



2008 Calendar

January 16th

Plan for the year

February 20th

Wine Faults and Flaws

March 19th

Bordeaux tasting

April 16th

Other Reds tasting

May 8th

Barney Watson at Chemeketa

May 10th

Chemeketa Tour

May 21st

Rick Mafit of Mystic Wines

June 18th

Michael Brown from Sokol Blosser

July 13th

Sokol Blosser Tour

July 20th

WSWC Annual Picnic!

August 20th

Other Whites

September 19th

Awards Gala!

October 15th

Pinot Noir tasting

November 19th

Pinot Gris / Viognier

December 17th

Speaker?

January 2009

Holiday Party

West Side Wine Club

June 2008

Next Meeting: June 18th, 2008 at 7 p.m.
Place: Oak Knoll Winery
Subject: Michael Brown from Sokol Blosser
Snacks: Dana Blizzard & Elissa Fenske
Website: <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/>
Message Board: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Westsidewineclub/>

Meeting focus-sustainability in the vineyard and winery.

Michael Brown, Direct Sales Manager at Sokol Blosser will be speaking. Name tags are distributed before the meeting. Come a little early to help set up so that we can start promptly at 7pm and end by 9pm.

Reminder - No Wednesday meeting in July. Tour and picnic instead.

(Details page 2)

May Meeting Notes

President Don Robinson opened the meeting and read a letter of apology from Newport Wine Competition Coordinator Sue Cummings. An email was sent thanking her and suggesting that two bottles per entry were preferable to one.

Rick Mafit of Mystic Wines spoke on TA, PH, and SO₂: How they interact.

Rick began by giving a brief history of how he got into the wine business, and cautioned us about going commercial - it takes over your life.

He said that in all his years in the wine business, the most misunderstood element is SO₂, and that the biggest SO₂ problem is incorrect measuring.

Rick pointed out that SO₂ protects color, prohibits brettanomyces, is anti-microbial and an anti-oxidant. However, it only puts the bacteria into a freeze state, it doesn't eliminate them. That is one reason why he questions using cold soaks (it can lower pH), and instead uses MLF co-fermentation, enzymes, various yeasts and even filtering to assure that the wine is of consistently good quality.

He said that to improve our winemaking we must ask ourselves "Why am I doing this? What do I want?"

Rick's recommendations:

75 ppm SO₂ at crush, 75ppm SO₂ after MLF.

Bring free SO₂ to 40-45ppm before bottling.

Enzymes- Lafase HE Grand Cru

Tannins- Biotan, Tan'Cor Grand Cru, and Tanin VR Supra

And lastly, he recommends that a winemaker make good, solid wine for five years before beginning to experiment with long cold soaks, extended maceration, etc.



Sokol Blosser Wine Tour Sunday July 13th at 11:00 AM

We will be touring the vineyard and winery and tasting wine. Cost to members is \$10. Please RSVP to Mary Schaer at marycschaer@verizon.net

Sokol Blosser farms grapes organically and sustainably in The Red Hills of Dundee, without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides. Though growing only one crop, they create a small ecosystem by encouraging biodiversity through the use of compost, beneficial insects, wildflowers and birds.

Sokol Blosser estate vineyards 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).

Founder Susan Sokol Blosser has written a book called *At Home in the Vineyard: Cultivating a Winery, an Industry, and a Life*.

(Top) Michael Brown of Sokol Blosser

Sokol Blosser winery is an active participant in the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project.

Pictured- Bluebirds in the Sokol Blosser vineyard.

Willamette Valley Grape Growers Group

Meetings are open to everyone who finds it useful. There are no official memberships or dues. They meet the first Tuesday night of the month for a no-host dinner at 6pm, with a speaker at 7pm.

Meetings are held at MiNas Restaurant at McNary Golf Course 155 McNary Estates Drive, Keizer, OR 503-393-4111

For more information contact Growers Groups Program Director Betty O'Brien at eltonvines@yahoo.com

Wine Competitions

By Mike Hauser

WSWC members – The annual wine competitions are fast approaching! WSWC members should consider entering their wines in these events. WSWC members have been awarded the Best-in-Show for the last three major regional wine competitions (2008 Newport S&W Festival, 2007 Oregon Amateur Wine Competition, and the 2007 Washington County Fair)

Oregon State Fair: The Oregon State Fair is inviting all-comers to participate in the 2008 Amateur Wine Competition. The wines will be judged on July 23 and 24, 2008. Blue, Red and White ribbons will be awarded within each wine classification. Best-In-Show winners will be selected from the Blue ribbon winners in both the vinifera and fruit/berry categories. Entry forms and fees must be received by Wednesday June 25th. Wine must be delivered to the fairgrounds the week of June 30-July 2, between 9a.m. and 5p.m. Information and entry forms can be found on the web at:

http://www.oregonstatefair.org/competitions/blue_ribbon_competitions/wine

The Washington County Fair Wine Competition: The Washington County Fair awards First, Second, and Third place ribbons (and cash) and a Best-in-Show from the First Place wines. Entries must be received by Saturday, July 19, (between 3pm and 7pm) or Sunday, July 20 (between 10am and 2pm). Wines are displayed during the fair's run. More information can be found at <http://www.faircomplex.com/wcf2008/competition.html>





The Washington County Fair Competition

By Miriam Schnepf

The Washington County Fair is open July 24th -27th. Entries are admitted on Saturday, July 19th and Sunday, July 20th. I will have entry forms at the club picnic on July 20th at Oak Knoll, and will deliver them to the fair in Hillsboro at 2-3 pm closing time. I ask for 2 volunteers to help take entries at the fair on either Saturday or Sunday, the 19th and 20th.

After the fair on July 27th, I will pick up the wine, money and judge's comments and hold them for the next meeting. People are also free to pick up and drop off their entries on their own.

This is a competition that the wine club decided to support and promote several years ago. It is free to enter, and pays up to four dollars per winning bottle. It is a great place to win ribbons and I am always at the judging to uphold consistency in standards. Good luck,
Miriam

WSWC Annual Picnic July 20th at Oak Knoll!

Details to follow by email

Northwest Viticulture Center Tours Report

By Don Robinson

Club members attended two informative tours of the Northwest Viticulture Center of Chemeketa Community College located in the Eola Hills northwest of Salem. Led by instructors Barney Watson and Pat Lundeen, the tours explored the vineyard, classrooms, formal event halls, winery and the program's curricula in detail.

We toured the beautiful 8-acre vineyard with ten grape varieties and with numerous clones and root stocks within each variety. Facing south to south-east and about 250 feet above the nearby Willamette River, it's considered a warm vineyard and can produce decent sugar and acid levels—even in big reds in warm years. The vineyard was certified sustainable in 2003.

Barney Watson, the head instructor at the center, has passionately built the program in recent years to include a professional on-site winery. The students in the program are assigned several rows in the vineyard to tend during the year, and then harvest the grapes and take them through the entire winemaking process—including bottling and marketing. Their wine is now being sold to the public.

The Center has three two-year Associate Degree programs in viticulture, winemaking and wine marketing. The curriculum allows students to get a dual degree in two of the disciplines in two years. For detailed information about the Center and its programs, go to their website at: <http://www.chemeketa.edu/aboutus/locations/eola/index.html>.

Courses can be audited by students not formally enrolled in a degree program. When auditing a class, the student pays the regular tuition but does not have to complete the homework nor sit for exams. This would be a great way for busy WSWC members to take advantage of select course offerings!

Barney is a lot like Rick Mafit of Mystic Wines: both are gold mines of wine-related information, so I became excited when Barney described a day-long workshop he holds every year on a Friday in late September where he takes the students through a complete harvest-to-wine cycle. Starting in the vineyard, the students learn to properly sample grapes and measure the sugar. A significant sample of grapes is then taken to the lab in the winery. All steps of the winemaking process are discussed and demonstrated when possible—including monitoring and measuring the must and wine for TA, PH and SO₂.

Barney liked my suggestion to hold a similar session for WSWC members, but I said we'd prefer it would be on a weekend day, and be customized to focus on techniques used by amateur winemakers instead of commercial ones. Apparently, the Salem winemaking club (<http://www.wvaws.org/>) has an interest in a similar hands-on seminar, so Barney thought it might make the most sense to combine efforts. Please let me know if this is something WSWC members would be interested in. I'd like to finalize the details on this in the near future.



President's Musings

Hello WSWC Members!

Finally, the grape clusters are starting to set on this year's vines in the Willamette Valley. Think SUN! Being nearly four weeks behind, they have a long way to go!

May was a busy month for club members. Led by instructors Barney Watson and Pat Lundeen, WSWC members attended two informative tours of the Northwest Viticulture Center in Salem. Our monthly meeting featured guest Speaker Rick Mafit of Mystic Wines. His lecture on SO2 was fascinating, and the Q&A session could have run for hours! Don't miss our next monthly meeting on June 18th. Our featured speaker will be Michael Brown, from the Sokol Blosser Winery.

The more I get to know about winemaking, the more I realize I don't know. Case in point at this month's lecture with Rick Mafit: Rick is an opponent of cold maceration. I heard audible gasps in the room when Rick made that proclamation. He claims a maceration initially subjects the young wine to too many uncontrolled, unwanted fermentations of native yeast and other organisms. He continues, if the goal of a cold soak is to extract more tannins and color, then use instead targeted yeasts, enzymes and perhaps consider adding tannins. As a graduate from Davis and a long-time Regional Rep for Scott Labs, Rick appears to know more about the chemistry of wines than most, so I've had to seriously mull over some of his assertions.

In fact, I have observed this "tinkering" with every step in the winemaking process has become the norm rather than the exception in the industry. Perhaps it's the sign of the times where modern food science practices are replacing traditional winemaking techniques. Now, that may be sad, but it's not necessarily a bad thing. I understand the pressure to sell a product with nuance to distinguish it from the competition. For some time, wineries have been blending with scores of different clones to arrive at a desired state, consistently. But I'm starting to draw the line for those whose goal is to turn Pinot Noir into a big oaky red!

To give some clarity to this confusion, I made a recent discovery: the incredible Pinot Noir wines of Privé Vineyard. Mark and Tina Hammond's two one-acre vineyards on Chehalem Mountain contain only Pommard clone Pinot Noir vines that are over 25 years old, and they produce less than 300 cases. Tina, who tends to the winery, explains how she and Mark hand pick and inspect all of their fruit. They use carefully selected yeasts and nutrients and age it on French oak. What was most surprising was the depth and complexity of their wines, especially since they were using only Pommard clones. Ultimately, if you desire excellence through simplicity, perhaps, the grapes really do make all the difference.

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

GrapeRadio is a radio program discussing wine related topics that is broadcast over the Internet using audio & video podcast technology. Take a listen at <http://www.graperadio.com>

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

**Below-
Sokol Blosser Vineyard**



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 - **CANCELLED**
- 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 – **Chemeketa**
- Winery Tour 2 – **Sokol Blosser**

Chairs for Social Events: **Open**

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