

West Side Wine Club

August 2013
Monthly Rant



Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Scheduled Meetings

January 12, 2013

Annual Gala

January 16, 2013

Crush Talk / Planning

February 20, 2013

Bordeaux Tasting

March 20, 2013

Aroma Kit / Faults & Flaws

April 17, 2013

2012 Barrel / Carboy
Sample Tasting

May 11, 2013

Joe Dobbs Winery Tour

May 15, 2013

Speaker – James Osborne,
OSU Wine Research
Institute

June 19, 2013

“Best Practices of Amateur
Winemakers”

July 13, 2013

Annual Picnic, Home of
Dennis & Marlene Grant

July 19, 2013

Colene-Clemens Winery /
Vineyard Tour

August 21, 2013

Other Whites Tasting

September 18, 2013

Other Reds Tasting

October 16, 2013

Pinot Noir Tasting

November 13, 2013

No Meeting

December 4, 2013

Planning, Tours, Speakers,
Events, Elections

So, its going to be an early harvest, right? It was an early, warm spring and the temperatures have been warm all summer, with lots of sun. Flowering and bud break were early, and Veraison is starting up, and its also early. The winemakers from Stoller and Erath were recently quoted as saying they expect to begin harvest in the second week of September, if all goes as it has so far. But then there's that Oregon September weather that has yet to arrive. On the Lenne Estate blog there was the following data from the '07 harvest, noting that we were in just about the same place as now. Veraison was 10% complete on August 10th. Brix levels were at 23 to 24 on September 24th, and everyone was just waiting for flavor development. Then came the rains. And more rains, dragging harvest deep into October and causing lots of angst throughout the Willamette Valley. So not so fast, it's all about what happens in September. Only one thing is certain, it won't be long before we know.

News Flash: Oregon received the No. 1 ranking in the nation for its friendliness to wine consumers, according to a report released yesterday by the American Wine Consumer Coalition. Among the criteria considered in the evaluation were access to products, government control, blue laws, winery-to-consumer shipping, retail-to-consumer shipping and government control of wine sales. The report also noted that in 2011 Oregon wine sales surpassed the 2 million case mark for the first time ever.

Wine and Sex in China: Its not what you think. The Chinese, who for years have wandered in the wine drinking wilderness, have recently been on a tear with French Bordeaux's, many with very high price points. Because they can afford it, of course, but not necessarily because they understand it. Yet. Below are some consumer ratings for the top 10 Bordeaux's selling on Wangjiu, China's top online wine seller. Many of them mention more about the look of the packaging or the recommended gender of the purchaser than of the tasting experience. But they are trying...

#9 Chateau Soutard 1986 \$112: (Winery Est. 1699, highly respected)

“Subtle hints of fruit aromas, reminds me of Ume plum.” “Perhaps ladies would prefer this wine style!”

#8 Chateau La Freynelle 2009 \$33“

A feminine style, not bad on the palate.” This wine would suit ladies particularly well – it has intoxicating aromas of red fruits.”

#7 Chateau Marjosse 2010 \$34

“Great as a gift for the New Year, and good value for money.” “Exquisite packaging, perfect gift for a friend.”

#5 L’heritage de la Tour Carnet 2010 \$65

“This wine is suitable for gatherings as it is affordable without appearing ‘cheap’, smooth and refreshing, and suitable for men and women. Great value.”

But then, the cart goes off the rails. The MOST popular bottle on the site, with over 5000 sold just in July alone, not French, not dry, not red, not still, and not expensive:

#1 Morando Moscato Spumante NV \$19 (A sweet Italian Sparkling, 6% alcohol)

“Superb value, cheap, delicious, and the preferred drink for gatherings.”

“A wine that reminds me very much of Sprite.”

Phil Bard

Information & Trivia

Winery earns historic marker

– Hillcrest Vineyard in Roseburg, OR, announced it will receive a historic marker from the state agency Oregon Travel Experience. The marker will be placed at the winery in spring 2014 to commemorate the first planting of Pinot Noir in Oregon in 1961. Richard Sommer established the winery that same year and is considered one of the founding pioneers of the state's modern wine industry.

Washington Wine Industry

- The growth of the Washington wine industry has taken large strides over the last 35 years. The number of wineries has increased steadily over the years going from 15 wineries to nearly 700 wineries today. During the last year of growth alone there were 60 new wineries started, which is 4-fold greater than what the state had in 1980.

Did You Know?

There are more wine drinkers in the U.S. than in any other country. We have 33% more wine drinkers than France does, 40% more than Italy, twice as many as Spain and four times as many as in Australia. Over 100 million Americans drink wine. There are about 50 million who drink beer or spirits. That leaves something like 78 million Americans (over the age of 21) who do not drink alcoholic beverages. Last tidbit of profundity: There are more female wine drinkers in America than male wine drinkers.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 21 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll Winery.

• **Agenda all whites blind tasting.** Member wines taste and critique - This will be all white varietals also including rose, sparkling, fruit wines & mead plus anything remotely resembling a white.

• **Snacks: This will be another potluck; bring a small snack to share.**

- 1.) Please bring a couple wine 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. You may also pay your 2013 dues if you have not already done so.
- 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/>

2013 Annual Picnic

About 35 members and guests attended our club picnic at the beautiful home of Dennis & Marlene Grant on July 13. We were blessed with good weather and a great view of Mt. St. Helens & Mt. Rainier off of their front deck. The Grants gave us a tour of their ever expanding winery, which most of us were envious of, and a few barrel tastes of their 2012 wines. We also got to see their antique buggy collection including sleighs, fire wagons and some wagon undercarriages that came over on the Oregon Trail.

There was plenty of good food and excellent member wines to enjoy. Our thanks go out to Dennis and Marlene for providing such a nice setting.





Scott Nelson said we sold 15 sets of the Govino glasses at the picnic.

If you find that you have a set of Govino glasses from the picnic for which you did not give the treasurer \$22, please send \$22 to Scott Nelson or bring to the next meeting.

There are eight sets of Govino glasses still available, if you are interested in a set they will be available at the August meeting or contact Scott Nelson.

Thanks go out to Rick Kipper for collecting member wines at the picnic and delivering them to the Washington County Fair for competition. I know from experience that this involves a couple hours of filling out competition tags and tying them to bottles. Thanks Rick



Govino Wine Glasses

Govino wine glass specifications: Height: 4.4 inches, Capacity: 16 ounces

Where Wine Meets Design

Necessity is indeed the mother of invention. Govino was originally created as a trade tool to help professional salespeople showcase their wines whenever and wherever proper stemware isn't accessible – which as we learned firsthand, is often! Once we began testing the market, we realized there was an even bigger need for Govino in the consumer sector, particularly at settings where breakable glass is an issue. After all, how many times have we all had to endure drinking good wine from bad glasses?



Why does the Govino wine glass look and perform like crystal?

Govino is made from a food-safe, BPA-free polymer, which reflects a wine's color and aromatics much like crystal. It is recyclable (#1), but better yet it is reusable.

Washing your Govino glasses:

We recommend hand washing all Govino products.

Reuse it, abuse it, but eventually recycle it!

To ensure the optimum wine tasting experience, we recommend replacing your govino products once they lose their luster.

WSWC imprint on each glass:



PLEASE NOTE: THE ACTUAL IMPRINT WILL BE "FROSTED" LIKE ETCHED GLASS, NOT BLACK AS SHOWN

Wine club members may purchase a four-pack of these glasses at the picnic for \$22. Supply is limited, first come, first served.



WSWC Tour of Colene Clemens Vineyards

Only 5 members showed up at Colene Clemens Winery for a tour on Friday, July 19 and were rewarded with an extensive barrel tasting, many wine making insights & ideas from vintner/vineyard manager Steve Goff plus some very impressive views of the countryside.

Steve Goff, originally from Philadelphia, Pa. has been with Colene Clemens from 2006 to present. He was with Beacon Hill in 2005, Beau Freres from 1999 to 2004. He was schooled in the wine making arts at Fresno State. His winemaking is essentially minimal intervention.

We were offered a tasting of 2012 Rose' of Pinot Noir in the inside tasting room. Fermented dry in SS, it was fruitful with a soft acid balance, very nice. Their Pinot Noir grapes are all estate grown except for the Pinot Noir Rose' which is sourced from Red Hills Weber Vineyard, 26 year old own rooted Pommard.

We were then shown the vineyard view from the terrace that is used as the crush deck and an outdoor wine tasting area in summertime.

Then inside to the winery that was very clean and compact. Built on the side of a panoramic knoll, the gravity fed barrel room is below the fermentation room. The subterranean barrel room is kept at 58 degrees until ML is done and then dropped to 52 degrees.

He uses a spray bottle of "EverClear" diluted to 70% alcohol for more efficient sanitation.

He said he was entertaining someone from the Wine Advocate Sunday afternoon and our tour was opportunity to make sure he would only show good examples to them. We were either guinea pigs or we got to help him pick out his samples for a wine journalist.

Steve prefers to use RC 212 yeast on the Pinot Noir and lets it go through ML on it's own. He prefers using native ML bacteria. He just got through ML last month. He ferments with five to seven day cold soak for up to 25 day total fermentation and likes to hold fermentation temperature below 90 degrees followed by 3 to 4 days extended maceration. Does not believe in feeding the fermentation once it has started.

Wines are pressed into primarily François Freres Barrels, 50% new, 25 % one year and 25 % two year and interestingly, each barrel is filled with about 50% free run wine, 25% lightly pressed & 25% heavy press, the amount of heavy sometimes depends on taste. He does not rack until bottling, about 11 months then filters into bottles. We got to barrel taste sample the 2012 wines, 777, 667, Wädenswil, and Pommard in new, 1 year, and 2 year barrels for comparison.

Steve said that used barrels may be available to WSWC members in the fall. The price depending on their age. We were then escorted to the outside tasting bar to sample their latest releases, a 2011 and two 2010's. Lastly he opened a bottle of 2008 Reserve that was their first bottling and no longer available. Steve was a very down to earth regular guy that was very informing and had a very simplistic style. He also made very good wine.



One of our 3 constant companions



Some West Side Wine Club Competition Awards so far in 2013

Winemaker Magazine International Competition

Ken & Barb Stinger

2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Bronze

Oregon State Fair

Winners list link: [http://oregonstatefair.org/sites/all/osf/files/2013 - AMATEUR WINE WINNERS - 7-22-13 HJ.pdf](http://oregonstatefair.org/sites/all/osf/files/2013_-_AMATEUR_WINE_WINNERS_-_7-22-13_HJ.pdf)

Ken & Barb Stinger

2012 Gewurztraminer Silver
 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Bronze
 2011 Syrah Silver
 2011 Red Blend 70/30% Pinot Noir / Marechal Foch Silver

Mike Smolak

2008 Port Style Solera Bronze

Marlene Grant & Ted Johnson

2011 Tempranillo Bronze

Dennis Grant & Ted Johnson

2011 Sangiovese / Merlot Bronze

Scott Nelson

2010 Chardonnay Bronze
 2009 Dundee Pinot Noir Silver
 2010 Dundee Pinot Noir Silver
 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon – Horse Heaven Hills Silver
 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon – Yakima Valley Silver
 2010 Primitivo (Zinfandel) Silver

Washington County Fair

Blizzard-Kahrs-Robinson-Gellert

2011 Rioja blend **Best of Show Red wines**

Mike Smolak

2012 Pinot Noir Blanc **Best of Show White wines**

Ken & Barb Stinger

2011 Cabernet Sauvignon 1st place ribbon
 2011 Red Blend 70/30% Pinot Noir / Marechal Foch 2nd place ribbon
 2011 Syrah 2nd place ribbon
 2012 Gewürztraminer 2nd place ribbon
 2010 Sparkling Pinot Noir Rose' 3rd place ribbon

Jon Kahrs

2009 Chardonnay 1st place ribbon

Barb Thomson

2010 Malbec 1st place ribbon

Don Robinson

2009 Syrah / Sangiovese blend 2nd place ribbon

Clark County Fair

Mike Smolak

2008 Port Style Solera 1st place ribbon
 2011 Riesling 1st place ribbon
 2012 Pinot Noir Blanc 2nd place ribbon

Those of you who have access to vineyard and plan to drop some fruit around veraison time should consider making verjus (ver-zhu).

Verjus is the tart, fresh juice of unripe grapes.

With all the excitement over the wine, Verjus, a delicious byproduct of the winemaking process, is often overlooked.

Verjus (pronounced ver-ZHU) literally means 'green juice' and refers to the tart, fresh juice of unripe wine grapes. It is a mellow substitute for vinegar or lemon juice, and when reduced produces a delectable base for sauces- the perfect balance of sweet and tart.

Verjus is made from any grapes removed from the vines in midsummer, at a point in the growing cycle called veraison.

Thinning the grape crop is an important part of managing our vineyards and producing high-quality wines because it concentrates energy and flavor in the remaining grapes. The number of grapes thinned by hand depends on the season and usually the culled fruit are left on the ground as compost. However if harvested and pressed into Verjus, they make a non-alcoholic, highly acidic juice with a tart apple-like flavor. Verjus has been used since the Middle Ages as a sauce ingredient, a tenderizer, a condiment and in deglazing.

You can use Verjus as you would lemon juice or vinegar in any recipe, but while vinegar may clash with the wine you are serving, Verjus compliments wine.

The trick is to pick these grapes when they are high in acid and low in sugar. "That balance between the acid and sugar is critical," said Rudy Marchesi, winemaker and proprietor of Oregon's Montinore Estates, which produces verjus. "If you pick them too soon, it's too acidic. Too late, and it's too sweet." Good verjus finds a happy medium somewhere between. Verjus, like wine, comes in red and white varieties. Its flavor profile is all over the map, with notes ranging from chamomile to citrus to stone fruit. Reds can be smooth or robust, fruity to floral, while whites can be light or loud, tangy to sharp. Unlike wine, it keeps nicely when corked and refrigerated for up to 3 months. Can be purchased in most wine shops for about \$20 per bottle.

There is an article on how to make it at <http://honest-food.net/2011/08/02/how-to-make-verjus/>



As veraison begins, Washington wine grapes start to show true colors

By Andy Perdu on July 23, 2013



Wine grapes in Washington's Columbia Valley typically begin to change color – called *veraison* – around the first week of August. This year, it's at least two weeks early.

This year's heat in Washington's Columbia Valley has grape growers scratching their heads and winemakers scrambling to get ready for what most certainly will be an early harvest.

Last week, Sagemoor Vineyards north of Pasco, Wash., found *veraison* in Chardonnay and Syrah. *Veraison* is a French word for "change" that signals when grapes begin to soften and change color. To growers and winemakers, *veraison* begins the countdown to harvest.

In typical years, *veraison* often shows up the first week of August in the Columbia Valley. But this year, it's early – just as everything else has been since bud break in early April.

"We hit bud break two weeks ahead, hit bloom two weeks ahead, and now *veraison* is two weeks ahead," said Kent Waliser, general manager for Sagemoor.

Veraison could signal early harvest this year



Harvest for Washington wine grapes could begin as early as Sept. 1 this year, earlier than is typical.

Winemakers are buzzing about *veraison*, noting harvest could start as early as Sept. 1

Charlie Hoppes, owner/winemaker told Great Northwest Wine that it is not unprecedented to harvest so early in Washington – though it hasn't happened in awhile.

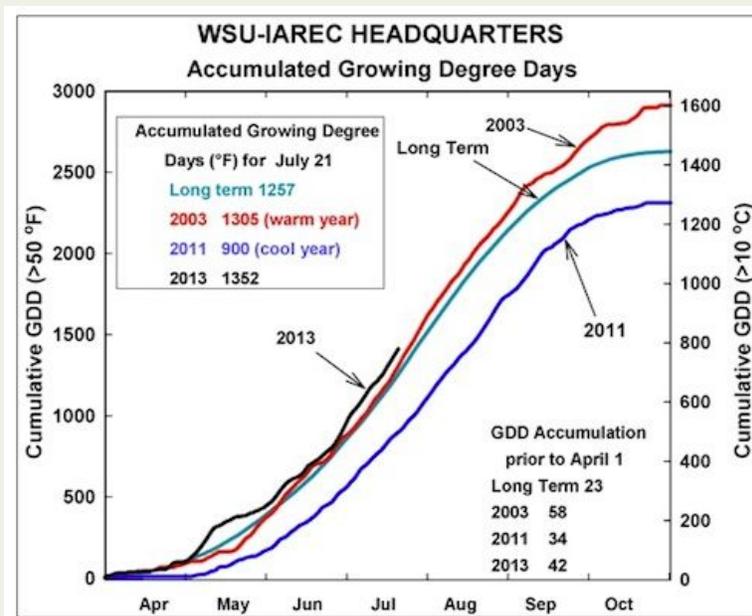
"I can remember picking red grapes on Labor Day before," he said. "It makes it a little tougher because we'd like a bit more hang time, but sometimes it happens."

Hoppes, who has been making wine in Washington for more than a quarter-century, said he can recall being done with the 1995 harvest by mid-October.

"That was kind of nice," he said.

With his increased focus on Red Mountain – traditionally Washington's warmest viticultural area – Hoppes is beginning to gear up for harvest, which could start as little as five weeks from now.

By the numbers, 2013 could be hottest yet



According to this chart maintained by Washington State University, 2013 is on track to be the warmest vintage in Washington state history.

Waliser pointed out that this year's heat is on track to exceed 2003, which has been the benchmark for hot vintages. According to Washington State University's research station in Prosser, the Yakima Valley had 1,362 heat units as of Sunday, July 21. The average long-term heat units by July 21 are 1,257, while 2003 was 1,306.

Meanwhile, 2011 – now the benchmark for cool vintages – had just 900 heat units by July 21.

Heat units, cumulative growing degree days, are a measurement of how warm temperatures are from April through October. They are figured by subtracting 50 from the average daily temperature. Heat units do not take in all factors. For example, grapevines will stop performing photosynthesis at about 95 degrees. Instead, they will “shut down” to protect the plant. Thus, when temperatures hit 103 – as they did Monday in the Columbia Valley – the vines do not actually ripen fruit for much of the day.

This year, the three warmest areas of Washington wine country are, in order, the Wahluke Slope, Red Mountain and Maryhill, followed closely by Ancient Lakes (a traditionally cooler area) and the Horse Heaven Hills.

Purple grapes at Champoux Vineyards



Paul Champoux looks at his 1972 block of Cabernet Sauvignon in the Horse Heaven Hills.

Paul Champoux, owner of Champoux Vineyards in the Horse Heaven Hills, said he has not noticed *veraison* in any of his early varieties yet – with one exception.

He planted a half-acre of a red hybrid grape called Marquette, which was developed by the University of Minnesota. It is a distant relation to Pinot Noir and also is a cousin of a grape called Frontenac. It can handle below-zero temperatures typical of upper Midwest winters and is in high demand in that area of the country.

Champoux planted it on a whim because he attended Marquette High School in Yakima. He told Great Northwest Wine that his Marquette grapes are fully purple and a sugar reading he took Monday indicated they already are at 19.1 brix, not far from optimal ripeness of 24-25 brix.

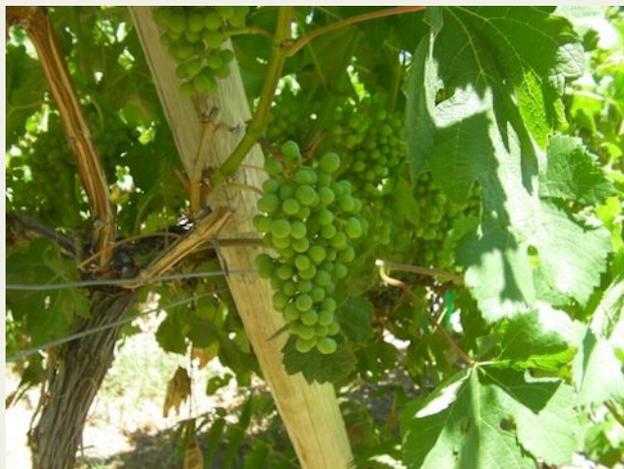
He said Hoppes plans to make the wine for him, though he's not sure what he will do once it's bottled.

"I'll have to figure out what to do with that," Champoux said. "If nothing else, I'll be able to sell it to the guys I went to school with."

Because the berries already are sweet, Champoux has had to take unusual precautions with his Marquette.

"It's the only thing ripe in the whole county, so I had to net it because the birds were eating it," he said with a chuckle.

Early ripening a concern for winemakers, growers



This photo shows what wine grapes look like prior to going through *veraison*.

One potential issue with an early harvest is grapes becoming “sugar ripe” before their flavors develop, something winemakers don’t like because they hope to avoid too many green characteristics. Hoppes said this might be a good year for vineyards to carry higher tonnage to balance the fruit that is on the vine.

“I would prefer higher crop loads and more hang time, especially on Red Mountain, where it’s so hot,” he said. “I have no problem carrying 4 tons of Merlot (per acre).”

Some of these decisions will be made at *veraison*, when growers typically will begin to cut off some clusters to ensure the remaining grapes ripen properly.

“This might be the perfect year to carry more crop and a year for growers to maybe make a bit more money,” he said. “It’s not really going to affect quality (to have higher crop loads), especially on warmer sites.”

Waliser, who as a grower would not mind making a bit more money, said that unfortunately it isn’t a simple equation. Many contracts between growers and wineries are written in a way that specify how many tons per acre vineyard blocks can carry. He said wineries already have figured out how much tank space they have and how many barrels they’ll need. And they also need to look one to three years ahead to project sales.

“I think this is going to create a tight situation,” Waliser said. “We might find ourselves raising the very best fruit but getting tight on space at the end. We’re all speculating, playing Monday morning quarterback before the game even starts. There’s no shortage of people trying to guess this one.”

Waliser, whose vineyard is in one of the warmest areas of the Columbia Valley, said this well could be a year in which cooler regions such as the Yakima and Walla Walla valleys shine because they won’t struggle to ripen their grapes.

“Every variety in every area will be different (than prior vintages),” he said. “Whether that will be good or bad remains to be seen.”



A great site for perusing what is happening in the Pacific Northwest wine world is: <http://www.greatnorthwestwine.com/>

West Side Wine Club Leadership Team - 2013

- President: **Phil Bard** phil@philbard.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: **Bill Brown** bbgoldieguy@gmail.com

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Jonathan Brown** jonabrown@gmail.com & Jim Ourada
jim.m.ourada@intel.com

Makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute

- Grape purchases
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution.

Chair of Competitions: **Don Robinson** don_robinson_pdx@yahoo.com

- Encourage club participation in all amateur competitions available. Make information known through Newsletter, e-mail and Facebook

Chairs for Social Events: Marlene Grant denmargrant@earthlink.net Barbara Stinger & Mindy Bush – Helpers

- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

• Web Content Editor: **Rick Kipper** kips@lycos.com

Webmaster: **David Ladd**