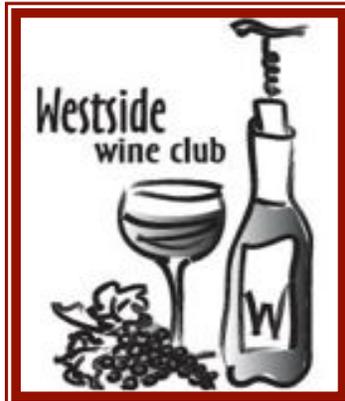


WestSide Wine Club

June 2011



I keep looking at the 10 day forecast on "weather.com". I see sunny day's way out on the 10-day horizon. The national weather service only goes out 7 days, but if the sunny days start to show there too, I might get excited. So far, it looks good. On a year like this I won't believe it until I see it. According to one article I read, the vineyards are three weeks behind in the Willamette Valley. Of course, they are always behind. Farmers are a pessimistic crowd having endured a year like 2010. I am a little more optimistic. Last year everything went wrong, but the good vineyards dropped fruit and produced fewer grapes. However they also may product some grapes of high quality. All too often we are willing to settle for second rate or "sour grapes". I say pay more and get better grapes. With good vineyards you not only get better grapes, your fermentations are easier since they have less rot. This year I am on the hunt for quality grapes. Hopefully, we will get a good set and a warm summer to help us catch up. Once set occurs, the harvest date is almost set like a clock. It may vary some, but not much. Sun is good, but not too much - those later harvest can help preserve acid, which is vital to make high caliber wine.

Our last meeting with barrel samples was very enlightening. It was a healthy exercise in evaluating our new wines. With the additional knowledge, we can make critical adjustments (when possible) to make better wine. Aside from restricting barrel samples to 10, I think it is an exercise worth repeating. But I also think people need to understand several things about barrel samples. One is that if people are critical, it is not personal. We care for our wines and they become like our offspring, and the comments can appear crude or brutal at times. The second thing to remember is that the feedback represents opinions, which can be wrong, even if several club members repeat it. Studies continually show that tasters can be affected by their environment and opinions of the people around them. Moreover, some of the flaws, in scale with the wine, can add character. If you have any doubts, have other people around you try the wine and don't tell them anything and see what they think. I remember one note a judge wrote about a pinot of mine that had some VA. The judge didn't say it was bad. Instead he said the VA was simply too prominent for him. The judge, properly, was not looking at the wine with a "yes" or "throw it out" mentality. Instead, the wine was viewed as having some positive attributes and in that case, one fault which the judge thought was negative. Lastly, remember that the wines are young. Most faults can be dealt with at this time or blended away. Our club members can be one resource. But Winemaker Magazine and winemaking books can be quite helpful.

I continue to be impressed by the internet site "Wine Press". It's like being at the wine club; only you get answers in less than 24 hours' notice on any array of questions.

<http://www.winepress.us/forums/index.php>

One of the topics which have been floated around by our club, and other people on winepress - is what to do about the warmth which we can expect as we head into summer. Air conditioning our wine is critical for 2-3 months. How this is done is another question. One can use portables, but as I explained to a friend, as the warm air is expelled by the portable, air from outside which, is typically quite warm, must replace it. Portables will chill a room alright, but I think a closed system where air is recalculated and the heat exchanger is taking in air from the "outside" and then expelling it after the heat exchange has taken place, is the better method. But hey, I am not an engineer. If our summer is cool, eastern Washington could be the place to buy grapes. Start thinking what wines you want to make this year. We will be taking orders soon and with the freeze in eastern Washington, there could be shortages of some varietals.

John Kahrs

Scheduled Meetings

January 19, 2011
Crush Talk

January 22, 2011
Holiday Party/Awards
Gala

February 16, 2011
Red Bordeaux Tasting

February 27, 2011
Argyle Winery Tour

March 16, 2011
Speaker: Robert Brittan of
Brittan Vineyards

April 20, 2011
Speaker: Darcy
Pendergrass, winemaker
at Amity Vineyards

May 18, 2011
Barrel Sample Tasting

May 29, 2011
Soter Vineyards Tour

June 15, 2011
To be determined

July 17, 2011
Annual Picnic (save the
date)

August 17, 2011
Chardonnay Tasting

September 21, 2011
Other Reds Tasting

October 19, 2011
Pinot Noir Tasting

November 16, 2011
Pinot Gris/Viognier Tasting

December 7, 2011
Planning, Tours,
Speakers, Events

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Quotes & Information

You probably already know this but: How big can a wine bottle get?

Capacity (Liters) followed by the number of standard size bottles contained:

Standard (.75) 1
Magnum (1.5) 2
Jeroboam (3) 4
Rehoboam (4.5) 6
Methuselah (6) 8
Salmanazar (9) 12
Balthazar (12) 16
Nebuchadnezzar (15) 20

Before leaving home to serve a one year jail sentence, a "white collar" criminal was quoted as saying, "I'm not worried about the reds; they'll keep OK. But I am worried about the whites." --- Anonymous.

"I am certain that the good Lord never intended grapes to be made into grape jelly." --- Attributed to Fiorello La Guardia, former mayor of New York City

And Noah he often said to his wife when he sat down to dine, 'I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't get into the wine'. G.K. Chesterton

Wino Forever... *Johnny Depp (The tattoo once read 'Winona Forever!')*

Wine "It sloweth age, it strengtheneth youth, it helpeth digestion, it abandoneth melancholie, it relisheth the heart, it lighteneth the mind, it quickeneth the spirits, it keepeth and preserveth the head from whirling, the eyes from dazzling, the tongue from lipping, the mouth from snaffling, the teeth from chattering and the throat from rattling; it keepeth the stomach from wambling, the heart from swelling, the hands from shivering, the sinews from shrinking, the veins from crumbling, the bones from aching, and the marrow from soaking.---From a 16th Century manuscript

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll

Agenda: To be determined; Jon Kahrs will send an email reminder with meeting information.

Snacks: Daniel Larson, Thanks

Place: Oak Knoll Winery

WSWC Website: <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/>

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

A few reminders:

- 1.) Please bring two glasses for tasting wines.
- 2.) For all our protection, all members must sign a waiver every year. You can also pay 2011 dues at this time.
- 3.) Meetings begin at 7pm and end by 9pm. If you can get there a little early to help set up, please do and help to put away chairs and tables at the end.

NOTE: Plans are rapidly coming together for the Annual picnic to be held on July 17 starting at 1:00 PM at the home of members Lee & Valerie Robinson in West Lynn. See page 4 for details and food assignments.

May Meeting Minutes

There were 22 members present for our meeting and barrel sample tasting. Please welcome new members Laurance & Leslie Gellert. Ken & Barb Stinger provided Snacks, thanks.

Jon reminded us of the 12 June Portland Indie event for those interested. Also the 25th anniversary of IPNC is at Linfield on July 30/31.

The June meeting will be either speaker Mike Carabella of Carabella Winery or "Other Whites" tasting.

There will be no general meeting in July. We will instead have our annual picnic on July 17 (**see information and food sign up sheet below**).

You are encouraged to enter your best wines in competitions available through the summer (Rick Kipper has provided a list below). Jon Kahrs has offered to deliver member wines to the Willamette Valley Amateur Winemaker Society National Amateur Wine Competition if you bring them to the June meeting with proper labels and fees. Contact Jon for further information.

There was some discussion if the Oregon State Fair would have a competition this year or not since they have suffered budget cuts. It was generally thought that there would not be a competition unless sponsors can be found.

The Soter Vineyards tour has four spaces left. Contact Jon Kahrs at jekahrs@aol.com to reserve a spot. The tour group is invited to hang out after the tour to visit a couple other wineries afterward.

Jon mentioned that grapes would again be available from Lonesome Springs Ranch Vineyards in Benton City, Washington. Sammy N. said that several eastern Washington vineyards have asked that people hold off ordering for a few more weeks until they can assess the extent of freeze damage and expected yields.

An amazing number of member barrel samples were brought in for tasting as listed below. We were reminded that, except for four, these have only been in the barrel for 6-7 months and should be assessed based on their progress so far. I was impressed with the consistent quality of the wines produced by our fellow club members.

Jon Gassaway	2010 Syrah - Red Mountain
Jon Gassaway	2010 Merlot - Horse Heaven Hills
Phil Bard	2010 Cabernet Sauvignon - Chandler Reach
Ken Stinger	2010 Tempranillo - Lonesome Springs Ranch
Dana Blizzard	2010 Pinot Noir - Arcane Cellars, southern Willamette Valley
Dana Blizzard	2010 Merlot - Sagemoor Vineyards
Scott Nelson	2009 Barbera - Yakima Valley, Wapato Road
Jack Seigendall	2009 Pinot Noir - Shea Vineyards
Bill Spiller	2009 Cabernet Sauvignon - Zerba Cellars vineyard
Randy Carrier	2010 Zinfandel - Hillside Vineyard, The Dalles
Randy Carrier	2010 Sangiovese - Sagemoor & Lonesome Springs Ranch
Jon Kahrs	2010 Pinot Noir - Sunnyside Vineyard
Jon Kahrs	2010 Red Blend - 30% Mourvedre, 30% Syrah, 35% Grenache, 5% Rousanne
Don Hoffard	2010 Merlot - Lonesome Springs Ranch
Don Hoffard	2010 Cabernet Sauvignon - Lonesome Springs Ranch
Daniel Larson	2010 Red Blend - Alder Ridge Vineyards, 80% Malbec, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon
Bill Brown	2010 Merlot - Cliff Creek Cellars vineyards

[Here is some competition information from Rick Kipper:](#)

Willamette Valley Amateur Winemaker Society: National Amateur Wine Competition 2011

Website: <<https://sites.google.com/site/willamettevaws/national-amateur-wine-competition>>

Entries Accepted through July 16, 2001 at Eola Hills Wine Cellars in Rickreall, Oregon.

Washington County Fair: July 28th through July 31st 2011

Fair Booklet: http://www.faircomplex.com/fair/2011-OC_PremiumBook.pdf

See page 25: Beverages

All entries must be brought to and entered on Saturday, July 23 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and/or Sunday, July 24 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Clark County Fair: August 5th through 14th 2011

Fair Booklet: http://www.clarkcofair.com/documents/2011_oc_winebeer.pdf

Entries will be accepted at Bader Beer & Wine Supply, 711 Grand Blvd. in Vancouver, from Friday, July 8 to Monday, August 1.

Oregon State Fair: August 26th through September 5th 2011

Website: <http://www.oregonstatefair.org/competition/wine>

The Puzzling Red Wine Headache

For some people, a glass of red wine is an invitation to a roaring headache. After a few such episodes, which usually include a feeling of queasiness, those who suffer them may banish wine from their tables for life.

The symptoms are part of a syndrome known as Red Wine Headache, or RWH.

"The red wine headache is a real if poorly understood phenomenon," says an article in the June issue of the Harvard Health Letter. That is a masterpiece of understatement.

There are many theories about what causes the syndrome, but few facts. Dr. Fred Freitag, associate director of the Diamond Headache Clinic in Chicago, said no one really knows what leads a patient to develop this type of headache.

It may be caused by "compounds found in the skins of grapes and they are either naturally occurring or produced through fermentation," Freitag said. He would postulate no further. "It's not as if there are hundreds of thousands of dollars for funding" studies to determine the cause, Freitag said. There is actually a stigma to studying the subject.

"I've entertained the idea of looking for grants to study this and I've been told, "Don't go there, it's bad PR," Freitag said. Bad publicity comes to those who would study drinking? Carry Nation is with us yet.

Sulfites used to take the blame for RWH. About 20 years ago the Food and Drug Administration determined that about 1 percent of the population is allergic to sulfites and required that wines containing certain levels of the compound be labeled "contains sulfites." Many people have assumed, incorrectly, that the labeling is designed to warn people who get a red wine headache. Scientists have pointed out, however, that because of their higher sugar content, many sweet white wines contain more sulfites than red wines - yet do not cause headaches in those who suffer from RWH. Additionally, dried fruits usually contain sulfites but you never hear of dried fruit headaches.

Sulfites can cause an allergic reaction, Freitag said, but they give headaches only to asthmatics. The more common reaction to sulfites is a breathing problem.

Other experts say that the tannins in red wine are at the root of the headaches. Tannins are the flavonoids in wine that set one's mouth to puckering. The Harvard Health Letter notes several well-controlled experiments showing that tannins in the blood cause the release of serotonin, a neurotransmitter. High levels of serotonin can cause headaches and that may happen in people who also suffer from migraine headaches.

But that does not explain why people who do not get migraines get the syndrome.

Dr. Marion Nestle, chairwoman of the department of nutrition and food studies at New York University, added that no one complains about tea, soy or chocolate headaches - though all contain tannins.

A third school of thought blames histamines. Histamines are 20 percent to 200 percent more likely to be in red wine than in white, and those who are allergic to them are deficient in a certain enzyme. Some experts believe that the combination of alcohol and that deficiency can cause the headaches. But a study of 16 people with intolerance to wine, reported in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology in February of 2001, found no difference in reactions to low- and high-histamine wines.

For every study proving the hypothesis there is one to disprove it. Take your pick.

(One recent study suggested that prostaglandins - substances that contribute to pain and swelling - may cause RWH)

Yet for most people who suffer from RWH, the hypotheses are irrelevant. They want to know what to do about the problem. Some Web sites suggest prevention: for histamine sensitivity, pop a non-sedating antihistamine like Claritin (or take an aspirin to stop production of prostaglandins).

Freitag frowns on this. To lick the problem, he advises what might be a long, painful and costly experiment.

Freitag, a sufferer of the headaches, said he has found he can drink some reds and not others. Almost any California red is fine but only certain reds from France - nothing in the Burgundy family, though, which includes all cabernet sauvignon grapes from Italy and Spain. But some of his patients can only drink French reds.

"If you really like red wine," Freitag said, "you should try different brands, different grapes, different countries of origin. That's the only way you are going to find out."

Here's how to challenge yourself, if you must. Drink a half a glass of red wine; if it is going to give you a headache, it will do so within 15 minutes. If there is no reaction, stick with that wine for the evening, keeping your alcohol consumption to no more than two glasses. Keep a journal. And don't confuse RWH with the headache that comes six hours after a full evening of drinking. That's called a hangover.

Grape & Region

Durif (Petite Sirah) is a variety of red wine grape that has been grown in California, Australia, France, and Israel. Since the end of the 20th century, wineries located in Washington's Yakima River Valley, Maryland, Arizona, West Virginia, Chile, Mexico's Baja Peninsula, and Ontario's Niagara Peninsula have also produced wines from Durif grapes. It is the main grape known in the U.S. and Israel as Petite Sirah, with over 90% of the California plantings labeled "Petite Sirah" being Durif grapes; the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) recognizes "Durif" and "Petite Sirah" as interchangeable and referring to the same grape. It produces tannic wines with a spicy, plummy flavor. The grape originated as a cross of Syrah pollen germinating a Peloursin plant. On some occasions, Peloursin and Syrah vines may be called Petite Sirah, usually because the varieties are extremely difficult to distinguish in old age.

History

The grape is named after François Durif, a botanist at the University of Montpellier. It was in a Peloursin vineyard near the university that he discovered the unique vine that he named for himself in 1880. As a conclusion of DNA fingerprinting at the University of California, Davis in 1997, Syrah was identified as the source of the pollen that originally crossed with Peloursin flowers. The grape is highly resistance to downy mildew. Today, it is almost nonexistent in France.

Regional production

California and Australia are now the two leading producers of Durif. The grape can also be found in Israel, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico.

USA

DNA fingerprinting has shown that the majority of Petite Sirah plantings in California are actually Durif. The vine is a popular planting in Lake, Mendocino, Sonoma, Napa, Monterey and San Joaquin County. In addition to being produced as a varietal wine, the grape is sometimes blended with Zinfandel. In years when heavy rain or excess sun has weakened the quality or yield of Cabernet Sauvignon or Pinot Noir plantings, Petite Sirah may also be used as a blending partner to strengthen the wine. The average age of Petite Sirah vines tends to be older than that of most Californian vines.

As of December 2007, the TTB lists both Petite Sirah and Durif as approved grape varieties for American wines, but they are not listed as synonyms. This means that U.S. producers can produce Durif wine, but not label it as Petite Sirah, and vice versa. The ATF proposed that they be recognized as synonyms but a decision appears to be postponed indefinitely, probably because the new regulation is tied up in the trade dispute that would see the TTB recognize Primitivo as a synonym for Zinfandel.

While not one of the officially sanctioned grapes of the Côtes du Rhône AOC, Petite Sirah's linking to Durif caused the California's Rhone Rangers to add the grape to its listings of wine in 2002.

Syrah grapes

Petite Sirah is sometimes mistakenly spelled "Petite Syrah," which has historically referred to a small-berried clone of the Syrah grape by Rhône growers. In California, immigrant vine growers introduced Syrah in 1878 and used the phrase "Petite Syrah" to refer to the lower yields that the vines then were producing in California. Actual Petite Sirah (Durif) was then introduced in 1884.

Viticulture

The "petite" in the name of this grape refers to the size of its berries and not the vine, which is particularly vigorous. The leaves are large, with a bright green upper surface and paler green lower surface. The grape forms tightly packed clusters that can be susceptible to rotting in rainy environments. The small berries create a high skin to juice ratio, which can produce very tannic wines if the juice goes through an extended maceration period. In the presence of new oak barrels, the wine can develop an aroma of melted chocolate.

Wine

Petite Sirah produces dark, inky colored wines that are relatively acidic, with firm texture and mouth feel; the bouquet has herbal and black pepper overtones, and typically offers flavors of blue fruit, black fruit, plums, and especially blueberries. Compared to Syrah, the wine is noticeably more dark and purplish in color, and typically rounder and fuller in the mouth, and offers a brightness that Syrah lacks. The wines are very tannic, with aging ability that can exceed 20 years in the bottle. Petite Sirah can sometimes be rather "short", that is, the flavor does not linger in the mouth, hence the benefit of blending with another grape which may lack mid-palate depth, but add length and elegance.

WSWC Annual Picnic will be held on Wednesday, July 17 starting at 1:00 p.m. There will be a charge of \$5 per adult to cover costs for the main protein dishes.

Place: Home of Lee & Valerie Robinson; 23501 SW Stafford Hill Dr. West Lynn, OR, 97068

We will enjoy a potluck style meal. Those signed up for the protein dishes are listed below. The club will reimburse you. We still need sign ups for beef and fish or turkey. E-mail Barb Stinger at kbstinger@frontier.com to sign up.

Chicken – Sammy Nachimuthu; Beef - ?; Pork – Cameren & Scott Nelson; Fish or Turkey – ?; Vegetarian - Kathleen High & Dana Blizzard; Lamb - Craig & Mindy Bush.

All members need to provide one of the following: Last names A-H bring side dish
Last names I-P bring desert
Last names Q-Z bring salad

Remember to bring your home grown wines to share, glasses & lawn chairs for comfort. The club will furnish plates, napkins and utensils. Also bring your Washington County Fair wine competition entries and Miriam Schnepf will deliver them to the Fair. She will have some exhibit forms to fill out.

Tour of Soter Vineyards and Winery

About 20 members met at Soter Vineyards at 9:30 on Sunday, May 29. Tony Soter and his cellar-master Chris Fladwood took us down to the winery for tastes of his 2005 Brut Rose, 2008 North Valley Pinot Noir, 2009 North Valley Pinot Noir and 2009 Mineral Springs Pinot Noir. In addition we were able to taste barrel samples of the North Valley 2010 Pinot Noir from both neutral and new oak barrels and the 2010 Mineral Springs Pinot Noir. Mineral Springs is from estate vines where North Valley grapes can be sourced from other vineyards within a thirty-mile radius of Soter.



Tony Soter, without formal training, is very knowledgeable about both grape growing and wine production. He is minimalist by nature preferring to source quality grapes and use very little intervention during production. He does allow native yeasts to start the initial fermentation then finishing with a shot of commercial yeast at about 1/4 the amount called for. He has experimented with Oregon white oak barrels and compares it favorably to French oak. He thinks Oregon oak has a future once stave aging has been worked out. He rarely uses acid or sugar additions. He uses cold soak and, sometimes, extended maceration. He prefers whole or preferably slightly broken whole berries and sometimes adds whole clusters as long as the stems are brown lignified. As far as free sulfur goes he likes to maintain 20 ppm with 30 ppm on the high side.

We then went up to the vineyard where he explained his growing techniques and decision points. For the most part he is using horizontal cordon vine training rather than the predominantly cane pruned vines used by most growers in the Willamette Valley. He feels cordon vines are easier to work with and will produce quality fruit at less cost. He varies his cover crop between rows depending on measured soil fertility. Low fertility sites may have nitrogen fixing legumes between rows while high fertility sites are grass. In between sites may have grass with every other row turned under.



Our members asked many questions which Tony answered expertly. This was a tour well worth the time spent.



West Side Wine Club Leadership Team – 2010

President: **Jon Kahrs** jekahrs@aol.com

- 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, update membership list with secretary
- Pay bills

Secretary: **Ken and Barb Stinger** kbstinger@frontier.com

- Communicate regularly about club activities and issues
- Monthly newsletter on first Wednesday
- Prepare meeting agenda
- Keep updated list of members, nametags and other data
- Club message board invitations

Chair of Education: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery Tours: **Mike Smolak** SmolakM@DimensionResources.com

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)
- Winery Tour 1
- Winery Tour 2

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

Webmaster: **David Ladd**

Chair of Group Purchases **Sammy Nachimuthu** murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com

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

- Chandler Reach Vineyard – **Sammy Nachimuthu** murugasamy_nachimuthu@yahoo.com
- Del Rio Vineyard – **Craig Bush** pnoir1@frontier.com
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chair of Competitions: **Miriam Schnepf** mowntnwmn@mac.com

- Work 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**

- Awards Gala / Holliday party