**From my April 9, 2014 Facebook Post:**

Here is the full text of the speech I gave at the CBC today. I had to shorten it, but wanted you to see the full version:

Thank you Dick, and all of you for this. I’m very honored. This feels like receiving an Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement. As such there are a few people who I would like to thank for helping me, and for believing in me during my 26 year career.

First, thank you to Charlie Papazian and the Brewers Association. When I attended the 1988 National Homebrewers Conference and Great American Beer Festival; what I saw there, who I met, and what I learned, inspired me to go Pro.

Thank you to the instructors and my classmates at the Siebel Institute, who encouraged me to become a leader, and voted me in as Siebel’s first woman class president in 1988.

Thank you to Reid Martin of Triple Rock, who believed in me, and who hired me as Head Brewer when I was recovering from 3rd degree burns and skin grafts from my previous brewing job.

Thank you to my brewing peers, as we were mentors to each other, including Dick Cantwell, Fal Allen, Grant Johnston, Ed Tringali, John Harris, and many others.

Thank you to Phil Moeller, for recommending me to be a Great American Beer Festival judge in 1991.

Thank you to Tom Sobieski, now deceased, who hired me as Brewmaster for Steelhead, a job which gave me the opportunity to brew the beers that made me a 1990’s beer rock star.

Thank you to my sister, Heidi Van Sickle, who has worked every GABF with me since 1991, by pouring beer at our Steelhead booth, fetching food for me, and helping me with Pink Boots meetings and other PBS work.

Thank you to my husband, fellow Brewmaster Jon Graber, for his friendship, his love, his passion for beer, and mostly his patience, especially when I take days and weeks out of our life together to work on Pink Boots Society’s needs.

Thank you to Laura Ulrich, Whitney Thompson, Jamie Martin Baertsch, Dee Dee Germain, and the other young women I met on my Road Brewer trip in 2007; who inspired me to start Pink Boots Society.

Thank you to the current and past volunteers of Pink Boots Society, especially Anita Lum, Laura Ulrich, Megan Parisi, Emily Engdahl, Sibyl Perkins, Denise Ratfield, Becky Molm, and Kris McDowell. You ladies rock, and you sure make my journey so much more fun! If I left anybody off that list, it was by accident as the work of all PBS volunteers is critical to its success.

Thank you to the donors who have funded Pink Boots Society, especially my employer, Country Malt Group, who is our largest cumulative donor to date.

And last of all, thank you to the members and non-members of PBS, who have organized and hosted Pink Boots fundraising events. Your enthusiasm and passion are worth as much as the money you’ve raised.

Pink Boots Society will be 7 years old in June. We have over 1,000 registered members worldwide, and we have awarded 7 scholarships so far. We will award approximately 9 scholarships this year, and we are shooting for 12 scholarships next year.

We have an amazing website, a great online presence, a dedicated team of volunteers, a lot of respect from the industry, and a high demand for services from our US and International members.

We host 2 national meetings and 1 educational seminar each year, along with multiple chapter meetings in several countries. Next year we will host our first Women in Beer Leadership Conference on Saturday April 18th, the day after the CBC in Portland ends.

I believe Pink Boots Society has helped to improve the ability of our industry to attract and retain women employees. I believe it has helped to balance the gender ratio in this room, and has brought renewed interest and media attention to craft beer in general.

I also believe its members, as positive beer role models, have inspired a generation of young women to choose beer over wine as their adult beverage of choice. I believe that women consumers will play a role in expanding our industry, and their purchase choices will be critical to selling the beer created through the exponential growth of breweries that we have seen. And I believe Pink Boots Society is linked with all of that.

Pink Boots Society is also virtually unfunded. It has been a long and often difficult struggle. We have mostly been funded by the equivalent of bake sales. 2014 is a critical year for Pink Boots Society: we have to fund it and hire a part-time Executive Director, and we need your help to do it.

If you have a smart phone on you, I ask you to take it out right now. Please send an email to donate@pinkbootssociety.org, and put the dollar value of your donation in the subject or body of the email. We will send you a PayPal invoice.

Alternatively, please go to www.pinkbootssociety.org and click on the donate button on the home page.

Pink Boots Society has brought a lot to our industry. Please help it survive this watershed moment, and become a sustainable organization, for the long term benefit of us all.

And for all the women out there, I hope you will join us at our Pink Boots Society meeting on Thursday April 10th at 10:30 am in Mile High Ballroom 1.

Thank you.

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