



Westside Wine Club

April 2008

Next Meeting: April 16th, 2008 at 7 p.m.
Place: Oak Knoll Winery
Subject: Taste and Judge Other Reds
Snacks: Gene Lynard
Website: <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/>

Taste and Judge Other Reds

Bring 2 bottles of red wine to be judged and two glasses. Other Reds are wines that are not Pinot Noir or Bordeaux varietals. Other Reds include: Syrah, Sangiovese, Marechal Foch, Tempranillo, Grenache, Barbera, Mourvedre, Zinfandel and more.

Craig Bush will lead the tasting, and we will be voting on the wines for awards. (See page 2 for more information on the awards.)

New! Club Score Sheets

Please print your own club tasting score sheets prior to coming to the meeting. Go to <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/docs/ScoresheetWSWC.pdf>, which is on the Current news page of our website, and print out enough sheets to judge 10 wines.

Reminder- Meetings begin at 7pm and end by 9pm. If you can get there a little early to help set up, please do, and be ready to put away chairs and tables at the end.



March Meeting

President Don Robinson opened the meeting and name tags were distributed. There will be permanent tags for members at the next meeting. There have been too many people to go around the room and introduce ourselves during the meeting, so come a little early and make sure to introduce yourselves to each other.

Craig and Mindy Bush volunteered to chair the September Gala, pending budget. Mary Schaar volunteered to chair the July picnic, if we can come up with a location and let her know what we would like to do.

Raine and Francois Serrou volunteered to bring May snacks. Gene Lynard will bring snacks for April.

Mike Smolak announced tours of Chemeketa Viticulture Center in May and Sokol Blosser in July (details page 3). There may be a speaker from Sokol Blosser at the June meeting.

A meeting with Barney Watson is still to be scheduled.

2008 Calendar

January 16th

Plan for the year

February 20th

Wine Faults and Flaws

March 19th

Bordeaux tasting

April 16th

Other Reds tasting

May 10th

Chemeketa Tour

May 21st

Rick Mafit
of Mystic Wines

June 18th

Speaker?

July 13th

Sokol Blosser Tour

August 20th

Other Whites

September 17th

Awards Gala!

October 15th

Pinot Noir tasting

November 19th

Pinot Gris / Viognier

December 17th

Speaker?

January 2009

Holiday Party



New! WSWC group web page

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Westsidewineclub/>

We now have a web page to post comments and questions for members only. You will be receiving an invitation in the mail today, just follow the instructions to register. You have the option of getting messages to your email daily or just reading them on the site. There are poll, calendar and photo functions available. The usual rules for common courtesy and brevity apply.

Some Other Reds

Syrah- deep red with a good deal of blue. Violets, black pepper, dark fruits, leather, sometimes smoke, meat (particularly bacon), and a white pepper finish.

Zinfandel- dark purple with hints of strawberry, plum, raisin, spice, leather, and tar. Sometimes described as being jammy or chewy.

Marechal Foch- vibrant, deep purple color, with a light-medium structure and dark berry fruit characteristics. Some find similarities to Burgundy Pinot Noir as it ages.

Tempranillo -garnet-hued, with flavors of tea, brown sugar and vanilla. Sometimes redolent of plums, tobacco and cassis, along with very dark color and substantial tannins.

Sangiovese - delicate and expressive. Dark red fruits, supple texture and medium-to full-bodied spice, raspberry, cherry and anise flavors.

Grenache - brilliant red colors, with flavors of currant, cherry, and raisin, and notes of black pepper, mint, and licorice.

Barbera- very dark berry flavors, including blackberry, black currant, raisin, and prune, as well as hints of clove, nutmeg, black pepper, and smoke.

March meeting (continued)

Mike Fredd is the Chair of Group Purchases for **Chandler Reach Vineyard** near Prosser in Benton county. CRV has Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Merlot and Sangiovese available. There will be separate pick-ups for each type of these grapes. Mike recommends visiting their tasting room to learn more about making wine with their grapes. **Contact Mike Fredd at split_cane@netzero.net by this Saturday, April 5**, if you want CRV grapes.

Craig Bush, Chair of Group Purchases for **Del Rio Vineyard** in Southern Oregon, said Del Rio grapes are now being used by their own winery, but that there are now grapes available for WSWC members. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Malbec, Sangiovese, Early Muscat, Pinot 777, and Pinot 667 can only be purchased in totes, which hold 800-900 pounds, and we need a minimum of two totes for a variety. **Contact Craig at pnoir1@verizon.net by April 25** to connect with other members and share a tote.

Other vineyards were considered for group buys, including Canoe Ridge in Horse Heaven Hill AVA and Destiny Ridge near Seven Hills Vineyard.

There was a question about the lack of a Pinot Noir group buy. Since Pinot is terroir-reflective, many of the best grapes are grown in small vineyards and aren't available to groups. We live amongst some of the best Pinot sources and most winemakers have particular vineyard they prefer to use. There may be interest in a group buy if a source is found that would be acceptable.

We tasted and voted on 14 Bordeaux varietals, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec Petit Verdot and blends. There was group interest in some of the vineyards represented by the wines. There was animated discussion and a show of hands to vote on the wines to receive No Ribbon, a Bronze, Silver or Gold.

WSWC Awards!

Awards will be announced at the September WSWC Awards Gala. Winners will be contacted before then and asked to bring their wine for tasting at the gala, but the results will be kept secret until the ceremony in September.

If you brought wine to the last tasting and have not yet responded as to what number it was, please do so now, to craigb@peterscopc.com.

Welcome new members

Dana Blizzard
Elissa Fenske
Juliet Cardinal

Thanks, Sammy!

Sammy Nachimuthu took the photos in this issue of the newsletter.



Tasting Notes

By Craig Bush, WSWC Tasting Chairman

The general feedback regarding our last tasting and the format has been fairly positive. To that end, as a group, I think we all need to applaud ourselves for our willingness to try something a little different; to step out of our “comfort” areas, and to be willing participants in the tasting process. As we all know, one’s individual taste is a very subjective area in both winemaking and enjoyment.

At this time, we have chosen to focus our tastings toward using our palates, eyes and noses to determine general wine characteristics, i.e. aroma, bouquet, mouth feel, flaws, etc. By doing this, we are developing our sensory apparatus to recognize these items in wines. We are also (hopefully) broadening our wine “vocabulary” to attach descriptors to our sensory readings.

As we develop and refine our tasting skills, another focus we will be venturing into will be to use these skills to focus on particular varietals and varietal characters – which will include winemaking styles and geographic/terroir issues.

As such, in our first tasting, we did not reveal either the particular varietal or age of the wine so as not to prejudice our “readings”. While personally I am a fan of these “double-blind” types of tastings, if we as a group decide we want to know varietal and age, then that is fine with the tasting committee and we will accommodate that request at our next tasting.

Just a few other things to ensure a timely tasting:

- 1.) Please have your wines to taste at the meeting no later than 6:55 pm. Wines brought in after that time will be held in reserve to taste as time allows.
- 2.) No commercial wines
- 3.) Be sure to bring two bottles of the wine to be tasted.

In Vino Veritas
Craig Bush



Tours Information

Tour 1: Chemeketa CC, 10:00 AM to noon Saturday May 10 – Free to members
Please RSVP by May 1 to Mary Schaer at marycschaer@verizon.net

The Northwest Viticulture provides continuing education and degree programs in all aspects of viticulture and enology - from the growing of the grape to selling of the wine. The center, with its vineyards planted to cool climate varieties and a producing commercial-sized winery, provides a unique opportunity for instruction and practical, hands-on training and experience in the basic knowledge and technical skills required for successful employment in a variety of areas within the wine grape industry.

2008 will be the first time that the Northwest Viticulture Center will be running the Oregon State Fair Wine Competition.

Tour 2: Sokol Blosser Winery and Vineyard
11 AM Sunday July 13, \$10/person Tasting Fee

Sokol Blosser estate vineyards are farmed organically and received full USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) organic certification in 2005 from Oregon Tilth. They have been certified "green" by LIVE (Low Input Viticulture and Enology, an international certification). Susan Sokol Blosser has written a book called *At Home in the Vineyard: Cultivating a Winery, an Industry, and a Life*. We will be tasting their award-winning wine while touring the vineyard and cellar.

Please RSVP to Mary Schaer at marycschaer@verizon.net

Newsletter Submissions

If you have a piece you wrote and would like to share in the newsletter, please send it to:
Luna Hauser
WSWC Secretary
HauserWine@comcast.net



President's Musings



Rick Mafit of Mystic Wines will be speaking on TA, PH and SO₂ on May 21st at the WSWC. He will also bring some of his wine for a mini-tasting.

Grape Radio- listen at <http://www.graperadio.com>
Grape Radio is currently featuring Scott Paul Wines, a boutique winery dedicated to producing ultra-premium Pinot Noirs from the Willamette Valley of Oregon. There is a possibility that proprietor and winemaker Scott Paul Wright will invite the WSWC to tour his winery in Carleton.

Hello WSWC Members!

The calendar indicates spring but the return in earnest of a wintry mix of snow, sleet and hail these past couple of weeks has been difficult for all. But several things are certain: over-priced wines from Domaine Serene, death, taxes and warmer weather during springtime!

Thanks to Craig Bush for heading up the Bordeaux tasting in March. The new "voting for medals" format was enthusiastically received by the nearly 50 tasting members present. Craig persevered and got us through the 14 wines, but with the large number of tasters, we ran over a bit. I understand that experienced wine judges are able to taste and evaluate a wine in less than a minute. I don't know how they do it, but perhaps we will find ways to pick up the pace. In fact, I found I started using the scoring sheet less formally and I honestly felt I knew after several swigs if it were a medal winner or not. Although, after swigging and judging...and swigging and judging...through all 14, perhaps near the end, my ability to score soundly was simply not possible!

Is it possible to become too critical as a taster? As winemakers who are always in search of remedies for flaws, are we our own toughest critics? And while judging, are we influenced too much by those around us? When voting for wines at our last tasting, the votes seemed to spread into blocks. Those sitting together tended to vote similarly. We even see judging bias with experienced panels. One judge is more dominant and the rest follow. Perhaps this is just human nature that needs to be factored somehow?

Is it possible to become a better taster and not realize it? I used to think a bottle of Three Buck Chuck (a.k.a. the Charles Shaw label) wine at a mere \$2.99 was such a deal—even though it used to be \$1.99. It still seemed like it was an inexpensive wine that wasn't too bad. Recently while racking my Chandler Reach Cabernet Sauvignon, I needed about one bottle to top off my last five gallon carboy. I didn't want to use an expensive label, so I reached for a 2005 Three Buck Chuck Cab Sauv "someone" had left after a party. Of course, I sampled it before pouring it in. Much to my surprise, it took me only a second to decide, "No way was I going to contaminate my wine with this stuff!" Old adage: Yes, you *do* get what you pay for. And, just perhaps, I have become a better taster?

Before I forget, KUDOS to the 14 wine entries at our Bordeaux tasting. Only two submissions were out of favor, while a whopping 12 were deemed very good wines. Keep up the good winemaking!

Cheers,

Don Robinson
President, Westside Wine Club
971-219-1553



Westside Winemakers Club

Leadership Team – 2008

President: **Don Robinson** don_robinson_pdx@yahoo.com 971-219-1553

- Set agenda for the year
- Establish leadership team
- Assure that objectives for the year are met
- Set up and run meetings

Treasurer: **Bill Spiller** nrac@msn.com

- Collect dues and fees
- Pay bills

Webmaster: **David Ladd**

Web Content Editor: **Rick Kipper**

Secretary: **Luna Hauser** Hauserwine@comcast.net

- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Monthly newsletter
- Keep updated list of members

Chairs of Group Purchases

The chairperson makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute.

- Chandler Reach Vineyard – **Mike Fredd** Split_cane@netzero.net
- Del Rio Vineyard – **Craig Bush** pnoir1@verizon.net
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chairwoman of Competitions: **Miriam Schnepf**

- Work with Washington County Fair staff
- Encourage club participation in County Fair
- President will be the contact for the Oregon State Fair.

Chairperson of Education: **Don Robinson** don_robinson_pdx@yahoo.com

- Arranges for speakers for our meetings

Chairs for Tastings: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@verizon.net
and **Jim Merdink** james_merdink@yahoo.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chairs of Winery Tours: **Mike Smolak** SmolakM@DimensionResources.com and **Mary Schaer**

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)
- Winery Tour 1 – **Open**
- Winery Tour 2 – **Open**
- Winery Tour 3 with picnic lunch - **Open**

Chairs for Social Events: **Open**

- Summer picnic – **Mary Schaer**
- Awards Gala – **Craig and Mindy Bush** pnoir1@verizon.net
- Holiday Party – **Open**