

West Side Wine Club

October 2014

Monthly Rant



Scheduled Meetings

January 11, 2014

Annual Gala – Archer Winery

January 15, 2014

Crush Talk / Planning

February 19, 2014

Bordeaux Tasting

March 19, 2014

Speaker: Andrew Beckham;
amphora winemaking

April 16, 2014

2013 Barrel / Carboy
Sample Tasting

April 19, 2014

Tour of Lange Winery

May 21, 2014

Speaker: Rob Landsness; A
sommelier's perspective

June 18, 2014

"Best Practices of Amateur
Winemakers"

July 12, 2014

Annual Picnic

August 20, 2014

All Whites Tasting

September 17, 2014

Other Reds Tasting

October 15, 2014

Pinot Noir Tasting

November

No Meeting

December 3, 2014

Planning, Tours, Speakers,
Events, Elections

Harvest was fast and furious this year, most of the fruit is off the vine now, and usually in early October we are just starting. Almost everyone has reported great fruit, especially in the Willamette Valley, where most vineyards harvested huge crop loads of fruit showing near perfect brix, acid and flavor profiles. 2014 will undoubtedly be one of Oregon's best. Eastern state fruit was also great, but some areas had high brix, 28 and 29 were seen in the Red Mountain area.

Across the Walla Walla and Tri-Cities area the larger problem was low nutrient levels. Generous Fermaid K and DAP additions were the rule, and according to one person I spoke there were a number of wineries experiencing fermentations sticking at around 5 Brix or so. Tough to deal with as you can't really feed your batch at that point.

The Pinots fermented fast, even on slower yeasts, and most of my eastern WA fruit is managing to get through primary but its taking 14-16 days on average for those. I stayed away from yeast that needs high nitrogen and looking back am glad for it. One batch of Cab Sauvignon on D80 seem to pause 4 days in, I hit it with nutrients and it resumed but its been a little stressful monitoring the progress. On the encouraging side though, the nascent wines are tasting great and all have beautiful, deep color. Its going to be hard to wait for this one. Good luck everyone, don't be shy with your nutrients! I've included a Harvest 2014 Photo Album on the pages following...

Phil Bard



Information & Trivia

•Scott Labs now has a “Cider Handbook” as well as their Wine making handbook. Download it from:

<http://www.scottlab.com>

•According to a study carried out by the Santa Maria Nuova Hospital in Florence, drinking one to two glasses of red wine a day increases female sexual desire.

•Low-sulfur yeast strain by Lalvin

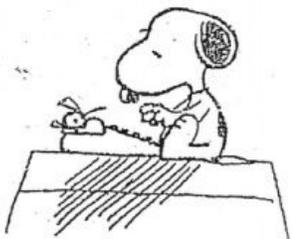
Scott Laboratories is offering the new yeast strain Lalvin “ICV Okay” for the 2014 harvest.

Researchers at Lallemand, Montpellier SupAgro and the Institut Cooperatif du Vin used traditional breeding practices to develop the yeast, which Scott Labs reports offers robust fermentation capabilities even in a nutrient-deficient environment as well as minimal production of sulfur dioxide, acetaldehyde and hydrogen sulfide. Details: scottlab.com.

•Oregon winemakers have reported bumper grape hauls from the 2014 harvest, with quality that the 'public will fall all over'.

Dear IRS,

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The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Oak Knoll Winery. Agenda : This will be member produced “Pinot Noir” blind tasting and scoring. This will be Pinot Noir only.

- 1.) Snacks: This will be another potluck; bring a small snack to share.
- 2.) Waivers will be present at the meeting. If you have not previously signed a waiver please do so at the meeting. You may also pay your 2014 dues if you have not already done so.
- 3.) Bring two glasses for tasting member wines.
- 4.) The 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/>

September Meeting Minutes

21 Members present

- Paul Boyechko brought in a quantity of extra yeast for anyone who might need some.
- Phil Bard announced that Momtazi Pinot Noir grapes would be ready by the coming week end.

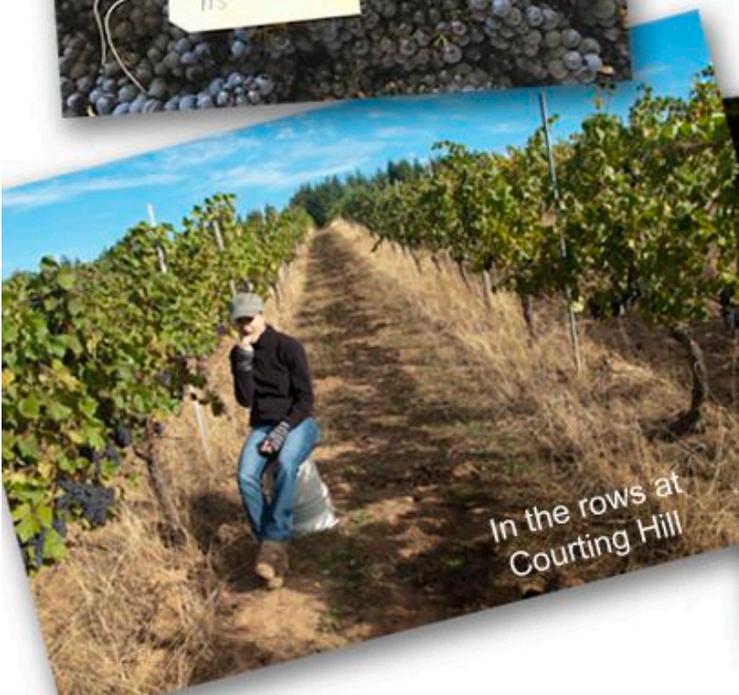
After a short meeting Ted Johnson and Marlene Grant poured member wine samples for a blind tasting and judging of “other reds”. Phil Bard kept the scoring as shown below.

Wine #	Name	Varietal	Gold	Silver	Bronze	None	Total Score	Medal Score	Medal	Rank
1	Robinson/Kahrs	Blend '09/'10	3	15	3		42	2.00	Silver	2
2	Kahrs	Mourvedre '11	1	10	8	2	31	1.48	Bronze	6
3	Gassaway	Syrah '10	2	9	10	0	34	1.62	Silver	4
4	Tymchenko	Syrah '11	4	10	6	1	38	1.81	Silver	3
5	Hatt	Sangiovese '12		4	16	1	24	1.14	Bronze	8
6	Brown	Sangiovese '12	2	8	10	1	32	1.52	Silver	5
7	Stinger	Syrah '11		3	16	2	22	1.05	Bronze	9
8	Grant/Johnson	Barbera '12	1	9	7	4	28	1.33	Bronze	7
9	Hooson/Hoffard	Cote Rôtie '10	8	9	4		46	2.19	Silver	1
10	Brown	Primitivo '13		6	10	5	22	1.05	Bronze	9

Photos: Phil Bard



Momtazi pickup and crush



In the rows at Courting Hill



Insert your own caption



CRV Cabernet



Jimmy & Jenna, Courting Hill



Momtazi fruit



photos: Phil Bard

The Blend Trend... the next revolution in fine wines?

Wines blended from several different varietals are the norm in Europe. Here in the New World we do not have the benefits that come with age-old wine regions and vineyards, synonymous with a core of varietals, on which reputations have been built; winemaking in North America got its start emphasizing single varietal wines...Chardonnay, Riesling, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, etc.

Over the past several Pacific Northwest vintages, however, the observant visitor to our many wine regions and wine shops has, no doubt, noticed the increased availability of blended, high-end wines... Bordeaux-style and Rhone-style blends (both red and white), Super Tuscan-style blends and many other red and white proprietary blends that allow winemakers to balance the structure, flavors and acidity of their wines. We are learning which varietals grow best in our regions and which combine well for more complex and interesting wines.

Blended wines are not a new phenomenon in the Pacific Northwest, of course; they have been available for quite some time, usually in the form of table wines at the bottom of the price scale. Today's blend trend is evidenced in the premium wine lists of wineries, restaurants and wine shops throughout the region.

“There is a subtle, mysterious quality about blends. They tend to be much more complex and interesting when assembled properly, and in my mind, they provide the most complete wine experience whether enjoyed on their own or with food.”

Mark Colvin, Colvin Vineyards, Walla Walla Valley

Wine as art reaches the apex of its potential, agree many winemakers, when its creation allows the free hand of the winemaker to blend multiple wine-grape varietals from selected vineyards each vintage. Vintages vary more from year to year in the Pacific Northwest than in many other North American winegrowing regions; winemakers here vary percentages of each varietal every year in their blended wines to compensate for vintage influences on vineyard fruit. In their annual quest to find the “perfect” balance of flavors, acid levels and structure in their wines, winemakers vary the combination and percentages of grape varietals to create their final, nuanced blends.

Captivated by the synergism of blending wines, renowned Washington winemaker, wine consultant and winery designer Brian Carter organized Brian Carter Cellars as a boutique artisan winery in the spring of 2005, the first in Washington to focus exclusively on an array of hand-crafted European-style blended wines.

“I am excited about making European-style blended wines,” says Carter. “Under the Brian Carter label, I will be able to concentrate on my passion for wines of complexity, while showcasing the terroir of Washington”.

Brian Carter Cellars currently produces five core blended wines including two Bordeaux-style blends, a Rhône-style blend, a Super Tuscan-style blend and a white blend:

- Bordeaux-style Blend: Yakima Valley; Cabernet, Merlot, Cab Franc, Malbec, and Petit Verdot.
- Signature Bordeaux-style Blend: Columbia Valley; Merlot, Cab, Cab Franc, Malbec.
- Southern Rhône-style Blend: Yakima Valley; Grenache, and Syrah.

- Super Tuscan-style Blend: Yakima Valley; Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah.
- Rhône-style White Blend: Yakima Valley; Roussanne, Riesling, and Viognier.

“This is a fantastic time to be part of Washington winemaking,” says Carter. “The next revolution in fine wine is in the increased interest in blended wines in this country. We have an excellent selection of fruit available that allows a winemaker to produce extraordinary quality blended wines. By handcrafting each particular blend, I am able to bring forth the inherent beauty of the fruit, the unique qualities of the terroir, and fulfill my vision of a superbly balanced wines.”

Bordeaux-type blends... variations on a theme

The "royal grapes" which comprise the finest Bordeaux's in the world also grow well in the warmer wine regions of the Pacific Northwest. Probably the most common blend combines varying percentages of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, depending on winemaker styles and vintage influences. An A-to-Z list probably could be put together showing Pacific Northwest wineries that produce such blends. When additional varietals of the Bordeaux type grapes are included in a blend, the results are usually a more complex wine.

Knowing the percentages of each varietal in a blend can provide important information about what the consumer can expect, if a rudimentary knowledge of Varietal flavor profiles is cultivated. Winemakers may choose from traditional Bordeaux varietals like Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Malbec, as well as a few others of less-known status.

Winemaker John Haw of Maryhill Winery, near the Stonehenge memorial along the Washington side of the Columbia River, chose to lead with 40% Malbec (with its deeply aromatic and intense character) in his 2003 Serendipity blend. Bordeaux

type blends that include Malbec, except in Argentina, generally contain only a small percentage of this classic grape; this Proprietor's Reserve blended wine may be one of a kind with its Malbec supported by 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc.

Malbec played a slightly smaller, but major, role in Ray Sandidge's 2002 C.R. Sandidge TRI Umph. A quadruple medal winner at the 2006 Jerry D. Mead New World International Wine Competition. This elegant red blend contains 26% Malbec along with 64% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot.

The once-prized Carmenère Bordeaux grape has since been abandoned in France. Thanks in large part to Mark Colvin, owner and winemaker of Colvin Vineyards, it has found a new home in the Walla Walla Valley. Reviving the Bordeaux varietal allows Colvin not only to produce the region's only straight Carmenère varietal wine, but also to step up the complexity of his blended wines. Colvin wines that include some amount of the grape are distinct from the usual Bordeaux-type blend. Colvin centers his winemaking passions on Cabernet Sauvignon and complex blends created by adding other Bordeaux grapes including Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petite Verdot, Malbec and, of course, Carmenère.

"There is a subtle, mysterious quality about blends," says Mark Colvin. "They tend to be much more complex and interesting when assembled properly, and in my mind, they provide the most complete wine experience whether enjoyed on their own or with food."

Less conventional blended wines

Over the centuries, European wine regions have become synonymous with specific varietals traditionally grown there. Winemakers must use those varietals, if their labels bare that region's name. Grape growing in Pacific Northwest wine regions is in its infancy, and experimental vineyards continue to be planted to determine which varietals will flourish. Use of a region's name on a label promises only the origin of the grapes, not specific varietals. With many varietals grown in each wine region, winemakers can experiment with unconventional blends of multiple varieties.

Gus Janeway uses this freedom to produce unusual blends for his Velocity Wine Cellars from grapes grown in the Southern Oregon appellation. His Velocity wines are unusual only in the fresh ideas they bring to the question of which wines *should* be combined. Characterized by unconventional blends, Velocity wines are balanced, elegant and nimble partners for the seasonal fresh food of the Pacific Northwest.

His Velocity and Velo red blends has begun to win awards for his distinctive wines. These velvety red blends are Velocity Cellars' flagship wines and are based on the deeply aromatic and intense Malbec grape, supported by an alchemy of traditional Bordelaise varietals, spiced by a small percentage of Syrah. The actual blend varies with the vintage.

In one of Washington's Horse Heaven Hills, Alexandria Nicole Cellars also uses Syrah in its otherwise Bordeaux-type blend in its proprietary wine Destiny Ridge Vineyard Quarry Butte. Quarry Butte earned 90 Points from *Wine and Spirits* magazine for its elegant expression of five varietals grown in the unique terroir of Alexandria Nicole's Destiny Ridge Vineyard. Barrel aged in both French and American Oak barrels for 16 months, this blend of 56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, 4% Syrah, 3% Cabernet Franc, and 3% Malbec is backed by a balanced structure and silky smooth finish.

Alexandria Nicole Cellars also earned 91 Points in *Wine and Spirits* magazine for its Destiny Ridge Vineyard Shepherd's Mark, a white blend of Roussanne (70%), Viognier and Marsanne.

Any discussion of Less Conventional Blended Wines would be remiss if it did not include the wines of Wade Wolfe, winemaker and co-owner of Thurston Wolfe Winery in Prosser, Washington. Wolfe is known for his love of blending unusual varieties to create table wines unique to Thurston Wolfe and Washington State.

Consider the Dr. Wolfe's Family Red, a proprietary blend that, in the 2004 vintage, includes 62% Primitivo (an Italian clone of Zinfandel), 16% Petite Sirah and 16% Lemberger. Wolfe's white blend, Thurston Wolfe's PGV, is blend of Pinot Gris and Viognier. His 2005 PGV is comprised of 70% Viognier and 30% Pinot Gris.

One of the most unusual combinations of varietals is found in Oregon's Penner-Ash Wine Cellars' Rubeo blend of Pinot noir and Syrah. Lynn Penner-Ash and her husband, Ron, first compiled the blend from young vines of a Pinot noir they felt wasn't yet ready for their reserve bottling. The Syrah was sourced from southern Oregon's Del Rio vineyard.

The grapes form a kind of study in contrasts with Pinot's flavor profile known for its delicate, subtle tastes, and it is rarely blended. Syrah is brawny and versatile, with deep flavors. Repeated tastings of the blend were required to find the right balance for the more forceful grape.

Two of Idaho's wineries have begun producing unusual blends - Sawtooth Winery and Parma Ridge (now closed) located in the Snake River Valley. Brad Pintler, winemaker and general manager of Sawtooth, is definitely in the right place, as manager of Skyline Vineyards, the relatively new and largest vineyard planting in the Snake River Valley. He is able to select from its wide variety of grapes for blended wines. His Skyline Red was first produced with the 2003 vintage which combines the unlikely mix of 47% Syrah, 47% Cabernet, 2% Tempranillo, 2% Primitivo and 2% Merlot. His 2004 blend is a combination of 40% Syrah, 40% Cabernet, 3% Tempranillo and 10% Merlot.

Parma Ridge Mélange des Trois (French for "mixture of three") was a unique blend of three varietal grapes, all grown in Idaho. The blend consists of 1/3 Cabernet Sauvignon, 1/3 Merlot and 1/3 Zinfandel.

Such blending projects rely heavily on winemakers' skills. Traditional European blends have been refined over centuries; though new-fangled combos generally follow similar blending principles to hone a precise mix, successful blends might fail miserably in less skilled hands.

"Field Blending"

Here and there in old-time European vineyards, particularly in Chianti and parts of France, it was - and occasionally still is - the custom to plant different grape varieties together in the same vineyard, harvesting them all together and making wine from this mixed bounty. European immigrants brought this practice to the New World, particularly in California where the roots of the wine industry are strongly Italian. Zinfandel and Petite Sirah made natural vineyard companions, along with Carignan and a few other varieties - some of which remain inter-planted to this day.

Field blending is uncommon in modern vineyards for several reasons, not the least of which is the varying ripening time required by different grapes.

One remnant of this old-world practice can be found in Kestrel Vineyards, home to some of the oldest Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec vines in Washington state. A few vines of Malbec were inter-planted with Cabernet Sauvignon vines more than 30 years ago. All grapes in this old-vines block are harvested together in a field-blend for Kestrel Vintners Old Vines Cabernet. A grower in Idaho's Snake River Valley refers to Malbec as "the magic ingredient" of many fine blended wines, and Kestrel's Old Vine Cabernet Sauvignon certainly validates the concept, even though the portion of Malbec in the wine is very small.



Viticulture & Enology Program
Tri-Cities, Pullman, Prosser

Consider adding 100 to 150 mg/L (ppm) of ascorbic acid to your white wines *now* to protect the varietal fruit aromas.

Based on experience with ascorbic acid additions in NY and in Australia I think the use of ascorbic acid in winemaking should be re-evaluated. Long term bottle closure studies with wine with and without ascorbic acid show that the combination of ascorbic acid and free SO₂ is a very strong system for protecting wines against oxidation and protecting their varietal fruit flavors. Ascorbic acid addition is also very effective in protecting wines from developing the Atypical Aging flavor defect (ATA) in which very young wines lose their varietal flavors (starting 6 months to 1 year after the end of fermentation) and develop wines that taste like candle wax, dried flowers, dusty roadside, furniture varnish, floor polish, and dirty dishrag. These off-flavors are produced in the vineyard and water stress is a key factor. You can find this flavor defect in wines around the world in Europe, North America, and Australia / New Zealand. I have only found very few wines with this off-flavor in Washington State. Since this summer has had some rather hot periods it is possible that some vineyards did not receive enough water when the vines needed it and the wines will show a lack of varietal flavors and perhaps the appearance of the atypical flavors. To protect wines against the premature loss of varietal flavors it is important to add ascorbic acid early - as soon as the wine has stable free SO₂. Now and until the end of January would be the best time to add ascorbic acid. I have had the experience with a wine to which we added ascorbic acid at bottling in February and bottled it but had not enough bottles to bottle all. The remaining wine we bottled in late March when we had more bottles. The wine with the ascorbic acid in late March developed ATA, the wine bottled with ascorbic acid addition in February was fine for at least a couple of years. Early addition in the case of potential ATA is important.

While in Australia, I talked with several experienced winemakers about their current and past use of ascorbic acid. Some years back, many Australian winemakers added ascorbic acid to the must and/or at bottling of white wines. The consensus was that these wines aged better. Most winemakers stopped using ascorbic acid because of an erroneous report that ascorbic acid additions cause browning and oxidation. **Ascorbic acid additions do protect wines against oxidation when used in the combination with free SO₂.**

I think this is a good year to perhaps do an experiment and add 50 to 150 mg/L of ascorbic acid to maybe one portion of a wine, not to the rest, and bottle the two lots separately. Always make sure your wine has sufficient free SO₂ (0.8 ppm molecular SO₂) and that it is holding the SO₂.

Already 50 ppm of ascorbic acid will help protect your varietal flavors against oxidation. Only 100 to 150 ppm of ascorbic acid can protect a wine against ATA. A predictive ATA is described below.

CAUTION

Ascorbic acid in the wine will interfere with the Ripper SO₂ analysis method, likely also with the Rebelein residual sugar analysis. Ascorbic acid does not interfere with the AO distillation titration method and the FiaStar method for SO₂ analysis nor with enzymatic, HPLC or FOSS WineScan sugar analysis.

ATA Test

Testing a wine for its potential to develop atypical aging defect.

Make sure the wine has stable free SO₂. Divide wine into two aliquots (100 mL or more). To one part add 150 mg/L ascorbic acid. Add nothing to the other part. Fill into glass bottles, avoid large headspace, and seal well. Place into oven at 104 degrees F for 12 hours, better 2 days. Let wines cool and compare the aroma and taste. If both wines (with and without ascorbic acid) taste the same then the wine likely will not develop ATA. If the wine without the ascorbic acid added has changed its flavor then it is likely to develop ATA soon.



Family-Based Winemaking During Prohibition:

A Case Study - Stephen Franzoi

Many contemporary amateur winemakers were first introduced to the possibility of producing their own alcoholic beverage through either observing a family member make wine or hearing stories of such family efforts by one's part of the 20th century due to the interacting effects of at least two noteworthy cultural factors: immigration and Prohibition. As a way of providing a more vivid description of how the influx of new American citizens from overseas and the federal ban on alcohol shaped family winemaking during this time period, I have chosen to personalize this story by using my father's parents, Paride and Emelie Franzoi, as a case study.

Parents or grandparents. Home winemaking became especially popular among Americans in the early decades.

My paternal grandparents were among the waves of immigrants passing through Ellis Island at the turn of the 20th century in search of a more prosperous life than could be found in their homelands. Paride arrived in 1902 from Sporminore, a country village in northern Italy, while Emelie came from Paris France. A year later (they later met and were married in Iron Mountain, Michigan). Although Emelie was born in Paris, her parents hailed from the same village in northern Italy as Paride (which at that time was part of Austria). Emelie's family's relocation to one of Europe's largest cities was their first attempt to find a better life before setting out for America, the country that some described as having "streets paved with gold."



Not only were the streets of American cities not glittering, many of the citizens walking those streets were not enthusiastic in welcoming those from foreign shores. During the 1800s and early 20th Century, Jews and Italian immigrants were often perceived as non-Anglo and non-White, and as a result, were targets of extreme prejudice, discrimination, and even violence. Next to African Americans, Italian Americans were the second most likely ethnic group to be lynched at the turn of the century. This intergroup intolerance was also fanned by popular beliefs that Ellis Island Immigrants many of these new immigrants were slow-witted and/or immoral, and thus, posed a threat to America's national character.

Facing such ethnically based hostility and negative stereotyping, these new arrivals' ethnic identity and related cultural practices provided a sense of group pride that strengthened them as they pursued opportunities in their new country. One of the cultural practices that many of these people preserved from their homelands was winemaking, which ultimately fostered an appreciation of "The Noble grape" in future generations of Americans.

Prohibition: Noble Experiment or Culture War?

Many Americans became amateur winemakers during the years leading up to and including the thirteen-year span of Prohibition in the United States. By 1917, at the outbreak of World War I, three-fourths of the states had gone dry and ratified the Eighteenth Amendment of the Constitution banning the sale, manufacture, and transportation of alcohol. Then in November 1918, before the new constitutional prohibition went into effect, the United States Congress passed the temporary Wartime Prohibition Act, which banned the sale of alcoholic beverages with an alcohol content greater than 2.75%. Finally, in 1920 the Volstead National Prohibition Act made it illegal to manufacture, sell, or otherwise distribute intoxicating liquors.



Prohibition increased interest in home winemaking.

Advocates of Prohibition (the "dries") believed that banning alcohol was a "Noble Experiment" and a victory for public morals and health. In contrast, opponents of the new law (the "wets") argued that it was a brazen attempt by mainly rural Protestants to impose their more mainstream lifestyle on urban, immigrant and largely Catholic families who used alcohol, especially wine, as an important component in their cultural lifestyle. There was not widespread popular support for this national ban and it unfortunately fostered the growth of various and widespread criminal organizations in the country (think "Al Capone" and similar "Godfather" figures), but that is an entirely different topic that we will not analyze here. No, let us explore the cottage industry that developed around Prohibition to literally quench the desire of many Americans to consume wine in their daily lives.

"Warning: Will Ferment and Turn Into Wine!"

During Prohibition, alcoholic beverages for medicinal and sacramental use were exempt under the Volstead Act.

It is estimated that doctors earned \$40 million per year during Prohibition by writing prescriptions for whiskey. Similarly, there were clergy from all religions who supplemented the church coffers with the proceeds from bootleg sacramental wine. For example, in 1925, the Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ reported:

"The withdrawal of wine on permit from bonded warehouses for sacramental purposes amounted in round figures to 2,139,000 gallons in the fiscal year 1922; 2,503,500 gallons in 1923; and 2,944,700 gallons in 1924. There is no way of knowing what the legitimate consumption of fermented sacramental wine is, but it is clear that the legitimate demand does not increase 800,000 gallons in two years."

Besides the legal production and sale of medicinal alcohol and sacramental wine, there was a legal loophole in the constitutional ban on alcohol that allowed each home to make 200 gallons of "non-intoxicating cider and fruit juice" per year. As a result, the warning label "Will Ferment and Turn Into Wine!" was often found on grape concentrate containers sold in the United States during the 1920s and early 1930s. These "juice-making kits" also came with instructions on how to not make an alcoholic beverage out of the fruit juice, thereby giving home winemakers the detailed steps on how to make wine. Not surprisingly, grape concentrate quickly became a highly desirable commercial product, along with a grape jelly called "Vine-go" that, with the addition of water, would ferment into a high alcoholic wine. Dried grapes were also sold as "raisin cakes" for the making of grape juice. Many otherwise law-abiding citizens began purchasing grape concentrate and dried grapes with those warning labels uppermost in their minds. The resulting wine was not good quality, but it was alcoholic.

Train Cars Filled With California Grapes

Recent immigrants, who had grown up in their home countries making wine as a yearly family practice, generally avoided the low-quality winemaking kits in favor of fresh fruit, especially grapes. As with grape concentrate and dried grapes, Prohibition also produced a sharp increase in demand for fresh California grapes in Midwestern and East Coast states, which created a railroad shortage of refrigerated freight cars in which to ship them. Most of the fresh grapes shipped from California came from the Central Valley, where grape growers decided to capitalize on Americans' desire to make wine at home.

Two of the red grapes that were often grown and sent out of state to amateur winemakers in the Midwest and East Coast were Zinfandel and the thicker-skinned Alicante Bouchet. For example, in 1931, three thousand train cars (about 38,000 tons) of Zinfandel grapes and six thousand train cars (about 76,000 tons) of Alicante Bouchet were shipped eastward. Both of these grapes were high in sugar content and produced a full-bodied deep-red wine, reminding many immigrants of the red wines from their homelands. These two grapes were also attractive among home winemakers because they produced reasonably good "second wines" by adding water and sugar to the fermented and just-pressed grape skins and conducting a fresh round of fermentation. This second wine was ready to consume well before the first wine.

Due to the ready availability of grapes and grape concentrate in the marketplace, American wine consumption tripled in volume between 1925 and 1939. American ingenuity and resourcefulness in operation!

Paride Franzoi's Winemaking

As a young boy in Sporminore, Paride Franzoi had learned all about the winemaking process from his father and uncles.



Refrigerated freight cars loaded with California grapes were extremely popular with Midwestern home winemakers

Two of the primary grapes in his Southern Tyrol area of northern Italy/Austria were Teroldego and Lagrein, which are somewhat similar to the Zinfandel and Alicante Bouchet grapes, respectively. Most likely, this similarity caused my grandfather to primarily purchase California-grown Zinfandel and Alicante Bouchet grapes for his home winemaking. During Prohibition, these grapes could be purchased for about \$20 per ton and would arrive by train in Iron Mountain during the latter part of September or early October. A couple of train cars loaded with countless wooden grape crates (lugs) would be unhitched and set on a sidetrack near the meeting hall of the Austrian-Tyrolean Club, which was located just north of the Chapin Iron Ore Mine in town. Each lug of grapes (36 pounds) cost about 36 cents, about one percent of their cost today. From this location, grapes were distributed to various households throughout the city by trucks.

Upon arriving at my grandparent's house, the grapes were placed in the basement cantina. My grandfather would dump a couple of lugs at a time into a galvanized washtub, slip on a pair of knee-high white-rubber boots, and begin stomping the grapes. Because this was the sole purpose of these boots, they hung on a hook in the cantina throughout the rest of the year. The stomped grapes and juice would then be poured into big oak wine barrels standing upright with open tops. In describing the commencement of fermentation, my father thinks that Paride used a "fermentation plug" to get things going. During fermentation, about four times per day, Paride used a broom handle with an eight-inch two-by-four stuck on the end to "punch down" the cap.

When primary fermentation was complete, my grandfather would place a copper oval-shaped bucket next to the fermenting barrel, pull the plug from the barrel bottom and allow the fermented juice to fill the bucket. When nearly full, he would re-plug the barrel to temporarily stop the flow and drag the full bucket of new wine across the cantina sand floor to a set of four 60-gallon oak barrels. Using a big ladle, my grandfather would transfer the juice into a funnel stuck into the bungholes at the top of the barrels. When the barrels were filled, the bungholes were sealed with a pair of my grandmother's old nylon stockings filled with sand. These sand-filled stockings allowed carbon dioxide gas to be released from the wine barrel without letting in too much air; in essence, these stockings were my grandfather's version of an airtight seal.

Paride did not press the skins after this first fermentation. Instead, he filled the freshly drained fermentation barrels—that still contained the soggy grape skins—with fresh water and sugar, and fermented his "second wine." He also had a homemade still. Once this second wine was fermented, he drained it, scraped out the soggy pomace, and made grappa. Grappa is a high-alcoholic grape-based beverage produced by distilling the grape pomace. My grandparents never wasted anything!

Within a few months after fermentation was complete, the wine in the oak barrels had cleared and was ready for consumption. This wine was drunk young by today's standards, and by the time that new grapes arrived at the Austrian-Tyrolean Club in the fall of the next year, most of the wine in these barrels was gone. The only sulfite that was ever used in the winemaking process was sulfite sticks that would be burned inside empty barrels to sanitize them before the fresh wine was poured into them each fall.



Paride Franzoi resting in his backyard after winemaking.

None of this wine was ever corked in a bottle the way we amateur winemakers often do today. Instead, a jug was filled directly from the barrel for immediate consumption, usually during meals. For my grandparents, wine was a consumable staple in their diet, ever present at both lunch and dinner. My Aunt Hyacinth recalls that as a child she would regularly have a glass of wine mixed with water and a bit of sugar at lunch and dinner. When recounting drinking this child's wine blend at lunch before returning to school for afternoon classes, Aunt Hyacinth exclaimed, "Maybe that's why I wasn't so good at my afternoon math!"

My grandparents also had a barrel of vinegar in another area of their cantina that was always at least partially filled. Inside this vinegar barrel was the "mother of the vinegar." The mother of the vinegar is a slimy, gummy, jelly-like substance composed of acetic acid bacteria that turns alcohol into vinegar with the help of oxygen from the air. My grandfather would periodically refill this vinegar barrel with fresh wine to maintain the family's household vinegar supply.

The Franzoi Speakeasy

During Prohibition, "blind pigs" or "speakeasies" were places where people could drink alcoholic beverages. Some of these establishments were operated by organized crime figures, but in many small towns throughout the country they were

in the households of home winemakers who supplied their neighbors with a bit of their wine for a very reasonable amount of money. My grandparents were small business owners of just such an establishment in the basement of their modest home on the west side of Iron Mountain, Michigan. Many people made wine during Prohibition because it was part of their cultural heritage, but not everyone sold it to others. For example, my grandmother's sister lived a few blocks away from my grandparents, and my Grand Uncle Nasto made wine every year, yet they never sold their wine outside the family because, with eleven children, his family consumed all the wine they produced.

Paride and Emelie had only four children, and thus, there was an abundance of homemade wine in their household that was available for sale. During Prohibition their speakeasy was open three days a week, Friday nights after work and Saturdays and Sundays during mid-afternoons and evenings. The city's police chief, fire chief, and manager of the largest local factory were some of their more frequent customers. One reason the Franzoi speakeasy was so popular was because it had the

only indoor heated bocce ball court in the area. Further, during the summer months, three outside bocce ball courts were also put into operation; patrons would play bocce ball on the outdoor courts and then come inside for some wine and a sandwich. For a dime, they could drink a glass of wine and for another dime they could eat a salami and provolone sandwich.

My grandmother, being a good Catholic churchgoer, made sure there was no hanky-panky going on under her roof by not allowing any women into the cantina; it was a “male only” establishment. As a child, one of my father’s favorite forms of entertainment was to lay on the kitchen floor with his brother and sisters and gaze down the opening of the trapdoor stairs into the cantina in hopes of catching a glimpse of the excitement and wonder being created by the men below. He recalls that on one Saturday evening a well-known national singer—whose name now escapes him—came to the cantina for a drink and sang a few of his popular songs. My father also recalls that this was the only time that my grandmother allowed a woman other than herself—in this case, the singer’s girlfriend—to enter the cantina.



Emelie and Paride Franzoi in front of their house/speakeasy

Paride was both generous and opinionated in his role as a small businessperson. Much to my grandmother’s consternation, Paride would allow his customers to cut their own slices of salami and cheese for their sandwiches, which resulted in a poor return on his sandwich investment. Yet he was also known to kick people out of his cantina if they offered an opinion on some issue that he did not similarly hold, although they were free to return at a later date if they had “learned their lesson.” But Paride’s wine was very good, his sandwiches were meaty/cheesy thick, and he had a great set of bocce ball courts, so the family ended up turning a small profit, supplementing my grandfather’s modest salary at the Ford Motor Company Factory in nearby Kingsford where Ford manufactured wooden automotive body parts (and where “Kingsford Charcoal Briquettes” were later produced). Paride also made a bit more money selling his grappa, which had an alcohol content of about 60% (120 US proof). He sold it to friends for ten dollars a gallon, but never offered it to the patrons in his cantina. My grandfather continued to make wine from California grapes until his death in 1961.



Egg Launched

Australian and New Zealand Grapegrower & Winemaker Magazine

Wine fermentation is being taken to infinity—and beyond. First there was oak. Then the ceramic egg. Now South Australia’s JMA Engineering has come up with the stainless steel egg. And this mind-blowing bit of engineering is way out there—with a capacity more than twice the size of its nearest, non-steel rival. So cutting edge it is still the only one in the world.

JMA’s national sales manager Mark Johnson said the next stage in the launch of their super egg will be to deliver it to one of the state’s bigger wineries to let the winemaker have a play with it during next vintage.

“It started out as a lark, but once everyone here started to look at it seriously it quickly became a major project,” Johnson said.

“To make a normal fermenter normally takes us about four days. This was four weeks in design and fabrication and another four weeks in getting the construction just right. It has a 2,500-liter capacity and comes with a cooling and heating jacket to give the winemaker total control over its contents.”

Johnson said they have looked around the world and not been able to find another stainless steel egg—and certainly not one of this size and with all the added features.

He said JMA took it to the recent Winery Engineering Association conference in McLaren Vale as a talking point at their trade display, but there was so much genuine interest the boys from the Riverland-based engineering company suddenly realized the joke might be on them. “It seemed like a good idea when we were joking about it,” Johnson said. “But the design team really had to put a lot into it and what they came up with left the boys in fabrication scratching their heads.”

“Originally we thought if we could get something that just looked like an egg it would be great for WineTech next year,” he admitted. “But now we think we might really be onto something. Sure it’s big, but that’s economies of scale against the cost of building this.”

The countdown to WineTech might be on but JMA Engineering has already launched what is sure

West Side Wine Club Leadership Team - 2014

- President: **Phil Bard** 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

- 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: **Ted Johnson**, tedj52@msn.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Bill Brown** bbgoldieguy@gmail.com

- Select wineries to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Jonathan Brown** jonabrown@gmail.com & Jim Ourada
jim.m.ourada@intel.com

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

- 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 Barbara Stinger & Mindy Bush – Helpers

- Awards Gala / Holliday parties

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

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