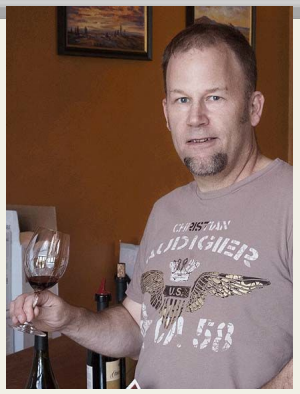
West Side Wine Club

August 2012

President's Musing's



A muse for August.

Our summer continues to be perfect. The early spring and moderate temperatures are moving us toward a great harvest. But as they say "The grapes are made in the spring, the wine is made in the fall". A nice long fall will produce great flavors. Eastern Washington is right on target as well.

But while you're waiting for the grapes to ripen, thinking about a new barrel is always a great way to pass the time. The only problem is that if you are thinking of a barrel this fall you should be ordering them now. Typically they send the barrels via a container which arrives in September or October.

This year we have had two great formats to learn about barrels. In one, Nicholas Keeler from Allary came to our meeting and talked about barrels while showing us how barrels affect wine. At our last tour, Rick DeFarrari showed us how barrels are made.

This looks to be a great pinot year for the cooler Willamette Valley vineyards. It has been a tough hoe the last couple of years. This year less expensive vineyards can produce decent fruit. So if you are planning on making pinot this year, most vineyards will produce nice ripe fruit. A much easier year….

It has been a great year with great guests, tours, tastings and fun events. It is not too early to think about how you would like to be more involved in our organization. Elections will be coming up a little later in the year. This is a great time to start thinking of being involved. Don't be shy, this organization can only benefit by your involvement.

But you still have time to enjoy our warm August. Even as we speak, we get less sun and fall is just around the corner……

Drink Responsibly. Drive Responsibly.

Scheduled Meetings

January 18, 2012
Crush Talk / 2012 Plans

January 21, 2012
Holiday Party Gala

February 15, 2012
Bordeaux Tasting

March 21, 2012
Aroma Kit / Faults & Flaws

April 18, 2012
2011 Barrel / carboy sample tasting

May 12, 2012
Tour, Johan Vineyards & Winery

May 16, 2012
Speaker, Nicholas Keeler, American Sales Manager Tonnellerie Allary barrels

June 20, 2012
Speaker, Mike Hallock from Carabella Winery

July 22, 2012
Annual Picnic, Oak Knoll

August 15, 2012
Other Whites Tasting

September 19, 2012
Other Reds Tasting

October 17, 2012
Pinot Noir Tasting

November 21, 2012
Pinot Gris/Viognier Tasting

December 5, 2012
Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections

Information & Trivia

The new 2012 Scott Fermentation Handbook is now available for download as a PDF file at: http://www.scottlab.com/pdf/2012ScottLabsHandbook.pdf

"A fool and his money are soon elected." — Will Rogers

A fly was very close to being called a land, because that's what it does half the time.

The voices in my head may not be real, but they have some good ideas!

Some people hear voices. Some see invisible people. Others have no imagination whatsoever.

Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.

Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of the pool and throw them fish.

I live in my own little world. But it's OK. They know me here.

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 15 at 7:00 p.m.
Agenda : Member wines tasting and critique – Other whites. This includes all white varietals except for Pinot Gris or viognier. It also includes rose, sparkling and fruit wines & mead.
Snacks: This will be another potluck; bring a snack to share.
Place: At Oak Knoll Winery
1.) Please bring a glass for tasting wines.
2.) Waivers will be present at the meeting. If you have not previously signed a waiver for, please do so at the meeting.
3.) The meeting will begin at 7pm and end by 9pm. If you can get there a little early to help set up, please help to put away chairs and tables at the end.
WSWC Website: http://www.westsidewineclub.com/
Message Board: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Westsidewineclub/

No July meeting minutes – No minutes

Annual 2012 summer picnic –

The WSWC picnic was held on Sunday, July 22 on the lawn at Oak Knoll Winery. Thanks go out to Marj Vuylsteke for being our host once again. Everyone brought delicious side dishes and desserts to go along with Jack Seigendall's grilled salmon, Craig & Mindy's smoked pulled pork, Bill & Marilyn Brown's succulent ribs, Ken & Barb Stinger's tender chicken and Kathleen High's delicious vegetarian French galette with home made goat cheese.
Our members seem to be making better & better wines the last several years and it was very evident at the picnic. There were so many good wines, I couldn't come close to tasting them all. Unfortunately, no one thought to bring A camera so there are no pictures.
The afternoon was warm and pleasant and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

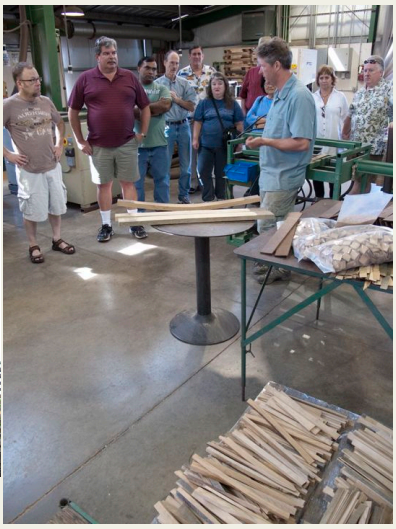
American Wine Society National Conference

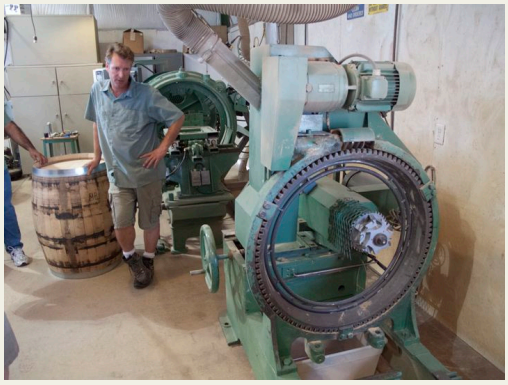
If anyone is considering attending the American Wine Society annual National Conference being **here in Portland** in November, registration opened on August 5th. Getting you registration in early is important if you want to attend seminar sessions. Their website is:
http://www.americanwinesociety.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=3

Oregon Barrel Works

Old world tradition, new world innovation

François Frères
TONNELLERIE





On Saturday July 28 the club toured Oregon Barrel Works in McMinnville. The owner, Rick DeFerrari conducted the tour personally. Rick was a graduate of Oregon State University in Forestry Management and found himself interested in barrels. Rick has been involved in cooperage for the past 17 years. Rick's presentation covered forests in France and the differences between them. He told us how, in France, the wood for barrels is highly regulated and that logs must be bought from brokers. His French wood is then split and air dried for 3 years before being shipped to his shop. Rick explained and demonstrated the equipment used in cutting the staves and barrel heads. Most of the machinery at Oregon Barrel Works dates back to the 1920's and was shipped here from France. His newest piece of equipment was built in the1960's. Rick showed us how the bevel is cut on the barrel staves. It was fascinating to see all the steps in the process of barrel making. The second part of the tour took place in Carlton. The emphasis was to visit the Southern Oregon winery tasting rooms along Main Street. Club members were free to have lunch and visit the tasting rooms at their leisure. This was another successful tour by our group.

Jack Seigendall

Competition Results

WSWC members did very well in this years **Oregon State Fair Amateur Wine Competition**. Special congratulations to Scott Nelson for **Best of Show in the red category**.

- **Best of Show:**
- Best in Show (Red Wine): 2009 Primitivo – Scott Nelson
- **Gold:**
- 2010 Pinot Noir – Don Robinson & Craig Bush
- 2009 Primitivo – Scott Nelson
- **Silver:**
- 2011 Viognier – Jonathan Kahrs
- 2011 Rose – Jonathan Kahrs
- 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon – Scott Nelson
- 2010 Merlot – William Brown
- 2008 Sangiovese – Barb Thomson
- 2010 Red Blend (1/3 each each Grenache, Syrah & Merlot + Touch of Roussane) – Jonathan Kahrs
- **Bronze:**
- 2009 Chardonnay – Scott Nelson
- 2010 Pinot Noir – Jonathan Kahrs
- 2009 Zinfandel – Scott Nelson
- 2009 Barbera – Scott Nelson
- 2009 & 2010 Red Blend – Don Robinson & Jon Kahrs

One member entered the **Winemaker Magazine Amateur Competition** and struck gold.

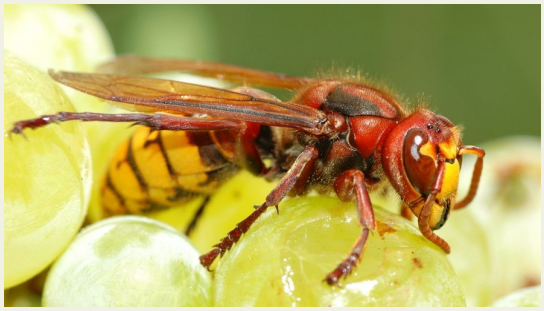
- **Gold:**
- 2010 Cabernet Franc – Kenneth Stinger

Editor: Club member Paul Rogers submitted this interesting tidbit.

Thank the simple wasp for that complex glass of wine

By Elizabeth Shogran
The European hornet, or *vespa crabro*, helps make wine by kick starting the fermentation process while the grapes are still on the vine.

The next time you take a sip of your favorite wine, you might want to make your first toast to hornets. Or, more precisely, European hornets and paper wasps.
That's because those big scary flying insects whose stings can be especially painful may be the secret to the wonderful complex aroma and flavor of wine. "Wasps are indeed one of wine lovers' best friends," says Duccio Cavalieria professor of microbiology at the University of Florence in Italy.
Cavalieri and his colleagues discovered that these hornets and wasps bite the grapes and help start the fermentation while grapes are still on the vines. They do that by spreading a yeast called Saccharomyces Cerevisiae — commonly known as brewer's yeast and responsible for wine, beer and bread fermentation — in their guts. When the wasps bite into the fruit, they leave some of that yeast behind.
Cavalieri says one of the reasons the discovery is so exciting for him is that it's an example of just how connected the natural world is and how humans rely on this interconnection in ways we simply cannot perceive.
"It's important because it's telling to me it's crucial to look at conservation and the study of biodiversity," says Cavalieri, one of the authors who published his findings in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* recently.
"Everything is linked," he adds.
Of course, Cavalieri says, winemakers can add yeast later. But wines would not taste the same without wasps. Different yeasts applied at different times have a big impact on flavors. The wasps also introduce other microorganisms to the grapes, which add flavors to the wine.
"One of the most beautiful things of wine is the fact that basically it's complex; it's made of several parts and it communicates to several parts of your brain," he says, which could be lost without the wasps and hornets.
Cavalieri comes by his interest in wine naturally. He's from a family of winemakers in the Chianti region of Italy. He first had the inkling of hornets' special role when he saw them piercing the skin of grapes during field research in the region 15 years ago.
Insects have long helped out with wine and other crops, we just didn't know why. At least since the time of the ancient Romans, winemakers have planted flowers near their vines to lure certain insects.
The researchers were able to unwrap the mystery of the insects' role by using DNA sequencing techniques to analyze the genes of the yeast, then tracing them to the guts of wasps. They even did a lab experiment to see if hornets could pass the yeast to their offspring, and they did.
Other insects and birds also carry the yeast, Cavalieri says. But hornets seem to play a special role because they both harbor the yeast over winters and can pass them along to their offspring.
You can imagine a vineyard might be interested in pest control — but perhaps it should be careful about which bugs it considers pests.
Evolutionary biologist Anne Pringle of Harvard, who was not involved in the study, says the findings have two strong messages: Great wines need bugs and people still know almost nothing about ecology.
"If you'd like to have your grapes fermented by local yeasts, which I think many vineyards do, then you have to have these insects around," she says.



Wild yeasts and natural fermentation

In winemaking, the term "wild yeast" has multiple meanings. In its most basic context, it refers to yeast that has not be introduced to the must by intentional inoculation of a cultured strain. Instead, these "wild yeast" often come into contact with the must through their presence on harvest equipment, transport bins, the surface winemaking equipment and as part of the natural flora of a winery. Very often these are strains of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* that has taken residence in these places over the years, sometimes being previously introduced by inoculation of prior vintages. In this context, these wild yeast are often referred to as **ambient**, **indigenous** or **natural** yeast as opposed to **inoculated**, **selected** or **cultured yeast**. Wineries that often solely rely on these "in-house" strains will sometimes market their wines as being the product of wild or *natural fermentations*.

Another use of the term "wild yeast" refers to the non-*Saccharomyces* genera of yeast that are present in the vineyard, on the surface of grapevines and of the grapes themselves. Anywhere from 160 to 100,000 colony forming units of wild yeast per berry could exist in a typical vineyard. These yeast can be carried by air currents, birds and insects through the vineyard and even into the winery (such as by fruit flies). The most common wild yeasts found in the vineyard are from the *genera Kloeckera, Candida and Pichia* with the species *Kloeckera apiculata* being the most dominant species by far] *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, itself, is actually quite rarely found in the vineyard or on the surface freshly harvested wine grapes unless the winery frequently reintroduced winery waste (such as lees and pomace) into the vineyard.

Unlike the "ambient" *Saccharomyces* wild yeast, these genera of wild yeast have very low tolerance to both alcohol and sulfur dioxide. They are capable of starting a fermentation and often begin this process as early as the harvest bin when clusters of grapes get slightly crushed under their own weight. Some winemakers will try to "knock out" these yeast with doses of sulfur dioxide, most often at the crusher before the grapes are pressed or allowed to macerate with skin contact. Other winemakers may allow the wild yeast to continue fermenting until they succumb to the toxicity of the alcohol they produce which is often between 3-5% alcohol by volume and then letting either inoculated or "ambient" *Saccharomyces* strains finish the fermentation.

The use of both "ambient" and non-*Saccharomyces* wild yeast carries both potential benefits and risk. Some winemakers feel that the use of resident/indigenous yeast helps contribute to the unique expression of terrior in the wine. In wine regions such as Bordeaux classified and highly regarded estates will often tout the quality of their resident "chateau" strains. To this extent, wineries will often take the left over pomace and lees from winemaking and return them to the vineyard to be used as compost in order to encourage the sustained presence of favorable strains. But compared to inoculated yeast, these ambient yeast hold the risk of having a more unpredictable fermentation. Not only could this unpredictability include the presence of off-flavors/ aromas and higher volatile acidity but also the potential for a stuck fermentation if the indigenous yeast strains are not vigorous enough to fully convert all the sugars.

It is virtually inevitable that non-*Saccharomyces* wild yeast will have a role in beginning the fermentation of virtually every wine but for the wineries that choose to allow these yeast to continue fermenting versus minimizing their influence do so with the intent of enhancing complexity through bio-diversity. While these non-*Saccharomyces* ferment glucose and fructose into alcohol, they also have the potential to create other intermediates that could influence the aroma and flavor profile of the wine. Some of these intermediates could be positive, such as phenyl ethanol, which can impart a rose-like aroma. However, as with ambient yeast, the products of these yeast can be very unpredictable—especially in terms of the types of flavors and aromas that these yeast can produce.

Inoculated yeast

When winemakers select a cultured yeast strain it largely done because the winemaker wants a predictable fermentation taken to completion by a strain that has a track record of dependability. Among the particulars considerations that are often important to winemakers is a yeast's tendency to:

- Quickly begin fermentation, out competing other "wild yeast" for nutrients in the must.
- Completely utilize all fermentable sugars with a predictable sugar-to-alcohol conversion rate.
- Have an alcohol tolerance up to 15% or even higher depending on the winemaking style.
- Have a high sulfur dioxide tolerance but low production of sulfur compounds such as hydrogen sulfide or Dimethyl sulfide.
- Produce a minimum amount of residual pyruvate, acetic acid and acetaldehide.
- Produce minimum foaming during fermentation which may create difficulties for cap management during Maceration or cause bungs to pop out during barrel fermentation.
- Have high levels of flocculation and lees compaction that makes racking, fining and filtering of the wine easier.

Inoculated (or *pure cultured*) yeast are strains of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* that have been identified and plated from wineries across the world (including notable producers from well known wine regions such as Bordeaux, Burgundy, Napa Valley and the Barossa Valley). These strains are tested in laboratories to determine a strain's vigor, sulfur dioxide and alcohol tolerance, production levels of acetic acid and sulfur compounds, ability to re-ferment (positive for sparkling wine but a negative attribute for sweet late harvest wines), development of surface film on the wine (positive for some Sherry styles but a negative attribute for many other wines), enhancement of a wine's color or certain varietal characteristics by enzymes in the yeast cells and other metabolic products produced by the yeast, foaming and flocculation tendencies, yeasticidal properties (a trait known as ”Killer yeast") and tolerance for nutritional deficiencies in a must that may lead to a stuck fermentation.

Stuck Fermentation

Have you ever started a wine - and fermentation seems to start normally enough - but all of a sudden, the signs of fermentation (bubbles in your airlock, or falling Specific Gravity, for example) seem to slow down or stop too soon? If so, you've experienced what's known as a "stuck fermentation."

Definition

By definition, a stuck fermentation is a fermentation that has stopped before all the available sugar in the wine has been converted to alcohol and CO_2. Were you to give up on the wine at this point, it would taste semi-sweet and pretty bad. That would be a shame, and what's more, a waste of good juice!

How did this situation occur? More importantly, what can you do to restart fermentation and salvage your wine?

Is It Really Stuck?

Before we dive into these questions, we should first make sure that our wine is stuck. Ask yourself these questions before you start dumping yeasts, additives, and chemicals willy-nilly into your carboy:

1. What is the SG (specific gravity) of your wine? Do you have proof that the SG is no longer falling, or is tremendously sluggish?
2. Do you have a good airtight seal at your airlock? Is your airlock firmly seated in the bung, and is the bung securely seated in the mouth of the carboy? If not, this might explain why you don't see bubbles in your airlock.
3. Are you fermenting in hot weather or in a hot area? Yeast works faster under higher (yet tolerable) temperatures, so your wine may actually be finished fermenting before you realize it.

Luckily, stuck fermentations don't occur very often - but when they do, it's important to make corrections right away and get the fermentation going again.

Causes of Stuck Fermentations

More than likely, the cause of a stuck fermentation centers around the wine yeast. Either something in the wine environment is preventing the yeast from working properly, or there is a problem with the yeast itself.

Even if the proper yeast is used, most experienced vintners know that wine yeast is pretty particular when it comes to fermenting wine to dryness - the proper environmental conditions (such as cleanliness and temperature) must be met, and nutrients need to be available for the yeast to continue their hard work. Wine yeast is most happy when:

* It's not too hot, and not too cold
* There's lots of food to eat
* No killer agents are present
* They live in sanitary conditions
* Oxygen is available (to kick off fermentation)

Sounds a lot like humans, huh? Using a little common sense, then we can easily extrapolate the major causes of a stuck fermentation:

1. Extreme fermentation temperatures - too high or too low
2. Using un-sanitized equipment - dirty or unsanitary equipment increases the possibility that microbiological factors such as wild killer yeasts and bacteria will spoil your wine.
3. Using old yeast - weakened or expired/out-of-date.
4. Incorrect yeast used - match the proper yeast for your wine.
5. Yeast not rehydrated before pitching - always rehydrate yeast according to manufacturer's suggestions.
6. Yeast rehydrated at too low or too high a temperature - this can kill a large percentage of yeast cell population.
7. Temperature shock when rehydrated yeast is introduced to must - try to allow no more than a 5-7° C differential between yeast mixture and must
8. Sulfite levels too high - Adding too much potassium metabisulfite; failing to wait 24 hours after potassium metabisulfite is applied to must before pitching yeast; or high must pH, which can lead to high fermentation rate.
9. Lack of nutrients, including a lack of nitrogen or certain amino acids.
10. Extremely high starting SG - too much sugar in must at the outset.

Prevention of Stuck Fermentations

Here are some things the home winemaker can do to prevent stuck fermentations:

* Monitor and ensure proper fermentation temperatures.
* Ensure proper sanitation - learn how to sanitize equipment.
* Use fresh yeast.
* Use the proper yeast for the wine you're making - don't guess or use a packet of yeast just because it's handy.
* Properly rehydrate yeast before pitching.

* Pitch the yeast within 20 minutes of rehydrating it.
* Maintain proper free SO2 levels - the amount of potassium metabisulfite to add to your wine depends on pH of wine.
* Add yeast nutrient before pitching yeast.
* Keep your starting SG to reasonable levels (1.090 - 1.100 or lower). If you don't currently have a hydrometer, buy one (they're inexpensive - about $5) and learn how to use it.
* Aerate the must properly by vigorous stirring, just before pitching the yeast. This will introduce the oxygen needed to "kick off" fermentation.

Treatment of Stuck Fermentations

And here's what to do if you get stuck... and remember - always start with the simplest things first. Resist the urge to add yeast or additives until you've tried the easy things.

1. Adjust the temperature of your wine. In most cases we've seen, simply warming your wine to 70-75° F for a couple of days will get the ball rolling.
2. Rouse the yeast by swishing or stirring the lees. Sometimes moving the yeast around in the wine will get fermentation going again.
3. WARNING: Although it may be tempting, don't add vitamins (yeast nutrient) during stuck fermentations. Leftover vitamins can stimulate spoilage microbes. Only add a yeast nutrient before or as you pitch your yeast. If you want to add a yeast energizer at this point (which is not the same thing as yeast nutrient), that's OK. Simply go to the local drug store and ask the pharmacist for some Thiamin HCL (thiamin hydrochloride). Add 25 mg. per gallon of wine and mix well.
4. Remove the old yeast by racking the wine, then re-inoculate with fresh yeast, preferably a killer strain like Lalvin EC-1118 or Red Star Premier Cuvee. In a pinch, you could even use a Red Star Champagne yeast. We want to get rid of the old yeast because yeast cells seem able to detect the presence of other dying cells, and are more likely to get "lazy" themselves.
5. If you detect there is a nitrogen deficiency (less than 200 mg/L fermentable nitrogen), addition of DAP (diammonium phosphate dibasic - commonly known in the winemaking industry as Fermaid*) is called for.
   If none of the above seem to help restart your fermentation within a couple or three days, it's time to bring in the heavy hitters:
   • Make a yeast starter by pulling off approximately 1/2 gallon of must, and add 1.5 to 2 teaspoons of yeast energizer (thiamin HCL) and 1 packet of "killer" or champagne yeast. Mix well, cover loosely and place in a warm spot. Once you have a vigorous fermentation you can add it back to the original must. OR...
   • Make a different kind of starter: use about a 1/2 cup of warm water, dissolve 1 teaspoon of sugar in the water, add some orange juice to this mix, make sure the temperature is about 90° F, before adding a packet of Red Star Premier Cuvee or Lalvin EC-1118 yeast to this mixture. Wait until it really gets working. Take about a gallon of your must and warm it up to about 68° to 70° F. Now add the yeast starter to the gallon of must, as it starts to work and gets going, SLOWLY add small portions of the stuck fermentation to that which is working. You should not add more than a quart, make sure the temperature of that which you are adding is at least 70° F. As the volume of the working must gets larger, you can add larger portions to the fermentation. Make sure the temperature is at least 70° F before you add it Using one of these methods should help get your fermentation restarted.

Editor : Also refer to the “Scott Laboratories Handbook” for recommended methods to restart stuck fermentations.

West Side Wine Club
Leadership Team – 2012

President: **Jon Kahrs** jekahrs@aol.com
- Set agenda for the year
- Establish leadership team
- Assure that objectives for the year are met
- Set up agenda and run meetings

Treasurer: **Scott Nelson** nelsonsw@gmail.com
- Collect dues and fees, update membership list with secretary
- Pay bills

Secretary: **Ken and Barb Stinger** kbstinger@frontier.com
- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Monthly newsletter
- Keep updated list of members, name tags and other data

Chair of Education: **Mike Smolak** Mike@NWRetire.com
- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@hotmail.com & Phil Bard phil@philbard.com
- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Jack Seigendall** jseigend@comcast.net
- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Sammy Nachimuthu** murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com & Daniel Larson daniel@genesislabels.com
Makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute.
- Grape purchases
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chair of Competitions: **Miriam Schnepf** mowtnwmn@gmail.com with Washington County Fair staff.
- Encourage club participation in County Fair President will be the contact for the Oregon State Fair.

Chairs for Social Events: Barbara Stinger and Sammy Nachimuthu kbstinger@frontier.com murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com
- Awards Gala / Holliday parties
- Web Content Editor: **Rick Kipper** kips@lycos.com Webmaster: **David Ladd**