

# West Side Wine Club

May 2015

Monthly Rant



## Scheduled Meetings

**January 10, 2015**

Annual Gala – Archer Winery

**January 21, 2015**

Crush Talk / Planning

**February 18, 2015**

Bordeaux Tasting

**March 18, 2015**

Speaker: Michael Blackard of "Portocork"

**April 11, 2015**

Tour, Ferraro Cellars

**April 22, 2015**

Barrel / Carboy Sample Tasting

**May 20, 2015**

Speaker - Patrick McElligott, Sineann Winery, Chemeketa instructor & wine judge

**June 17, 2015**

"Best Practices of Amateur Winemakers"

**July 11, 2015**

Annual Picnic

**August 19, 2015**

All Whites Tasting

**September 16, 2015**

Other Reds Tasting

**October 21, 2015**

Pinot Noir Tasting

**November**

No Meeting

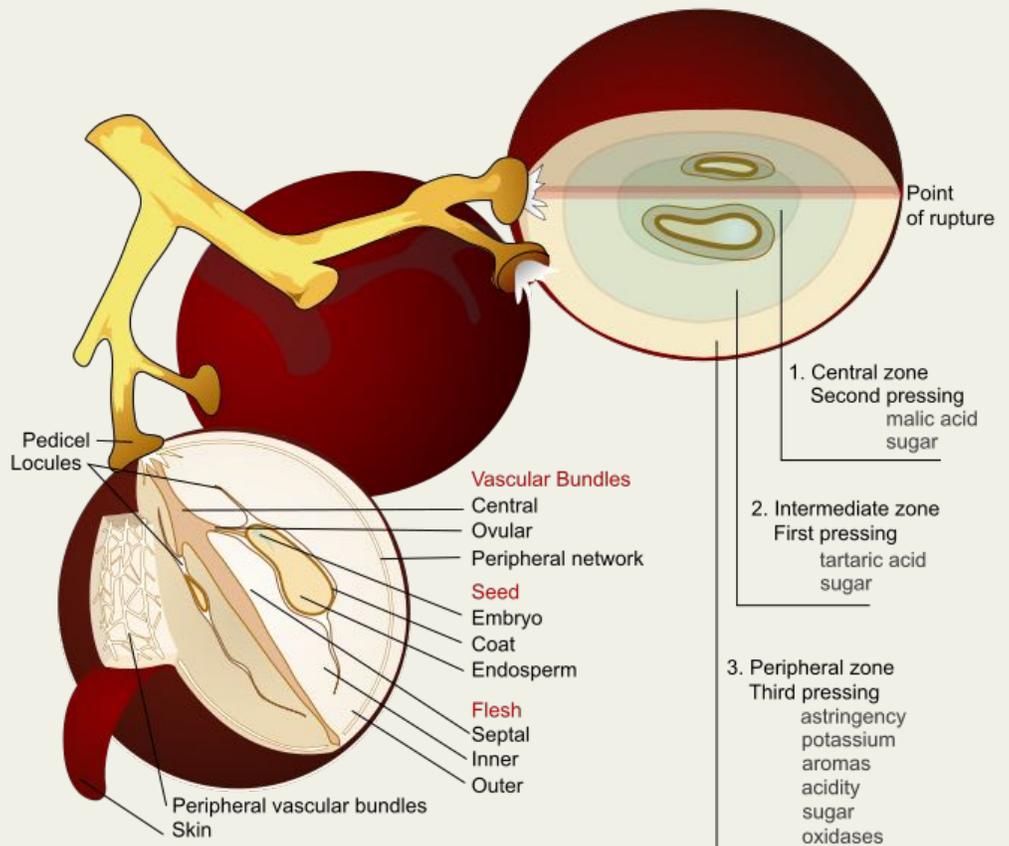
**December 2, 2015**

Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections

Not much to report this month, Alice and I are vacationing in Maui and as far as beverages are concerned, wine has been temporarily replaced by Mai Tai's. Hopefully everyone has their fruit order in with Jonathan, and also hope that the vineyards come through on the offerings they have made. See you soon!  
Phil



## Anatomy of a grape:



## Information & Trivia

• " I'm not superstitious, but I am a little stitious "

### • Beringer introduces 'flavor strips'

Beringer Vineyards last month announced a new on-premise program to allow consumers to sample the taste of three of its wines through non-alcoholic "flavor strips." Mounted in the wine section of select Kroger stores, the tasting stations dispense the strips loaded with flavors including Chardonnay, white Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon.



• In a first for Oregon, the owners of Domaine Serene in Dayton, Grace and Ken Evenstad, have purchased a vineyard and winery in Burgundy, France, turning the tables on a trend that has seen an increasing number of French wineries purchasing vineyards in Oregon. The Evenstads have purchased Château de la Créée in the Côte d'Or area in Burgundy.

• Shipwreck wines are a waste of time. Just ask the fifty souls who lined up at Charleston, South Carolina's Wine & Food Festival in March to sample wine recovered from an 1864 shipwreck. They were hoping for nectar of the gods, but were treated instead to a gray sludge tasting of gasoline, salt water and vinegar. Why are we not surprised?

• I believe no problem is so large or so difficult that it can't be blamed on somebody else.

**The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll Winery.**

**Agenda: Speaker - Patrick McElligott, associated with Sineann Winery, Chemeketa instructor & wine judge will be our speaker. He will speak & take questions about general winemaking. He is interested in talking about wine faults, what to do about them, how to prevent them. If you have a wine that you think is faulty, bring it to the meeting.**

**1.) Snacks: This will be a potluck; bring a small snack to share.**

**2.) If you have not paid your dues or signed a waiver, please do so at this meeting.**

**3.) Bring a wine glass for tasting member wines.**

**4.) The regular club meeting will begin at 7 pm and end by 9 pm. If you can, get there a little early to help set up. Please help put away chairs and tables at the end of the meeting.**

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

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

## April meeting minutes

Present: 17

Mike Smolak

Patrick McElligott, of Sinnean, will be our May meeting speaker, hosting (perhaps) an exercise using dry whites, sweet whites and ice. The other option being considered is to review flawed wines provided by the WSWC.

Bill Brown

- Is in contact with Carlton Winemakers' Studio about a future tour.
- Report from Ferraro/Sinnean event was that the WSWC came through with better than expected purchases.
- Discussion around having only paying members attend tours.
- Suggested sending email prior to tour/event inviting people to attend with a reminder to please update their dues.

Jonathon Brown

2015 Grape Purchases

- Deadline: ALL orders to be made by May 1st, 2015.
- Zerba and Sagemoor can't promise availability of varieties.
- Lonesome Springs may have limited availability of Grenache and other varieties (place orders soon).
- Discussion about ways to shift orders per adjustments needed regarding availability of fruit.
- Walla Walla's season is currently developing behind Oregon's.
- Jonathon will call individuals May 1st as needed to follow-up and confirm smaller orders

Barrel Samples

- Samples were poured (2 whites, Oak Knoll's Pinot White, and several reds)

Other Important Stuff

- Jon Kahrs suggested that Barb Thompson rename her "Night Owl Cellars" to "Night Sweats". Barb is considering it...
- Ted attended...Hoorah!
- It was decided that Don and John's wine was indeed a twenty-fourteen-in-a-thirty-gallon-ten-year-old-barrel-and-NOT-the-thirteen-in-a-fifteen...
- Unanimous vote that the Stingers will be hosting both the Gala and Picnic at their home this year. (Barb Stinger said Huh? ).
- It was decided that those in absentee will be the new president and vice president. (no way! Jose').



On April 11th about 20 members of the WSWC attended a tour of Ferraro Cellars near in the space also occupied by Sineann and Lady Hill wineries. Their new location is near Champoeg Park. While we tasted the 3 wines produced by Dick & Mary Ferraro he explained his background and answered our questions about his philosophy of winemaking. Before going commercial, Dick was a member of WSWC. He said he started the Newsletter e-mail delivery system for the club. Ferraro Cellars is a family owned business established in 2002 producing a limited quantity of premium red wines. He makes 3 wines per year with a total of 250 to 300 cases per year. We also tasted several of Sineann's wines under the direction of Patrick McElligott including their Zinfandel produced from the 114 year old, head pruned vines near The Dalles.





## What's the Big Deal About Stems?

Apr 21, 2015

Why would anyone want to put grape stems in their wine? Richard Hemming investigates.

### Stems? As in the bits of a bunch of grapes you throw away?

Yes! There is a growing trend for chucking the stems in the fermentation vat along with the grapes, rather than chucking them away. When making red wine, most grapes go through a machine called a crusher-destemmer, when they reach the winery. This process separates the stems from the skin and pulp of the fruit, which are normally discarded, and often become used for fertilizer or mulch back in the vineyard but some winemakers think they're worth keeping.

### So go on – how do stems influence the way a wine tastes?

The most obvious stylistic effect is a herbal character in the wine. Jeremy Seysses of Burgundy's stem-loving Domaine Dujac describes it as "sappy and spicy" bringing aromas of menthol and jasmine. If it becomes excessive, this green element can give the impression of under ripeness and become a negative attribute: "If it goes wrong, it's vegetal. But when it works the highs are higher," says Seysses.

But it's not just the flavor. Stems can influence the structure of a wine too, especially its tannins. Matt Stafford, chief winemaker at New Zealand's Craggy Range, says that "stems lengthen the structure and give a savory, rather than sweet, finish to the tannins".

Meanwhile Gavin Monery of urban winery London Cru suggests that adding more stems doesn't automatically equate to a harder texture. In fact, he feels that greater stem content can create smoother texture. That sounds counter-intuitive, but it may be explained by the fact that stems contain potassium. This has the effect of lowering the acidity of the wine, which may explain how the perception of tannic feel is altered. However, Monery adds that post-fermentation maceration is best avoided where stems have been used, as ethanol can extract harsher tannins.

### How should I use the stems?

Good question. There's an important distinction between whole-bunch fermentation and adding stems back. In the latter case, grapes are destemmed as normal, but the stems are then returned to the fermentation vat. This is claimed to be a poor substitute for the whole-bunch method. Stafford describes it as "no different to a powdered tannin addition". For improving the quality of a wine, whole-bunch (sometimes called whole-cluster) fermentation is the best way to potentially benefit from the influence of stems.

### All right then, what happens with whole-bunch fermentation?

Here comes the science: firstly, using whole bunches of grapes means that a certain degree of carbonic maceration takes place at the beginning of the process. This is the practice made famous by Beaujolais. It involves intracellular fermentation within unbroken grapes, which is supposed to extract lots of color but minimal tannin from the skins. Stafford also believes it "lifts the floral notes" of the fruit.

At this stage, the stem is incidental to the action; necessary to facilitate whole bunches of grapes, but without having a direct influence on the fermentation. After this intracellular stage, however, stems take on a more active role. Spread throughout a fermentation, they break up the mass of skins and pulp, thereby affecting temperature and movement of two key gases – oxygen and carbon dioxide.

Seysses observes that the temperature of whole-bunch fermentations is more regular throughout the tank, because the liquid circulates more easily. This avoids the hotspots that can accumulate in destemmed fermentations. Furthermore, the overall temperature tends to be lower so the process of extracting tannin and color is more gentle.

Stems also allow gases to move more freely. That means the escaping carbon dioxide doesn't produce such a thick cap of skins, and it also allows oxygen to permeate the fermentation to keep yeast active. However, Monery warns that if there are too many stems in a tank, pumping over becomes impossible, which could actually reduce the oxygen in the ferment.

That's why 100 percent whole-bunch fermentations are quite rare, and it is more common to have a proportion of whole bunches, and therefore stems, among otherwise destemmed fruit.



The tables below illustrate the affect of adding oak alternatives (powders, chips, staves etc.) to both primary fermentation and barrel aging. The third table lists recommended dosages for each alternative, when they are added and how long to leave them in the wine.

## sensorial effects on wines

### 1st objective : improve the sensorial profile of wines without imparting wood

Sensorial effects on wines	When to use	with what products	Which dose rate
<b>Protect varietal aromas and preserve the fruit over time</b>	At the very start of the fermentation process essentially for red wines	Powder is very efficient in protecting the fruit. Granulates can also do this but with less efficiency	Powder from 50 to 100 gr per hecto
<b>Improve the volume in the mouth without excess of tannin</b>	During the fermentation process essentially for red wines	Essentially with granulates and light or medium toast	Granulate from 100 to 200 gr per hectoliter
<b>Improve the structure by bringing roundness and volume</b>	During the fermentation process of both red and white wines	Granulates for red wines, chips for white wines	From 100 to 200 gr per hecto
<b>Help maintain the colour</b>	During the fermentation of red wines	Granulate, essentially French oak for red wines	From 100 to 200 gr per hecto
<b>Remove the vegetal characters and increase the crispness on the palate</b>	During the fermentation process	Powder for red wine, chips for white wines	From 50 to 100 gr for powder From 100 to 200 gr for chips and white wines
<b>Prepare the wines for ageing by adding more structure + volume + cleanness</b>	During the fermentation process	Powder-granulate-chips	From 50 to 100 gr for powder From 100 to 200 gr for granulates or chips
<b>Give sweetness to wines</b>	During the fermentation of white wines	Chips with a mix of French and American oak	From 100 to 200 gr per hecto

### 2nd objective : to develop a woody character

Sensorial effects on wines	For quick turnover wines Which Pronectar products ?	For medium turnover wines Which Pronectar products ?	For slow turnover wines Which Pronectar products ?
<b>Well balanced aromatic profile with hints of fresh wood, vanilla predominant, and some fattiness</b>	Chips as extraction is quick, lasting between 3 and 5 weeks, more in American oak, light or medium toast, and complement of French oak for the fattiness	Staves or segments as extraction is more progressive over a period of 3 to 5 months more in American oak, and complement of French oak for the fattiness	Tight grain staves as extraction is even slower and progressive with a smooth and elegant integration, French oak, mix of light and medium toast
<b>Well balanced aromatic profile with spices, toasty characters, structure and sweetness</b>	Chips as extraction is quick, lasting between 3 and 5 weeks, more in French oak, mix of medium – medium+ toasting, with complement of American oak, medium toast	Staves or segments as extraction is more progressive over a period of 3 to 5 months, 2/3 in French oak, medium-medium+ toast, complement of 1/3 American oak light or medium toast	Tight grain staves as extraction is even slower and progressive with a smooth and elegant integration, French oak, mix of medium and medium+ toast
<b>Well balanced aromatic profile with hints of fresh wood, vanilla, and toasty and spicy characters</b>	Chips as extraction is quick, lasting between 3 and 5 weeks, mix of French oak medium toast (50%) and American oak light-medium toast	Staves or segments as extraction is more progressive over a period of 3 to 5 months, mix of FO (50%) in medium-medium+ toast and AO (50%) light-medium	Tight grain staves as extraction is even slower and progressive with a smooth and elegant integration, French oak, mix of light-medium-medium+ toast

## Oak Alternatives Recommended dosages

Products	When to use it	Dosage for white wines	Dosage for red wines	How long for	What origin of wood
<b>Powder</b>	Before fermentation	300 to 600 grams per ton of grapes according to the characteristics of the grapes			French Oak
<b>Granulate</b>	During fermentation		100 to 250 grams per hectoliter of wine	The time of the fermentation	French Oak
<b>Chips</b>	During fermentation	100 to 150 grams per hectoliter of wine		The time of the fermentation	French or American Oak
	During aging	100 to 200 grams per hectoliter of wine	200 to 300 grams per hectoliter of wine	3 to 5 weeks	French or American Oak
<b>Segments</b>	During aging	A mesh bag of 5 kilos is adequate for giving wood to 10 to 12 hectos	A mesh bag of 5 kilos is adequate for giving wood to 8 to 10 hectos	2 to 3 months	French or American
<b>Standard Staves medium 960*47*7 mm</b>	During fermentation + aging ( white ) or aging ( red )	2 to 3 staves per hectoliter	3 to 4 staves per hectoliter	3 to 4 months	French or American Oak
<b>Blend Staves medium 960*47*7 mm</b>	During fermentation + aging ( white ) or aging ( red )	2 to 3 staves per hectoliter	3 to 4 staves per hectoliter	4 to 5 months	French Oak
<b>Long Staves 2200*100*12 mm</b>	During aging	One stave for each 200 to 250 liters	One stave for each 150 to 200 liters	> 6 months	French or American
<b>Sticks set of 14 sticks = 0,3 m2</b>	During aging	One set per barrel For 6 to 9 months		> 6 months	



## The Oregon Chardonnay Clone Wars

Oregon's controversial history with chardonnay clones culminated into one question earlier this month: do clones matter when it comes to chardonnay? We were there to find out at the fourth annual Oregon Chardonnay Symposium held at Stoller Family Estate in the Willamette Valley. Those who attended the technical panel titled "Attack of the Clones" likely left the seminar with the conclusion that perhaps they don't matter at all. In fact you may have even found yourself on team "end the clones."

Before I go on, you may be wondering what the heck is a clone anyway and why was there an event attended by several hundred people to discuss chardonnay clones?

A clone is a cutting from a mother vine, replanted to create a genetically identical version of its mother. Or, as Jason Lett, second-generation winemaker for The Eyrie Vineyards simply explained, "Go into vineyard, cut a piece of stick, put the stick halfway in the ground. The buds in the ground grow roots; the ones above the ground grow leaves. Boom, you have a plant that is genetically identical to the plant that you got the stick from. And that is a clone."

These clones are chosen (or eliminated) because they exhibit key characteristics, such as berry or cluster size, specific aromas, flavors, resistance to disease, etc. And Oregon has an important, and yet controversial, history of clones as they pertain to Chardonnay.

Lett passionately began the discussion when he welcomed attendees to the end of the clone era, encouraging us to all "stop talking about [clones]."

Rajat Parr, who moderated the five person panel, admitted to never putting much thought into clones until he started making wine, and echoed Lett's sentiment when he said, "We should all have t-shirts that say 'end of clones.'"

### **So, do clones even matter?**

If you were to leave that seminar, based on these opinions alone, you'd be confused to why the organizers put so much effort into an event called "Attack of the Clones" if the whole point to be made was clones don't matter and we don't need to talk about them. At least that's how I felt. Luckily I ran into some winemakers brave enough to explain how this rift came about and who defended the importance of the clone.

### **But first, let's backtrack about fifty years.**

Oregon's history of chardonnay is traced back to 1964 when David Lett of The Eyrie Vineyards brought back chardonnay cuttings, referred to as "Draper Selection," coming from a selection of clones from Draper Ranch in Saint Helena, California. These selections can be traced back to their origins in France, brought to California in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

During the 60's and 70's early Oregon pioneers began to plant these "Draper Selection," and also Wente clones brought up from California, from Wente Vineyard in Livermore Valley. This original Wente clone is also traced to France, both Burgundy in 1882 and Southern France in 1912.

The term "Wente" can be a confusing reference. The original Wente selections brought to California from France were prone to millerandage, also referred to as "hens and chicks," which produce clusters of inconsistent berry size, and also very small yields caused by viruses. So in 1964 UC Davis created a program that heat-treated a selection of these cuttings, which eliminated the "hens and chicks" tendency and created much larger yields (5+ tons per acre vs. ½ ton per acre). They immediately took off in popularity. This heat-treated clone is called the UCD 108 selection. So we now have the Old Wente, and the heat-treated 108.

Up in Oregon, they planted both. Those who planted the 108 noticed it was performing less than ideally, producing very high yields and ripening late, at least two weeks later than pinot noir. This struck winemakers as odd and frustrating since the two Burgundian varieties should be performing to equally high standards in this cool climate region. Not only were the grapes ripening much later than pinot noir, but also the resulting wines were rather uninspiring. Most, but certainly not all, winemakers had a hard time producing the quality Oregon is known for today.

Then, in 1974, David Adelsheim traveled to Burgundy in search of both pinot noir and chardonnay clones to experiment with back home. What he discovered was that the chardonnay there was ripening at the same time as pinot noir. He was determined to bring these back to Oregon. Throughout the next few years he worked with Oregon State University to set up a quarantine and disease evaluation program in order to bring these clones from Burgundy to Oregon. These clones are collectively referred to as the Dijon clones (though there are more specific titles associated with each specific clone, along with qualities of each type).

These Dijon clones changed the scene for Oregon chardonnay, in a dramatic way. And, in order to prove to the world that Oregon's chardonnays could stand up to those produced in California and across the pond, they needed a marketing strategy. An organization called ORCA, the Oregon Chardonnay Alliance, was even formed to discuss the "rebirth of Oregon chardonnay," but only those who had switched to the Dijon clones could be accepted into the organization. This then became the Dijon vs. Heritage story (Heritage generally referring to those original clones that were never heat-treated through UC Davis). Or, what seemed more like the Dijon vs. Heritage war.

The story Oregon began to tell was that Oregon was making lackluster chardonnay until the Dijon clones came in to save the day. It was a necessary story at the time to bump up Oregon as a region.

That story "fixed a problem in the region. And that's what people gathered around 10-15 years ago," Mimi Casteel, winegrower at Bethel Heights Vineyard, explained. I followed up with Casteel and a few other winemakers after the seminar to clear the confusion I left with.

She continued, "But that story played itself out, and alienated a lot of us, including myself, who still had original selections in the ground and have been making chardonnay that we felt very good about during this entire time, with those [original] selections in the ground."

There was a need to put a spin on the negative discussions around chardonnay at the time, and it's understandable that this message evolved. "But it's not a good message anymore," Casteel believes.

### **Is there a quality difference between the different clones or selections?**

Several winemakers who never switched to the Dijon clones are making excellent examples of chardonnay, Lett's The Eyrie Vineyards wines included. Does that mean the Dijon story isn't still important?

Going back to the seminar, it seems as if this rift still clearly exists. And you'd think there were two clear sides, Team Modern (or Dijon) and Team Purist (or Heritage, and original cuttings from California).

## So, are clones even important and should we even be discussing them?

Dave Paige, winemaker at Adelsheim, firmly believes so. And he believes both sides are important to share. “The notion that somehow people are choosing to be purist or heritage vs. modern and sterile and uninteresting is a false dichotomy that is being created. There are a lot of us doing both.”

To disregard the importance that the Dijon clones brought to the valley is, what Paige calls, “anti-learning.”

“The truth is in the nuance,” Paige continues. “The fact that there was some great [chardonnays] back then does not mean that we didn’t need to change things.” There were real problems with several of the wines back then, and the wines have improved dramatically since, and continue to improve every year.

While it’s clear that many on the panel want the discussion of clones to end, Paige believes this is an important conversation to continue. “We should care about what we plant. Just like where we plant it, and if we should do a cover crop... we should care about all of that. And, we should care about clones!”

Depending on the vineyard site, a clone is a vital element to consider. If you have a hot exposed site, with quick drainage, you might want more of a Heritage clone, rather than a Dijon, Casteel explained to me. You must “look for what’s right for your site,” she continued.

Paige also echoed the importance of site over clone, but that clone is still a huge consideration. “What I consider a mediocre performing clone from my favorite site is better than my favorite clone from a mediocre site. Site does trump clone,” but clones shouldn’t be dismissed.

“I’m not putting the Dijon clones on a pedestal. There are some great options. And they should not be ignored because some other [clones] came first,” Paige explained.

At one point during the seminar Thomas Bachelder from Bachelder Wines expressed concern that we focus too much on clones, and that other regions, like Burgundy and elsewhere, don’t put as much focus on them. “Burgundy is all about field blends,” and not about specific clones. It was implied that in Burgundy they don’t even know, nor care about, the specific clones within their vineyard.

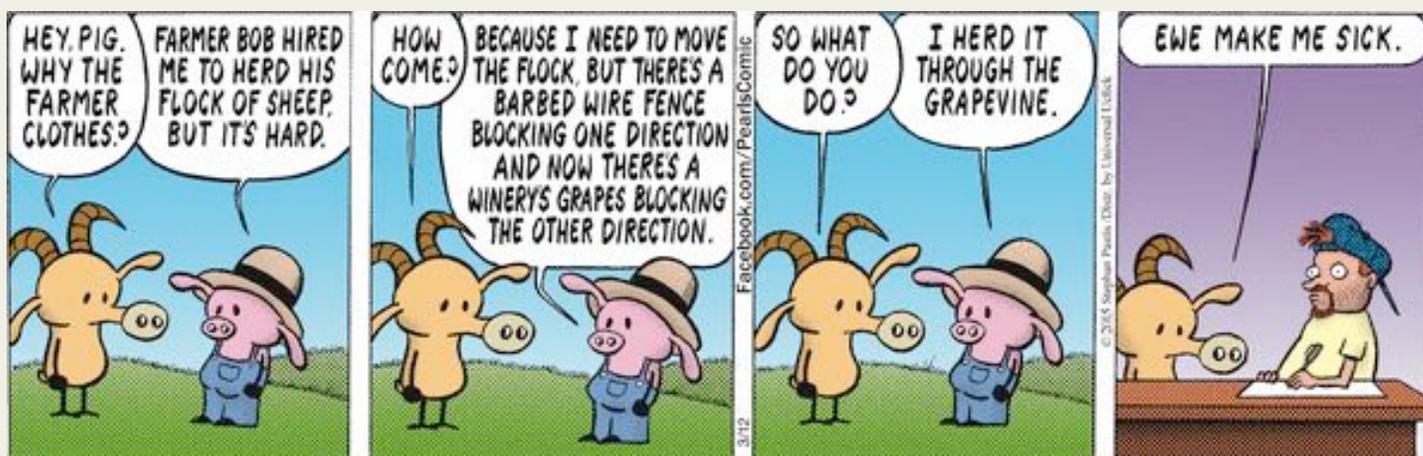
In my follow up conversation with Paige he called B.S. on that. “The idea that Burgundians don’t do this is crazy! They do [focus on clone selection].” He continued, “Why are we allowing the entire room to think that there’s a purist way to do things that doesn’t involve clones, and a modern-lesser way that does involve clones? Most wine regions in the world don’t do it one way or another, but instead some hybrid way of the two.”

The conversation needs to shift from which clone or selection is better for Oregon, to the elements and factors that collectively add up to create quality chardonnay.

Clones are a part of this conversation. But they are only one part in the whole picture. “It may not be the one thing you point to define your region,” Casteel shared. But, “you also don’t want to walk around saying you don’t consider it at all.”

At the end of the day, the message, which got jumbled in the mix of controversy over the history, and passionate winemakers, was really about the desire say “we’re not going to define Oregon chardonnay alone by this clone debate anymore.”

So, perhaps, instead of a t-shirt that says “end of clones,” it should say, “end the clone wars.”



# West Side Wine Club

## Leadership Team – 2015

- President: **Phil Bard** [phil@philbard.com](mailto: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: **Barb Thomson** [bt.grapevine@frontier.com](mailto:bt.grapevine@frontier.com)
- Collect dues and fees, update membership list with secretary
  - Pay bills

- Secretary: **Ken and Barb Stinger** [kbstinger@frontier.com](mailto: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](mailto:Mike@NWRetire.com)
- Arrange speakers for our meetings

- Chair for Tastings: **Ted Johnson**, [tedj52@msn.com](mailto:tedj52@msn.com)
- Conduct club tastings
  - Review and improve club tasting procedures

- Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Bill Brown** [bbgoldieguy@gmail.com](mailto:bbgoldieguy@gmail.com)
- Select wineries to visit
  - Arrange tours
  - Cover logistics (food and money)

- Chair of Group Purchases: **Jonathan Brown** [jonabrown@gmail.com](mailto:jonabrown@gmail.com) Bob Hatt & Jim Ourada helpers.
- 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](mailto: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@gmail.net](mailto:denmargrant@gmail.net) Barbara Stinger & Mindy Bush – Helpers
- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

- Web Content Editor: **Rick Kipper** [kips@lycos.com](mailto:kips@lycos.com)

Webmaster: **David Ladd**