel said filtering is an "unnecessary and undesirable step that big breweries have to do to ship it."  
Unlike commercial beer, addi-

tives and preservatives will not be added to the home-brew because customers will drink it immediately, she said.  
Tiebel said she and Vescio have been home brewing for about two years.  
"Brewing is great fun. It seems like Lincoln needs something like this."



Ken Johnson/Daily Nebraskan

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