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Ale to Scott! Guy with head for beer chasing dream job

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You probably have not heard of Scott Kerkmans, but you will if he is chosen King of Guys.

That won't be his official title. Should he be the Chosen One (a 25 percent chance), his official title will be Chief Beer Officer, which effectively makes him King of Guys.

Gentlemen, start your envy.

Kerkmans, 27, of Phoenix, is one of four finalists for CBO for the Four Points by Sheraton hotel chain. The winner will be, according to the lager-headed folks at Four Points, the only Chief Beer Officer in the nation. Maybe even the world. Well, at least the only CBO they know of.

"We've checked, and we're pretty sure this is the first CBO ever," said Sue Swider, a Four Points senior vice president.

Kerkmans already has a pretty sweet job. He is director of beer content for *Draft*, a Phoenix magazine dedicated to the beer lifestyle. He's also a professional beer judge, a job so appealing you'd swear it didn't exist.

When he learned that Four Points was looking for someone to assist with its Best Brews program - tasting and choosing the ales and lagers that would be served in its hotels - Kerkmans knew it was just about the only job in beer he could consider a promotion.

"As soon as I heard about it, I was pretty eager to apply," Kerkmans said. "It's fairly obvious why I would jump at the opportunity."

The only surprise is that Four Points received about 7,200 applicants, far short of the roughly 30 million or so guys who would swear they are qualified.

Kerkmans, however, really is. He's brewed beer as an amateur (at home) and professional (at brew pubs in New Mexico and Alaska). He has reviewed hundreds of beers for *Draft*

and is a certified beer judge. He knows that there are more than 1,400 craft brewers in the U.S., that each regularly produces three to four beers in addition to a few seasonal ales, and that all that beer adds up to a full-time job for a guy who drinks beer for a living.

His home decor includes beer barrels. Take that, you weekend beer warriors who consider yourselves worthy.

"I really enjoy beer, all types of beer," Kerkmans said. "Being a Chief Beer Officer is such an enviable job. That's why I'm taking it so seriously."

Kerkmans was in New York last week interviewing for the job, which is to be largely ceremonial, according to Swider.

The response was so great, however, that plans are in the works to make it a real job, with perks and compensation. Details are being worked out, Swider said.

The public can vote for one of the finalists at fourpoints.com/cbo. Voting ends Friday.

The Chief Beer Officer likely will be named next week, the hiring based on qualifications, the interview and the public vote, Swider said.

If it had been based on liking beer - really, really liking beer - millions would have had a shot. But there can be only one King of Guys. For the rest, consider yourselves Dukes of Ale.

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