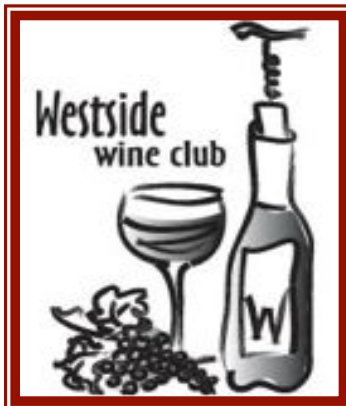


West Side Wine Club

November 2010



Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 17 at 7:00 p.m.

Place: Oak Knoll Winery

Agenda: Pinot Gris / Viognier Tasting

Snacks: Dana Blizzard, Thanks

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

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

A few reminders:

- 1.) Please bring a wine to share, score sheets and a two glasses from which to taste.
- 2.) For all our protection, all members must sign a waiver every year. You can also pay 2010 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: Waiver and score sheets can be obtained from our web site (above) under "Current News".

October Meeting Minutes

Twenty-four members were present. Please welcome new members Graham Copenhagen & Dustin Long.

Our next meeting will be November 17 and will be a blind tasting of member Pinot Gris & Viognier wines.

Jon asked if members were satisfied with grapes from the Eastern Washington harvest. Craig said that Pinot Noir grapes from Courting Hill Vineyard were running 22.5 to 23.5 brix. The Pinot Gris numbers were similar.

We will again have a January Gala. Barb Stinger and Sammy Nachimuthu will co-chair. It will be held at Portland Wine storage again similar to last year. There may be a fee increase to help cover all costs.

The December club meeting will be held on the 8th instead of the 15th. We will have elections, crush talk and some wines to taste.

Jon had some ideas for future tours. He went to Syncline in Lyle, WA this summer and was impressed with their big reds. He would also like to visit a sparkling wine house, possibly in March and a fruit wine producer, possibly Honeywood in Salem. Tours of vineyard / winery combinations have been fun and informative in the past.

Jon suggested we have a Rhone style tasting similar to the interesting Chardonnay tasting we had this year. Everyone agreed this was a good idea.

Member Mike Blackard will discuss cork and cork options at a future meeting (he represents "Portocork").

Scott Nelson proposed that the WSWC draft a letter for all to sign and send it to the appropriate committees and legislators about the need to change Oregon laws governing amateur wine consumption and competitions.

Pinot Noir tasting led by Craig Bush

Seven Pinot Noir wines were tasted. Results in order of tasting were:

- #1 - 2007 - Craig & Mindy Bush - 4th place
- #2 - 2008 - Jon Kahrs / Don Robinson - 6th place
- #3 - 2008 - Bill Brown - 7th place
- #4 - 2008 - Ken & Barb Stinger - 1st place
- #5 - 2009 - Terry Swan - 2nd place
- #6 - 2009 - Dana Blizzard (Chemekata class) - 5th place
- #7 - 2009 - Patrick Wenck - 3rd place

We also tasted a blackberry wine from Graham Copenhagen & Dustin Long.

Scheduled Meetings

January 8, 2010

Holiday Party/Awards Gala

January 20, 2010

Plan for the year

February 17, 2010

Bordeaux tasting

March 17 2010

Flaws & Faults & barrel samples, Trudy Kramer

April 21, 2010

Speaker; Karl Dinger, Terra Vina Winery

April 24th 2010

SakéOne tour

May Winery Tours

May 19, 2010

Speaker; Devin Stinger, Adamant Cellars

June 16, 2010

Other whites / Fruit Wine / Mead

July 18, 2010

Annual Picnic at Oak Knoll

August 18, 2010

Chardonnay Tasting

September 15, 2010

Other Reds Tasting

October 20, 2010

Pinot Noir tasting

November 17, 2010

Pinot Gris/Viognier Tasting

December 8, 2010

Elections /Crush Talk

President's Musings

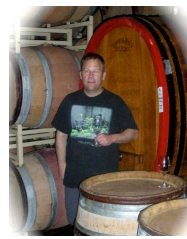
Dom Perignon was celebrated in his day for expert blending, especially of a white wine made from Pinot Noir. He avoided Chardonnay (prone to re-fermentation - too many bubbles!).

There is an audio article from OPB – “Wine Spat: Some Wineries In The West Are Taking Issue With Being Reviewed”. Listen at: <http://news.opb.org/article/6924-wine-spat-some-wineries-west-are-taking-issue-being-reviewed/>

Old, dry yeast can be used to remove ethyl acetate smells from tainted wine and it can also be used to remove excessive amounts of dissolved copper or other metals from wine. So experienced winemakers do not throw their old, dry yeast away. They save their old yeast so it can be used as a fining material if needed.

High Brix musts often start fermentation slowly because of the high sugar content. Many home winemakers add two grams per gallon of dry yeast to high Brix fermentations which is twice the normal amount.

Nitrogen additions should be made during the first half of the fermentation. A significant problem can develop when nitrogen is added too late. Near the end of fermentation, considerable alcohol has accumulated and the alcohol acts on the membrane of the yeast cells preventing the added nitrogen from entering the yeast cells. Now, the yeast does not benefit from the added nitrogen and the fermentation may stick. To avoid this problem, correct any nitrogen deficiencies early in the fermentation cycle before a large amount of alcohol has accumulated. For the same reason, simply adding nitrogen to a stuck fermentation seldom produces successful results.



This pinot season turned out to be worse than 2007. The grapes that we harvested ranged between 20 and 22 brix. What little flavor was there was rather tart with virtually no nose at this point. When we were finished picking the grapes, one of the vineyard owner sighed, “It is what it is”. I bit my tongue. I wanted to respond back: “Noooo, It is what it is because you didn't drop fruit!” I learned that one reason why the vineyard that I picked at doesn't drop more fruit is that the winery buying their fruit doesn't like “over extraction”. This philosophy, that somehow dropping fruit leads to over extracted fruit is, shall we say, rather unorthodox. Romaneé Conti (and every other Grand Cru) seems to believe in yield reduction. On balance, I think that if pursuit of quality is what one has in mind (which I presume is the goal of every amateur winemaker), early yield reduction at the vineyard is essential. I am not sure what to make of my pinot yet - I will give it time. But with very little flavor development it might have better to make sparkling wine this year. One thing I have learned this season is that life is too short to pick over cropped and under ripe pinot. As amateurs, all too often we seem to readily except 3rd rate grapes. Next year, high quality grapes are the goal, because you can't make **it shine. We weren't the only ones to suffer. Terry Swan went to the Schroeder's to pick Viognier that was owed him from last year. He described the vineyard as being in terrible shape with powdery mildew and botrytis. But he commented that the grapes that he did pick had that wonderful nose one expects from Schroeder Viognier. Vineyard owners who were not meticulous or who had extra bad luck had many issues with rot. This wasn't just here in the valley. A thousand pounds of Sangiovese from Sagemore in eastern Washington had to be sorted and half thrown out due to bad rot. So eastern Washington was hit by some of the rain as well. Still, eastern Washington and Oregon fared better than the Willamette Valley. And luckily, this year I bought a significant amount of my grapes from eastern Washington, including Mourvedre, Grenache, Roussanne and Viognier. Considering the disaster at Schroeders, getting the Viognier from eastern Washington was a smart move - although I do miss the Schroeder's Viognier nose. The eastern Washington Viognier just doesn't have that nose. But if I had not ordered grapes from eastern Washington, I really would not have any quality grapes - and the coolness provided some good structure to eastern Washington grapes. This may turn out to be a great year for these wines. Acid was preserved. The Roussanne has been a pleasant surprise, delicate with nice flavors; it will be a great dinner wine. The Mourvedre with some Grenache (and “borrowed” Syrah from Terry) along with a little Roussanne and Viognier should make a peppery “Cote de Rhone” or rather “Cote de Columbia”. It will be new and exciting. Our November meeting for Viognier and Pinot Gris will be the third Wednesday in November. “Crush Talk” will be in December. Crush Talk is a great time to talk about what worked for you this season, what you're excited about, and what you would like to do next year. It is an informal and fun way to celebrate the end of the harvest. May all your fermentation yield nicely balanced wine.

Jon Kahrs
President
WSWC

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Vitis vinifera

***Vitis vinifera* (Common Grape Vine)** is a species of *Vitis*, native to the Mediterranean region, central Europe, and southwestern Asia, from Morocco and Spain north to southern Germany and east to northern Iran.

It is a liana growing to 35 m tall, with flaky bark. The leaves are alternate, palmately lobed, 5–20 cm long and broad. The fruit is a berry, known as a grape; in the wild species it is 6 mm diameter and ripens dark purple to blackish with a pale wax bloom; in cultivated plants it is usually much larger, up to 3 cm long, and can be green, red, or purple. The species typically occurs in humid forests and stream sides.

The wild grape is often classified as *V. vinifera* subsp. *sylvestris* (in some classifications considered *Vitis sylvestris*), with *V. vinifera* subsp. *vinifera* restricted to cultivated forms. Domesticated vines have hermaphrodite flowers, but subsp. *sylvestris* is dioecious (male and female flowers on separate plants) and pollination is required for fruit to develop.

It is cultivated on every continent on Earth except for Antarctica. In Europe, in the central and southern regions; in Asia, in the western regions (Anatolia, Caucasus, Middle east) and in China; in Africa, along the northern Mediterranean coast and in South Africa; in North America, in California, Mexico and also other areas like New Mexico, New York, British Columbia, Ontario and Québec; in South America in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil; in Oceania in Australia and New Zealand.

History

The appearance of *Vitis vinifera* has been dated to 130 to 200 million years ago with the human relationship to the plant dating from the Neolithic period.

Foragers and early farmers harvested wild grapes. For thousands of years, the fruit has been harvested for both medicinal and nutritional value; its history is intimately entwined with the history of wine.

Changes in pip shape (narrower in domesticated forms) and distribution point to domestication occurring about 3500-3000 BC, in southwest Asia, South Caucasus (Armenia and Georgia), or the Western Black Sea shore region (Bulgaria). Cultivation of the domesticated grape spread to other parts of the Old World in pre-historic or early historic times.

The first written accounts of grapes and wine can be found in the Epic of Gilgamesh and ancient Sumerian text from the third millennium BCE. There are also numerous hieroglyphic references from ancient Egypt, according to which wine was reserved exclusively for priests, state functionaries and the pharaoh.

The ancient Greeks introduced grape growing and wine making to Europe in the Minoan age. Hesiod in his *Works and Days* gives detailed descriptions of grape harvests and wine-making techniques, and there are also many references in Homer. Greek colonists then introduced these practices in their colonies, especial in southern Italy (Magna Grecia), which was even known as “Enotria” due to its propitious climate.

The Etruscans improved wine-making techniques and developed an export trade even beyond the Mediterranean basin.

The ancient Romans further developed the techniques learnt from the Etruscans, as shown by numerous works of literature containing information that is still valid today: *De Agri Cultura* by Cato the Elder, *De re rustica* by Marcus Terentius Varro, the *Georgics* by Virgil and *De re rustica* by Columella.

During the third and fourth centuries AD, the long crisis of the Roman Empire generated instability in the countryside which led to a reduction of viticulture in general, which was mainly sustained only close to towns and cities and along coastlines.

Between the fifth and tenth centuries, viticulture was sustained almost exclusively by the different religious orders in monasteries. The Benedictines and others extended the grape growing limit northwards and also planted new vineyards at higher altitudes than was customary before. Apart from ‘ecclesiastical’ viticulture, there also developed, especially in France, a ‘noble’ viticulture, practiced by the aristocracy as a symbol of prestige.

Grape growing was a significant economic activity in the Middle East up to the seventh century, when the expansion of Islam caused it to decline.

Between the Low Middle Ages and the Renaissance, viticulture took off again. Demographic pressure, population concentration in towns and cities and increased spending power of artisans and merchants gave rise to increased investment in viticulture, which became economically feasible once again.

A lot of literature was also written during the Renaissance period on grape growing and wine production, favoring a more scientific approach, and can be considered as the origin of modern ampelography. Grapes followed European colonies around the world, coming to North America around the 1600s, and to Africa, South America and Australia. In North America it formed hybrids with native species from the *Vitis* genus; some of these were intentional hybrids created to combat *phylloxera*, an insect pest that affected the European grapevine to a much greater extent than North American ones and in fact managed to devastate European wine production in a matter of years. Later, North American rootstocks became widely used to graft *V. vinifera* cultivars so as to withstand the presence of phylloxera.

In the second half of the twentieth century there was a shift in attitude in viticulture from traditional techniques to the scientific method based on fields such as microbiology, chemistry and ampelography. This change came about also due to changes in economic and cultural aspects and in the way of life and in the consumption habits of wide sectors of the population starting to demand quality products.

Nature magazine has published the genome sequence of *V. vinifera*. This work was the result of collaboration between Italian researchers (Consorzio Interuniversitario Nazionale per la Biologia Molecolare delle Piante, Istituto di Genomica Applicata) and French researchers (Genoscope e Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique). *Vitis vinifera* is the fourth angiosperm species whose genome has been completely sequenced. The results of this analysis contribute significantly to understanding the evolution of plants over time and of the genes involved in the aromatic characteristics of wine.

In March 2007, scientists from Australia's CSIRO working in the Cooperative Research Centre for Viticulture reported that they found that "extremely rare and independent mutations in two genes [*VvMYBA1* and *VvMYBA2*] [of red grapes] produced a single white grapevine that was the parent of almost all of the world's white grape varieties. If only one gene had been mutated, most grapes would still be red and we would not have the more than 3000 white grape cultivars available today."

Uses

Use of grapes is known to date back to Neolithic times, following the discovery in 1996 of 7,000 year-old wine storage jars in present-day northern Iran. Further evidence shows the Mesopotamians and Ancient Egyptians had vine plantations and winemaking skills. Greek philosophers praised the healing powers of grapes both whole and in the form of wine. *Vitis vinifera* cultivation and winemaking in China began during the Han Dynasty in the second century with the importation of the species from Ta-Yuan. However, wild vine "mountain grapes" like *Vitis thunbergii* were being used for wine making before that time.

Using the sap of grapevines, European folk healers sought to cure skin and eye diseases. Other historical uses include the leaves being used to stop bleeding, pain and inflammation of hemorrhoids. Unripe grapes were used for treating sore throats, and raisins were given as treatments for consumption (tuberculosis), constipation and thirst. Ripe grapes were used for the treatment of cancer, cholera, smallpox, nausea, skin and eye infections as well as kidney and liver diseases.

Seedless grape varieties were developed to appeal to consumers, but researchers are now discovering that many of the healthful properties of grapes may actually come from the seeds themselves, thanks to their enriched phytochemical content.

Grapevine leaves are filled with minced meat (such as lamb or beef), rice and onions in the making of Balkan traditional dolma.

There, so now you know.



Varietal of the month

Viognier (French pronunciation: [vionje]) is a white wine grape. It is the only permitted grape for the French wine Condrieu in the Rhone valley.

The origin of the Viognier grape is unknown. Viognier is presumed to be an ancient grape, and some have hypothesized that it may have originated in Dalmatia and was brought to Rhône by the Romans. One legend states that the Roman emperor Probus brought the vine to the region in 281 AD. Another legend has the grape packaged with Syrah on a cargo ship navigating the Rhone River en route to Beaujolais when it was captured near the site of present day Condrieu by a local group of outlaws known as *culs de piaux*.

The origin of the name Viognier is also obscure. The most common namesake is the French city of Vienne, which was a major Roman outpost. Another legend has it drawing its name from the Roman pronunciation of the *via Gehennae*, meaning the "road to Hell". Probably this is an allusion to the difficulty of growing the grape.

Viognier can be a difficult grape to grow because it is prone to powdery mildew. It has low and unpredictable yields and should be picked only when fully ripe. When picked too early, the grape fails to develop the full extent of its aromas and tastes. When picked too late, the grape produces wine that is oily and lacks perfume. Winemakers in the Condrieu often pick the grapes with a level of sugar that will produce wine with alcohol in the 13% range. When fully ripe the grapes have a deep yellow color and produce wine with a strong perfume and high in alcohol. The grape prefers warmer environments and a long growing season, but can grow in cooler areas as well.

Since the late 1980s, plantings of Viognier in the United States and Canada have increased dramatically. California's Central Coast is the leading producer with over 2,000 acres of the grape planted. Californian Viogniers are noticeably higher in alcohol compared to other wines made from the grape. The Rhone Rangers of the mid 1980s helped spark the increased interest in Viognier in California.

Viognier wines are well-known for their floral aromas, due to terpenes, which are also found in Muscat and Riesling wines. There are also many other powerful flower and fruit aromas which can be perceived in these wines depending on where they were grown, the weather conditions and how old the vines were. Although some of these wines, especially those from old vines and the late-harvest wines, are suitable for aging, most are intended to be consumed young. Viogniers more than three years old tend to lose many of the floral aromas that make this wine unique. Aging these wines will often yield a very crisp drinking wine which is almost completely flat in the nose. It is sometimes used to soften wines made predominantly with the red Syrah grape. In addition to its softening qualities the grape also adds a stabilizing agent and enhanced perfume to the red wine.

In winemaking, the grapes are often harvested early in the morning to produce the clearest juice possible. Some winemakers will allow contact with the skins. The soft skin of Viognier is high in phenols - compounds that can leave an oily component to the wine if left in contact with the skins for too long. Sometimes the wine is put through malolactic fermentation to give the wine more weight and to decrease acidity. In New World Viognier, the lees may be stirred in a process called *batonnage*. The wine is then left on the lees till bottling in a manner similar to sparkling wine production.



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

Chairperson of Education: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@verizon.net

- Arrange speakers for our meetings

Chairs for Tastings: **Craig Bush** pnoir1@verizon.net

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chairs 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, rkipper@bpa.gov

Webmaster: **David Ladd**

Chairs 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@verizon.net
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chairwoman 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/Holiday Party