



DIMENSIONAL

BREWING CO.

BY DANNY FAIRCHILD

“Blessed are the beermakers. For they shall be called the children of God.”

—Some drunk guy named Matthew standing in front of a dingy bar urinal for the eighth time that night. He wasn’t an apostle, but it’s gospel, nonetheless

Like every nerd who is worth their rare merch collection, beer nerds are dreamers. Every beer nerd in the history of beer nerdery (which, after a long absence, has only had a significant place in the patchwork of American nerdery for the past few decades) has gotten together with their beer nerd friends in their nerdy little pubs of choice or their own nerdy caves adorned with steins they never drink from and neon signs of beers they despise, and uttered the following words: “We should totally open our own brewery.” The evening then evolves (or devolves) into speculation of where they should put their new brewery, the kind of atmosphere they want to foster, and all the recipes from their homebrew efforts they want to put on tap.

And so it was nothing too extraordinary when beer nerds Tom Rauen, Jeff Burds, and Joe Specht got together over beers and started to talk about the possibility of starting their own brewery. What IS extraordinary is what they created when they followed through. Most of these dreams vanish upon the morrow when sobriety returns. But sometimes... not often, but sometimes...heroes are born. Specht had the idea to join forces with fellow brewers Grant Wulf and Shane Knipper and Dimensional Brewing Co. was soon born. Like...remarkably soon. They may have set a record for making their brewery dream come true, announcing their intention in January 2018 and opening (on time, it should be noted) Nov. 21, 2018.

Co-owned by Rauen and Burds with Specht, Wulf, and Knipper comprising the brewing brain-trust, Dimensional Brewing is a welcome and exciting addition to the burgeoning Dubuque beerscape.

Located as far down Main Street as one can get at 67 Main St. in Dubuque, Dimensional Brewing Co. puts a nice little bookend on Downtown Dubuque with its warehouse-like exterior, industrial-yet-inviting exterior and, of course, the beer.

Here you’ll find a crowd-pleasing AND beer-nerd-pleasing array of beer styles with names that almost belong on album covers. mOATer bOATer. Cool Story Hazel. Builder the Bob. Grandpa’s Coin Purse. Claw Machine. Bill Brewski. Garage Beer. With styles ranging from oatmeal stouts to kölsch. Yes, kölsch. It takes no small amount of chutzpah to bust out a kölsch as one of your first beers.

In fact Garage Beer, the kölsch in question, was THE first beer developed by the Dimensional team. Kölsch is a German style of beer (hence the umlaut) often ignored by small breweries because with the cold conditioning it requires, often times you end up with something that resembles the boring, flavorless lagers the beer plebeians drink. So the fact that Dimensional Brewing Co. STARTED with a kölsch is pretty fearless. Their bravery pays off with a kölsch that is big on flavor with a little bit of sweetness that is welcome and appreciated. And yes, as one can guess, it is called Garage Beer because it was, indeed, a beer developed in a garage.

A lot of Dimensional Brewing Co.’s beer names have a story behind them. Most of these stories should be discovered with a trip to the brewery, but Builder the Bob, along with Garage Beer, tells the story of Dimensional Brewing’s beginnings. When Dimensional decided on 67 Main St. for their premises, they found themselves with a lot of old,

reusable wood with which to create the atmosphere they were going for. So they employed the wizardry of Bob Woodward to take all the wood and build something special. It’s a testament to how well Bob did that Dimensional decided to name this brown ale after him. Drinking Builder the Bob is like drinking 67 Main itself. A rich color with a commitment to comfort and craftsmanship. Bob Builder is a very easy drinking English brown ale while not sacrificing rich flavor. It’s exactly what a brown ale should be.

Like the beer that it inspired, Dimensional Brewing Co. is a beer nerd’s idyll. It’s well lit but not blindingly so with tasteful industrial lighting. The rafters are exposed to show off the building’s history. There’s loft seating which is also used as an area for live music performance space. This feature ingeniously fills Dimensional Brewing with live music while making it not so loud you can’t hear your buddy wax poetic about the beers in his flight. Dimensional Brewing also has plans for an event space and overflow area to seat 50 to 75 people. Any plans Dimensional has for a kitchen to serve food are still a ways off but in the meantime they partner with area food trucks, and the little cul-de-sac at that end of Main is the perfect place for a food truck to park.

Standing off to the side of the bar, you’re likely to see any of the Dimensional team surveying their empire.

Chances are, you’ve dealt with Tom Rauen before. You probably have at least one t-shirt in your wardrobe that he and his crew at Envision Tees printed. Tom also achieved viral status a few years ago with a sweet sixteen bracket of Catholic cardinals last time a new pope was chosen.

Shane Knipper is originally from Manchester, IA. While living in Idaho his friends got him in to homebrewing which led to him moving back to Manchester and working at Franklin Street Brewing Company.

He now brings his brewing expertise to Dimensional Brewing Co. which, judging by the quality of Dimensional's brews, is a great loss to Franklin Street.

Joe Specht got into brewing by being peer pressured by his homebrewer buddies, seven years ago. The first thing he ever brewed was a stout kit he purchased from Jerry at the Brew Haus on Bluff Street. It's no stretch to say that without the Brew Haus, Dubuque would not have the brewing community it currently enjoys. So if you ever see Jerry around, shake that man's hand.

The recipes for the beers on tap at Dimensional Brewing come from the brewing team's own recipes they brought with them as well as recipes developed as a team. Dimensional's recipe development is a lot like songwriting: One brewer will bring in an idea or a recipe, and the others add their own thoughts and feedback until they have something special. This process is known as "dialing it in." In addition to their impressive array of fermenters visible through glass behind the bar, the team also employs smaller fermenters for experimentation. The Dimensional Brewing team is currently planning to experiment with barrel-aging.

Dimensional's fermenters are made as local as they can get them by Crawford Brewing Equipment in the Quad Cities. In fact, Dimensional pulls as local as they can, including the grains they use in their brewing. Hooray for living in the Midwest where there's grains-a-plenty.

The team, their location, and their equipment have come together to build some wonderful brews in addition to the aforementioned Garage Beer and Builder the Bob.

Cool Story Hazel. This beauty is an Oatmeal milk stout, which means that lactose is added for the yeast to

feast upon and ferment this dark, rich, malty stunner. You probably could have guessed this beer also has a wonderful hazelnut flavor to it that complements and combines with the malt to also add a bit of a toasted coconut flavor. It's glorious.

Bill Brewski. The personal favorite of this writer and co-owner Tom Rau. Do you like IPAs? Doesn't matter. You'll like this one. This Imperial IPA is a pretty big beer at 7.9% alcohol by volume. Which will fool you because it's very easy drinking, especially for an IPA. It has a wonderful floral aroma and a very citrusy flavor from the citra, mosaic, and simcoe hops. You'll also get a slight melon flavor that probably comes from the yeast.

Grandpa's Coin Purse. While Bill Brewski is a very citrusy IPA, Grandpa's Coin Purse is all about the bitter for all you hop heads out there. One would not think that Bill Brewski has more IBU (international bitterness units) than Grandpa's Coin Purse, but sure enough Grandpa's Coin Purse comes to the ring weighing in at 42 IBU to Bill Brewski's 60 IBU. Nonetheless despite being very hop forward, Grandpa's Coin Purse is very easy to drink. Though if you don't usually like IPAs, you probably won't like this one. If you like IPAs, this one is a party.

Like any good brewery tasting room, Dimensional also supports the brewing community by hosting tap



takeovers. As of this writing they have two ciders from Jacked UP that definitely need to be tried, especially Apple Pie. It tastes just like that delicious but evil stuff that your skeezy uncle brings to the family holiday party to do shots with and get the whole family sloppy. But...y'know...only 6.8% ABV.

Overall, Dimensional Brewing Company's offerings are some of the most easy drinking beers you'll find. A testament to their brewing talent, and our Dubuque water that consistently ranks among the tastiest in the country. They'll appeal to both hop heads and malt addicts, beer nerds and beer poseurs. The Dimensional Brewing Company team has created something special deep in the cockles of Downtown Dubuque. The Dubuque brewery scene is already thriving and vibrant. And if the addition of Dimensional Brewing Company is anything to go by...we've only just begun to brew. ■

