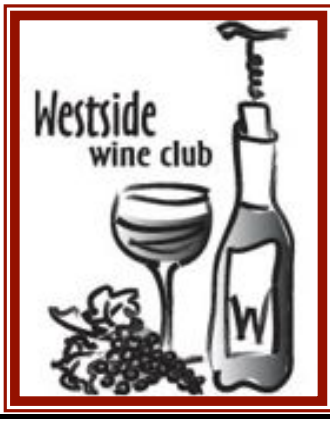


West Side Wine Club

May 2012

President's Musings



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

President's Musings: Hot Hot Hot!

Spring has come back with a roar. The vines in my front yard are easily 2 weeks ahead of last year. With 90-degree temperatures on tap for Monday we may find ourselves in a warm year. This is a great opportunity to make fuller bodied pinots and some of the more reticent eastern Washington grapes. The other good news is that if we continue to have a good year, vineyard managers will be able to produce more as they will not need to drop fruit to increase ripening and flavor. The problem is that in a big year subtlety can be lost. But the poor vineyards can produce decent fruit. Cooler vineyards, which for the last two years have been reluctant to ripen, will find their higher quality grapes in demand. So as we prepare to order grapes, don't just do what you normally do. Think about what does well in a warm year. Perhaps this is the year for Sangiovese, Mourvedre and Tempranillo.

This is the time of year to preorder a barrel if you want to get a discount. I know that that Bouchard Cooperages is taking preorders of Damy, Billion and Cadus barrels until the middle of this month. Now is the time to really think about what would go with that new wine you're going to make from a warmer year. Nicholas Keeler from Allary Cooperages will be speaking to our club about barrels. This should be very interesting and informative. Don Robinson and I are using an Allary Barrel in our winemaking this year. We were impressed by the flavors and the price. So don't miss that meeting.

We are also planning a tour this summer to Oregon Barrel Works. Our goal will be to gather insight into the making of barrels and understand how barrels are different from one another. We are going to pair this with a tour where we would taste a variety of barrel samples. Our goal will be to have fun and educate ourselves – and our palates - on how different barrels impart flavors to wine.

This Saturday we will have an awesome tour of Johan Vineyards. Johan has a biodynamic vineyard, which, as we will find out Saturday, has some unusual twist. A tasted Johan Vineyards wine at the State Fair a couple of years ago and it was quite good. See more information in this newsletter. I hope to see everyone there.

Enjoy the hot weather Monday,

Jon Kahrs
President, WSWC

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Information & Trivia

On May 18 - Wine Seminar: White Burgundy by Scott Paul. Explore all the major white wine regions & villages as well as viticulture & wine making techniques. Taste 6 yummy examples along the way. Fee: \$55 Includes wines, cheese, pate and printed materials. Reserve seat: Kelly Karr, 503-319-5827. 2537 N.W. Upshur St., Portland. <http://www.scottpaul.com/events>

"The hard part about being a bartender is figuring out who is drunk and who is just stupid." ~ Richard Braunstein

The "top five" chateaus of Bordeaux, according to the 1855 Classification, were actually only four: Lafite-Rothschild, Latour, Margaux and Haut-Brion. In the only change to that historic classification, Mouton-Rothschild was added in 1973.

Wine has so many organic chemical compounds it is considered more complex than blood serum.

Never wrestle with a pig- you both get dirty but the pig likes it.

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

Always remember you're unique. Just like everyone else.

Brain cells come and brain cells go, but fat cells live forever.

Eat right. Stay fit. Die anyway.

Half the people you know are below average.

I intend to live forever. So far, so good.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda: Speaker, Nicholas Keeler, American Sales Manager Tonnellerie Allary barrels

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/>

April Meeting Minutes

Members present = 23 So many people were busy partaking of the potluck that the meeting didn't get started until 7:20.

Please welcome two new members, Curt Larson & Steve Fine.

Two new children were welcomed into the fold; Sri Pria & Sammy Nachimuthu had a baby girl also Dana & Nick Blizzard had a baby girl.

Snacks for the May meeting will again be potluck.

The May meeting will feature speaker Nicholas Keeler, American Sales Manager Tonnellerie Allary barrels.

Sammy N. - Grape buys: Sammy said the vineyards we bought from last year have reserved the same allotment of grapes for us again this year. Most vineyards will be raising prices by about \$0.10 per pound. Both Sagemoor and Lonesome Spring Ranch grapes will be available. Sammy will check to see if Zerba grapes will be available.

Craig Bush will be managing Some of the Courting Hill Vineyards Chardonnay grapes this year and will be dropping fruit for quality. If you are interested in these grapes, contact Craig Bush at pnoir1@hotmail.com.

You are reminded to sign up for the tour of Johan vineyards & winery on Saturday, May 11. Contact Mike Smolak at Mike@NWRetire.com to reserve your spot.

2011-barrel samples: The person bringing the sample described the wine as we all tasted.

- 1- Joe Nadal - Joe waited until we had all tasted this sample before revealing that it was blueberry done dry, which surprised everyone. Most members guessed light Pinot Noir. On skins for 2 weeks; In barrels, topped with grape wine. Joe said blueberries have natural potassium sorbate and he had to re-start the fermentation several times. The group recommended adding a touch of sugar to improve balance.
- 2- Jon Kahrs - Pinot Noir; grapes from Yamhill/Carlton area; 777/115 clones. Done with 3 different yeasts. Removed seeds followed with 2 weeks extended maceration. Coming along nicely.
- 3- Paul Boyechco - Pinot Noir; under-ripe grapes from Mulino area. This is Paul's first attempt at Pinot. He brought brix up from 19 to 24 using sugar. Used oak cubes. This wine had a little VA smell which blew off quickly. Light, pleasant, fruity wine.
- 4- Craig Bush - Pinot Noir; 50% Temperance hill field blend and Sunnyside. Added sugar to bring brix from 21 up to 23; used RC212 yeast; some cold stabilization; in a neutral barrel. No extended maceration and no SO₂ added as yet. Nice color, smooth berry flavor. Very nice wine.
- 5- Phil Bard - Pinot Noir; Temperance Hill grapes. This is Phil's first attempt at Pinot. About 20 brix; RC212 yeast. Fermented with oak chips mixed in with the must. Removed seeds half way through fermentation. Has finished malolactic and is presently in new French oak. Coming along
- 6- Steve Fine - Bordeaux blend; 70% Cabernet Sauvignon; 15% Malbec; 15% Cabernet Franc. Cooler than normal fermentation. Presently 50% in oak, the rest in glass. Nice French style Bordeaux blend.
- 7- Bill Brown - Barbera; Grapes from The Dalles; initially 1.4 TA; pH was 3.12; 24.3 brix. Cold soaked, very light press; mostly free run. Finished malolactic. Cold stabilized to drop tartrates. Good but still a little sour. Some members recommended actions to further reduce acidity.
- 8- Jim Ourada - Marion berry; Used Pasteur Red yeast for 17% alcohol. Nice residual sugar level; very strong Marion berry flavor.

Paraprosdokians of the month (look it up).....

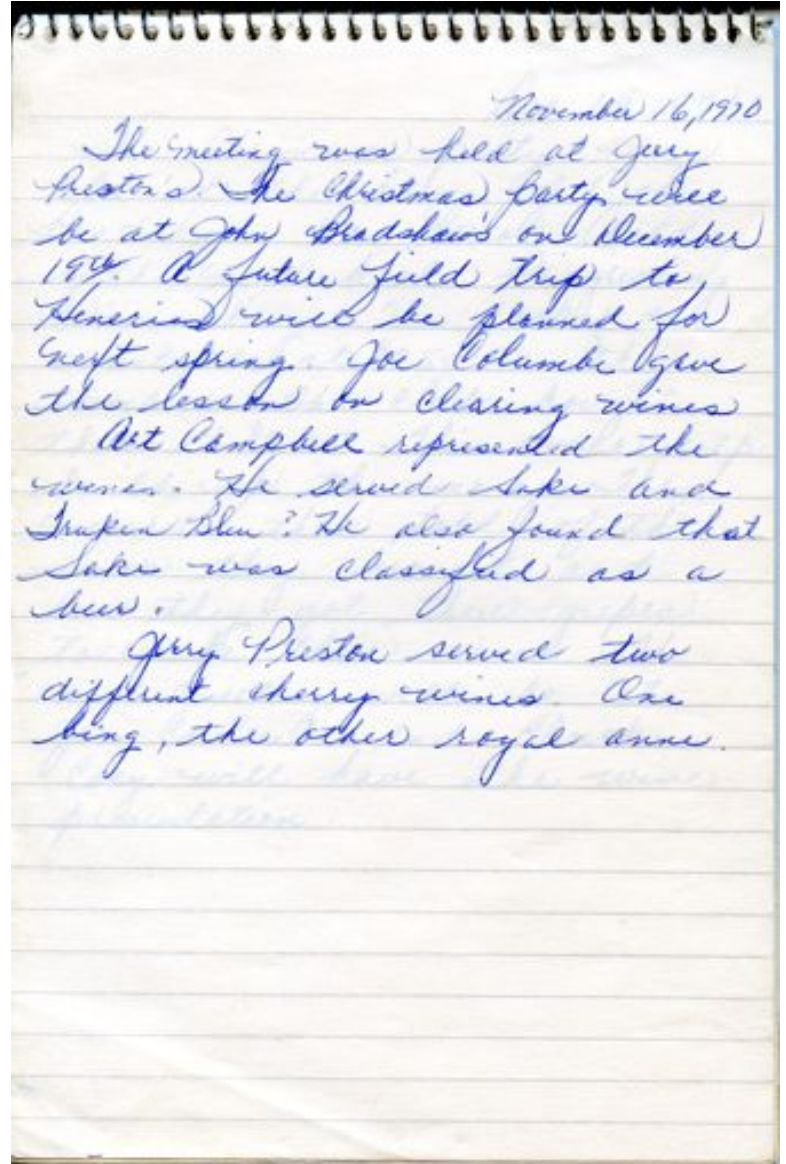
- Evening news is where they begin with 'Good Evening,' and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.
- To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
- I thought I wanted a career. Turns out I just wanted paychecks.

WSWC history.....

Meeting minutes fro 1970 & a photo from 1996



Ken Moyle & Peter Rosback Pinot Gris
Summer 1996



(Editor) - A couple years ago, I had 3 cases of a big, flavorful Merlot. I really liked it except for a taste of sweetness that I couldn't get past, possibly caused by high alcohol. I had a hard time even drinking the stuff. At the same time, I had another barrel of Sangiovese that had been in the barrel for 2 years. It was OK but lacked a full mouth feel and was very short in the mouth. We did bench trials blending small amounts of the Merlot with the Sangiovese in increments of 5% up to 25%. Our favorites were between 20% and 25% so we did more bench trials at 1% increments between 20% and 25%. We wound up using the 20% level. The result was a reasonably balanced wine superior to each of the two components allowing me to make good use of the sweet Merlot. In this case I had a definite goal in converting two problem wines into a better wine, which was limited in the amount of Merlot available.



Advanced Wine Blending

Even though it's early in the aging process for the 2011 wine, it's not too early to start thinking about possible blending opportunities. Here is an article from author Ed Kraus on the subject.

Blending to Improve Wines

Author

Ed Kraus

On the surface there doesn't seem to be much to blending wines. Blending, in itself, is a physically simple task. You take one wine and stir it with another, and the result is a wine that tastes a little like both. In reality, blending is a deceptive business that is more than simply stirring wines.

First-time blenders can improve their chances of success by arming themselves with a basic understanding of what concepts are really involved.

From a commercial standpoint the primary function of blending is to help the winery keep a consistent product from bottle to bottle. Blending among the various storage vessels of a particular vintage cancels out any variation created that year from a number of factors, such as differences in vineyards, fermentation containers, and tannin levels in barrels.

The second most common reason wineries blend is to keep their non-varietals consistent from one year to the next. This is a little more involved than blending across a particular vintage. Maintaining consistency within the same vintage requires a limited amount of skill and is almost routine in nature. Keeping non-varietals consistent from year to year requires an ability to taste and blend in an attempt to recreate what was made the year before.

For the home winemaker, the goal is a little different. For an amateur blending for the same reasons as the professional does has little value. Home winemakers blend to improve their wines, a third and less common reason wineries blend. Combining two or more wines makes each one better than they would be on their own. In effect the goal is to make one plus one equal at least three.

This is a more masterful side to blending that not only requires an understanding of its mechanics but also requires a palate with some finesse and an ability to envision a flavorful outcome. But the mechanics come first.

The Mechanics

There is a small part to blending wines that is quantifiable and non-subjective. For example if you have a wine with a titrated acid level of 1.1 percent and blend it with a wine that reads 0.55 percent, then the laws of science will easily tell you that upon blending the two wines the resulting creation will have a tartaric percentage somewhere between the two contributing wines. And to go a step further, if you know the proportion used of each wine in the blending, the math will predict exactly what acid level will result.

The same prediction can be applied to any measurable feature of a wine such as residual sugar, color, alcohol, and volatile acid. This does not tell you how the finished blend is going to taste, but it does allow you to maintain control of the measurable features. Knowing the measurable features is the starting point for any blending challenge. By knowing as many measurable features as possible, you can then begin to determine some blending parameters. This will help you to focus on the blends that are possible realities.

The Pearson Square is a visual math tool that can help even the most inept at math determine blending ratios of two wines to achieve a quantifiable outcome.

For example one wine has an acid level of 0.55 percent, and the other has 1.1 percent. You can use the Pearson Square to determine the ratio needed to obtain any desired acidity level between the two. In this example, shoot for an acid level of 0.7 percent.

The top left corner and the bottom left corner represent the acid level of the two wines to be blended. The center number is the desired acid level. The two numbers on the right are numbers that you calculate. The 0.15 is simply the difference between 0.55 and 0.7; likewise the 0.40 is the difference between 1.10 and 0.70.

The 0.15 and the 0.40 now represent the blending ratio of the wines that would result in the desired acid level: 15 parts of 0.55 percent wine and 40 parts of 1.10 percent wine. In this case the answers can be reduced to its lowest common denominator by dividing by five. So the ratio becomes three parts and eight parts respectively.

The point here is take measurements and follow through with calculations. Consider it a starting point before ever allowing any two wines to meet. Use what little science blending has to offer. It will be the foundation upon which your palate's learned blending abilities will have to build.

The Breakable Rule

On the whole, blending to improve wines is more like an art than a science. Like any art there are some basic rules that are allowed to be broken.

The following breakable rules are listed in order from the least breakable to the most breakable:

Blend wines that are fundamentally sound. Don't treat blending as a cure-all. The wines most suitable for blending are the ones with considerable quality but might have a single correctable defect. Wines that create a whole wish list are seldom candidates for successful blending.

Have a specific goal. Don't just blend because you want to make a wine better. For example know that you are blending to adjust a particular fundamental feature of a wine such as acidity, color, and residual sugar. Also know what desired measurement you want. Or from a more subjective point, know that you are blending to alter a nuance of a wine such as its berry undertones. Or maybe your goal is producing a commercial wine.

Do test blending with small amounts before blending in bulk. If possible have someone help you. Have someone mix a few combinations of two wines. Then you and others can do a blind tasting. Let your favorite blending choice be the guide to fine tune the next set of blending to be blindly tasted, and do the same with the rest. Once you feel you have produced the ultimate combination, you might even consider bringing a third wine into the picture. This can obviously go on to an endless number of rounds and with an endless number of wines, which brings up two drastically important points. As an amateur blender if you don't get anything else out of this article get this: As hard as it might seem sometimes, try not to swallow your sips; spit. The second point is observe rule number four.

When you feel you've reached a blending decision, wait at least a day before taking action. This will give your palate a chance to unwind and re-taste the blending from a fresh and sometimes more sober standpoint. Blending is not something to be rushed, but something to be done with solid footsteps and a reasonable amount of certainty. Take a step back and reconsider all the characteristics of the chosen blend in a more holistic fashion. Forget about analyzing it. What is your overall impression after a fresh, first sip or two?

Fine or filter wines after blending, not before blending. If you filter your wines it is best to wait a few days after blending. Every so often reactions between two or more wines can cause various precipitations to occur. This is for the most part an unpredictable phenomenon and should be just thought of as something that rarely happens and is easily solvable through filtration and/or finings.

Blend wines that are from the same year. Blending wines from different years, in general, does not work as well. Wines blended from different years seem to have more instances of precipitation. These types of blends also seem to pull the older vintage back to a youthful harshness even though it might have been almost at its ultimate age for consumption.

Blend wines that are similar in character. It is much safer and easier to blend wines of similar or like type than it is to blend wines that are dissimilar. For example, blend heavy reds with heavy reds, just as Cabernet is often blended with Merlot. Or blend a little peach wine with some Riesling. But attempting to blend a Merlot with a Riesling, while possible through luck, is not likely to increase the quality of your cellar stock.

Blending by Design

Understanding the mechanics and the rules of blending gives the novice blender a much-needed path to follow. The blender should observe the breakable rules and use them as a guideline. The blender should take measurements of the wines to be blended to know what cards are being dealt. But the fact can't be ignored that all these rules and measurements are only secondary to the real issue of how the wine tastes.

To become the best at blending, you must learn how to identify a particular wine's strengths before you can continue to improve that wine. What makes the wine stand out among the rest? What gives it distinction? Is it the wine's unusually light, crisp fruitiness? Or is it the rich, deep berry assertiveness? Or is it the unique way the wine starts on the tongue with its deep berry flavors and ends up cleanly with a light, crisp fruity aftertaste?

Understanding a wine's weaknesses is just as important but usually easier to identify. Quite often it is an awkward aftertaste or a lack of roundness in flavor, making the drinking experience one dimensional and uneventful. It could also be a measurable feature such as acidity or color. Only then can you select secondary wines to blend with it that have complementing characters.

A complementing wine means a secondary wine that not only enhances the anchoring features of a primary wine, but also dilutes the weaknesses of that wine. In other words the two wines must fit together, filling in each other's voids as well as building on their strengths. Blending that falls short of this goal is usually a futile event that just ends up trading one mediocre wine for another at best.

Without question there is significant talent in the ability to identify a primary wine stock's distinctive qualities, but there is even more talent in the ability to recognize other wines that have fitting characteristics that can augment that wine. So often blending can unsuspectingly reduce the desired features of a wine to a gray, uneventful nothing.

Don't feel that blending is only for the professionals or the few amateurs who aspire to become professional. Blending is a valuable tool that anyone with cellar stock should learn to use.

Start by observing the wines you drink whether commercial or homemade. Try to dissect each of the wine's characters. If you have time, run to the cellar and see if you can't pick out another bottle of wine that you feel would blend well with it. Not only is this approach helpful in becoming a proficient blender but also a fun and interesting way to appreciate wine.

Reminder: Dues and Waiver for 2012

It's time for club paperwork for 2012. Please submit your dues and waiver at a meeting or mail them directly to our Treasurer, Scott Nelson at the address below. The waiver can be obtained from our web site at <http://www.westsidewineclub.com/> under "current news".

The great continuing low price of:

\$15.00 Single

\$30.00 Couples

Please remit to:

Westside Wine Club c/o Scott Nelson

PO Box 0219, Beaverton, OR 97075-0219

Jack Seigendall wants to remind you about our first winery / vineyard tour of the year:

Saturday May 12th 10 am is our first wine tour for the club this year. We will be visiting Johan Winery in the Eola-Amity AVA.

<http://johanvineyards.com/index.htm>

Let's have a good turnout for this tour.

Our Vineyards

Johan Vineyards resides on 85 acres of gently sloping estate vineyards in the heart of the Willamette Valley. Adjacent to the Van Duzer corridor, our vineyards are blessed with afternoon ocean breezes and cool evening temperatures that are ideal for ripening Burgundian varietals. Elevations range from approximately 180 to 380 feet. Soils are Helvetia, Steiwer, and Santiam silts which were formed primarily from ancient marine sedimentary rock.

Our Wines

We are passionate about making premium wines that showcase our estate vineyards. We know that if one starts with excellent grapes, handles the fruit carefully, and intervenes in the wine making process only when necessary, the wine should be great. Our wines offer elegance, balance, complexity, and age ability. All wines are made in small, handcrafted batches to insure quality and enjoyment. We produce Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, and Vin Gris.

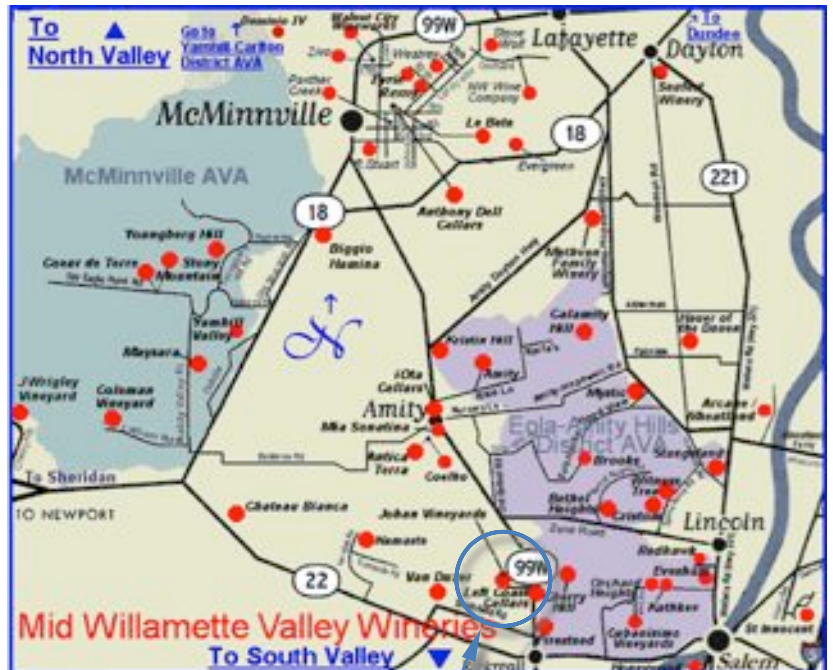
Nearby is Left Coast Cellars whose tasting room also contains a café for lunch

http://www.leftcoastcellars.com/home/lc1/page_31/tasting_room_cafe.html or you're welcome to bring a picnic lunch and tailgate.

We can conclude our tour by tasting their offerings.

Both wineries are easy to find See attached map.

As always, please drink and drive responsibly.



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@genesislabs.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** mowntwmn@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 / Holiday parties

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

Webmaster: **David Ladd**