

The Art of Wine and Beer Making ... In the Garage

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Bill Rose (left) and his wine making helper getting ready to bottle his homemade wine. Photo Diane Claytor

My Super Bowl is when I give my friends a bottle and they tell me it's one of the best wines they've ever had," he noted.

Rose is a member of the Contra Costa Wine Group, a 35-year-old organization of "home winemakers dedicated to making and drinking good wine." The group conducts a very professional and popular wine competition every year – last year there were 110 entries – and judges include sommeliers, winery owners, wine retailers and restaurateurs. Rose has won four blue ribbons over the last eight years, an accomplishment of which he's very proud.

Although Lafayette's Feddersen grew up in Napa, worked in wineries, took winemaking classes and enjoys a good glass of wine, he finds it much more satisfying to make beer. "It's amazing how many people around here make their own beer,"

Feddersen said. "I've learned that several neighbors and even one of the Lafayette City Council members are home brewers." Bruzzone had long been interested in learning how to make beer. When he met Feddersen at a Lafayette Rotary gathering and tasted Feddersen's home brew, Bruzzone knew he had found his teacher. The two have been brewing together for just over a year. Bruzzone says Feddersen, who has been making beer since his college days, is an excellent teacher.

Unlike wine, which, depending on the grape and style, can take anywhere from six months to three years before you have a drinkable product, it can take as little as three weeks from start to finish to get an excellent bottle of beer, Feddersen explained.

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Rose, and his wife, Beverly, getting ready to crush grapes.

Photo provided