My Beer Career
Est. 1988
The Formative Years

- German American Family
- Wisconsin Beer Culture
- Drinking Age was 18
- Unofficial Bar Age was 16
- Family of Scratch Cooks
- Family of DIY: Pickles & Soda
6 Yrs Pickles

10 Yrs Bread

WISCONSIN

14 Yrs Rootbeer

19 Yrs Wine
More Background

• Age 19 - Home Winemaker
• Age 25 – Homebrewer
• Age 28 – Attended AHA Conference
  – And Great American Beer Festival
• Age 28 – Siebel Institute
  – And Professional Internship
Brewing Jobs

- Sieben’s River North, Intern
- Golden Gate Brewery, Brewmaster
- Triple Rock Brewery, Head Brewer
- Steelhead Brewing Co, Brewmaster
  –Eugene & 4 California locations
- GWM Malt Innovation Center, Mgr
Golden Gate
Triple Rock
Steelhead
Great Western Malting

Malt Innovation Center
Non-Brewing Jobs & “Jobs”

- 1989-Current: Speaker, Educator, Author
- 2008-2009: Beer Store Clerk – Belmont Station
- 2009-2015: Sales – Great Western Malting Company & Country Malt Group
- 2007-Current: Founder & President – Pink Boots Society
Highlights

• Attending the 1991 GABF as a first time judge, and first time with beers entered, and bringing home 2 gold medals out of the 50 gold medals awarded that year.

• Managing 11 brewers at 5 brewpub breweries in 2 states after spending 4 solid years building and staffing 4 California Steelhead Locations (in addition to Eugene)
Lowlights

• Having to let a brewer go and decommission a brewery in 2002, and then having to do it again in 2003.

• Knowing that the brewery I helped design, the highpoint of my design skills, was going up for auction. And then hearing that the $250,000 brewery sold at auction for $38,000, and I didn’t have the money to buy, move or store it.
Career Things I Didn’t Like

- Getting burned over 11% of my body at my first paid brewing job. Then having to wear compression garments for 2 years and not go barefoot for those 2 years.

- When I was the only female brewer around, and all my male brewer friends were going to Europe and sharing hotel rooms and visiting breweries together. They didn’t invite me, and I didn’t feel it was appropriate to invite myself.
Jobs for Fermentation Grads

- Cellar Staff or Brewer (cold vs. hot side)
- Laboratory, Sensory, or QA/QC Manager
- Distiller or Winemaker
- Brewery Owner
- Think up and down the supply chain:
  - Ingredient or Equipment Sales
  - Brewery Beer Sales Rep
  - Beer Distributor Sales Rep
  - Bar Manager, Specialty Store Buyer, or other Retail Sales
Advice for Future Brewers

• You’ll need more than a fermentation degree:
• If you haven’t homebrewed—Do it.
Advice for Managing Others

• I went from a corporate programmer to not only a brewer, but a manager of others:

• It is more important to be respected than liked.

• Your assistant brewer is not a good choice for best friend or lover.
Why Sales is a Great Job

• Retail Sales
  — Belmont Station Clerk
    • Beer Detective & Beer Matchmaker
      — Fun but IMHO pays worse than brewing.

• Supply-side Sales
  — GWM Account/CMG Territory Mngr
    • Free Consultant & Advisor Street Cred
      — Fun and IMHO pays better than brewing.
More about Sales Jobs

• You are a Resource to your Customers.
• Teaches you to be more gracious.
• Retail Sales
  – No travel. Only pays well if tipped.
• Supply-side Sales
  – 50% Travel expected. Annual bonus.
• Brewery Beer Sales &
• Distributor Beer Sales
  – Smaller travel territory than Supply.
Why Malting is a Great Job

• Blends science & art
• Uses your technical skills
• Calls on creative thinking
• Never boring
• Always a good challenge
• Pays better than brewing
• Just as hard as brewing, but less glory
Why the Beer Industry is Great

• There’s no other industry like it:
  • Camaraderie is the culture.
  • Being “competitive allies” ups everybody’s game. Everybody wins, including consumers.
• Your peers are your friends.
Why Brewing Can Be Overrated

• If you’re a loner type, you probably won’t survive: Go into high tech.
• You may compromise your personal life. (Postpone or never: Marriage & children.)
• You may compromise your health. (Brewing is dangerous. People die.)
• It can be a beer factory job with low pay and no or minimal benefits.
Other Beer Industry Careers

• Look at Pink Boots Society as an Example.
• Jobs not yet mentioned include:
  – Accountant
  – Lawyer
  – Marketing
  – Human Resources
  – Beer Jewelry Artist, Beer Writer, Etc.
Surviving in the Beer Industry

• Sometimes life kicks you in the gut.
• It’s about what you do after that.
• Find a way to stay involved while learning new skills.
• Earn enough to get by, or better.
• Improve your flexibility. Can you do anything other than be a brewer?
Why I like Great Western Malting

• I get to work in the Beer Industry.
• I have a great job that keeps me:
  • Challenged, engaged, relevant & helping others, including Start-ups.
• After 28 years as a beer pro, I don’t need to prove myself with a massively physical brewing job.
• Earning more → increased flexibility.
Why Flexibility is Important

- Two types of Flexibility were mentioned.
- Can you name them?
Why Flexibility is Important

• Two types of Flexibility were mentioned:
  • Skill flexibility
  • Financial flexibility
Why Flexibility is Important

• Flexibility allows you to:
  – Stay in the Beer Industry you love.
  – Geographically mobile: You can afford to move for opportunities.
  – Provides you more career options as you get older.
  – Including owning a brewery if that is your end goal. (Or retirement.)
Thank you to my awesome Employer!
Questions?