

Portland
Winemakers
Club



Monthly Events

January 15th, 2020

Crush Talk & Planning

January 25th, 2020

Annual Gala

February 19th, 2020

Bordeaux varietals and
Bordeaux blends, Blind
Tasting

March, 18th, 2020

Speaker **CANCELLED**

April 15th, 2020

ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

May 20th, 2020

Best Practices; winemaking
skills & discussions. Tips &
Tricks. Vineyard grape
sources.

June 17th, 2020

Speaker

July

Annual Picnic

August 19th, 2020

All Whites Blind Tasting

September, 16th, 2020

Other Reds Blind Tasting

October 21st, 2020

Pinot Noir Blind Tasting

November 18th, 2020

Crush Talk

December 16th, 2020

Elections, Planning for Next
Year, More Crush Talk

NOTE: Tours, Gala & picnic
date & times may vary
depending on availability.

Portland Winemakers Club

April 2020

“Bill’s Meanderings”

Well I guess its obvious that we will again be cancelling this months meeting at the Grange. Just so we don't suffer from terminal meeting withdrawal we are arranging a virtual meeting on Zoom. This will entail some logistical work that our new Zoom Czar John Kahrs will be organizing and hosting. So if you haven't used Zoom yet search it out and watch for an email with a link to connect to that will be sent out before the meeting. What we are planning on for this meeting is discussing, besides regular business, group purchases and the different wine regions and the varietals available in those areas. please be sure your email addresses are current and that any new members have submitted their email addresses to Ken to be able to receive this link to connect to this online discussion.

We are hoping this will be embraced by our members as this may take place for future meetings. The discussion will start on the same night and time as our regular meeting. More details will be forthcoming.

We, Marilyn and I, are fortunate to be in the country and have ten acres to roam in these confining times. I'm sure we all have wine work to help pass time and we have been busy with this seasons vintage. We still need to plan for the future. So for our future we have been grafting some of our poor performing vines over to Wädenswil. The last several years we have been able to purchase some wonderful Wädenswil fruit from a nearby vineyard but that was suddenly sold and made unavailable to us. Not wanting to do without we decided to grow our own



Shelter at home and enjoy a steaming cup
of mulled wine!

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Upcoming events / Save the date

Club Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for April of 15th, 7:00 pm. We're looking to hold our club meeting by computer, iPad or phone using a virtual meeting service called "Zoom". Jon Kahrs will run the Zoom part of it.

Agenda: We will go through introductions and variety of club stuff. The first part of the program will focus on our grape buys. Helping people understand the grapes and then the actual process of working together to get grapes. Jon will start out with a quick discussion of AVA's in Washington and Oregon. For Oregon he can talk about clones for Pinot and a little about Chardonnay. Jon will send the moderator abilities to Bob Hatt and then we can go to our grape buys. If you are attending the meeting, which given the grape buy deadlines I hope you are, you can talk a little about each vineyard, one by one. People can then talk about their experiences, how they received the grapes, seasonal differences, and how people handled special situations. We can go through each vineyard like this. For some of the newer members we can provide some basic info.

The moderator roll will be sent back to Jon and then we can have an overall round table that will no doubt evolve into a crush talk of sorts.

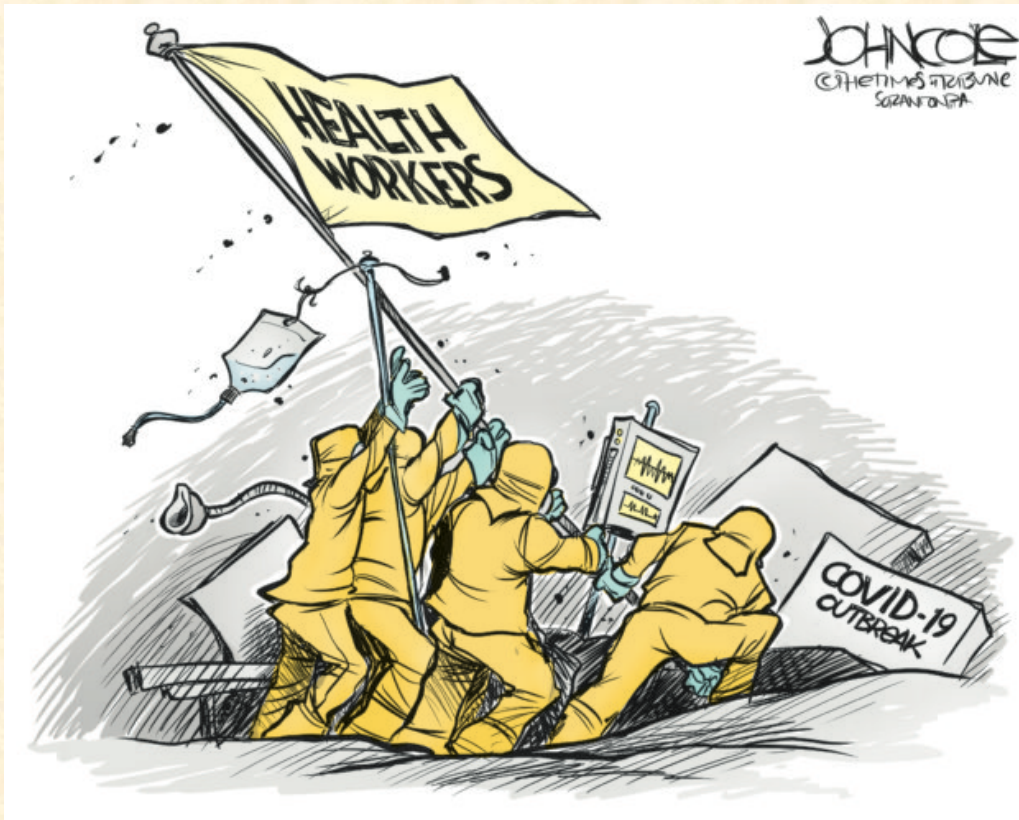
We will provide further sign on information and other details next week by e-mail.

Since this is a virtual meeting feel free to have your own private potluck and use as many wine glasses as you want to taste your own wine. Put your own chairs away at the end, no need to move your tables.

Website: <http://portlandwinemakersclub/>

March Meeting Minutes

- There was no meeting in March due because of COVID-19 virus concerns.



Thanks go out to the many health care workers fighting on the front lines against this virus.

7 BEST SAKE BOTTLES – BUYER’S GUIDE & TIPS



Sake is a Japanese alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice. Although it is often called a wine rice, it is brewed in a process more akin to beer making rather than winemaking. Its alcohol content is normally between 14% and 17%. While this rice-based alcoholic beverage has been around for centuries, it still remains a mystery to many consumers in Western countries. Even those who know much about wine are often baffled when it comes to sake. Is a ginjo drier than junmai? And what about daiginjo? Is junmai ginjo similar to daiginjo? And just why is nigori so cloudy? These are just some of the questions most imbibers grapple with.

As with whiskey and wine, sake requires education – and the best way to learn is with your palate. But sometimes, expert guidance can go a long way. So we’ve put together a buyer’s guide to help you demystify this Japanese liqueur. Read on to find out what the different categories and grades of sake are and how best to enjoy each type of sake. We’ll also look at some of the best sakes on the market.

KEY SAKE TERMS

Rice polishing/milling ratio

Understanding the rice polishing rate is half the battle when it comes to choosing a sake. This is because the percentage is used to determine the quality grade of a sake.

The rice polishing ratio is the percentage of rice grain that remains after the husk of the brown rice is milled away. A higher polish rate removes amino acids, fats, and proteins that can produce undesirable aromas and flavors in the beverage.

Usually, 30% of the outer part of the rice grain is removed, leaving the 70% of the central part. This milled rice is said to have a polishing ration of 70% or referred to as 70% polished rice. Although sake made with highly polished rice is lighter and more refined, this doesn’t mean that it is of better quality than sake made with less polished rice.

Tokubetsu

This is a term used by brewers to refer to sake that is special in some way. The sake may have been made using a specially designated rice or a certain brewing method.

TYPES OF SAKE

Nigorizake – nigorizake is a cloudy sake produced by straining the moromi (main mash) through a coarse-meshed cloth. The yeast and rice particles in this unfiltered brew give it the milky appearance.

Namazake and nama-chozo – sake is normally pasteurized twice before being released to the market (before and after bottling). Namazake is not pasteurized. Nama-chozo, on the other hand, is stored at low temperatures and only pasteurized once before bottling.

Genshu – this is undiluted sake. Since no water is added during the brewing process, genshu has a high concentration of alcohol and a strong taste.

Koshu – sake is usually aged for a maximum of one year before release. With koshu, aging can last for three years to five years. It has a mature flavor and smooth quality – both of which are common in long-aged sake. The color of this sake ranges from yellow to amber and has a strong smell of caramel with hints of molasses, honey, and dried fruits.

Taruzake – taruzake is sake that has been stored in a cedar cask. It usually has a special aroma.

Sparkling sake – with sparkling sakes, the brew is carbonated by injecting carbon dioxide or trapping carbon dioxide produced during fermentation. They range from sweet brews with a low alcohol content to those with a dry taste and a high alcohol content. The sparkling varieties also vary in appearance – they can be clear or cloudy.

THE GRADES OF SAKE

Sake is classified based on several factors including the type of rice used, the degree to which the rice has been polished and the amount of distilled alcohol used. Here are the different grades of sake:

1. Regular Sake

- **Futsuu-shu** (普通酒)

Futsuu-shu sake, also known as normal sake or table sake, makes up the bulk of the sake brewed in Japan (about 70-75% of the entire sake market). It is made with rice that has been polished to around 70% and distilled alcohol equivalent to about 20% of the weight of the milled rice. Organic acids and sugars may be added to the sake to adjust its flavor. This sake has a less pronounced aroma and flavor when compared to specially designated sake.

2. Specially Designated Sake

The classifications described below are collectively known as special designation sake or tokutei meisho-shu and are considered to constitute the realm of premium sake.

- **Ginjo** (吟醸酒)

Ginjo grade sake is brewed from rice that has been polished down to 60%. It is usually brewed longer and at lower temperatures than other sakes. Distilled alcohol equivalent to about 10% of the weight of the milled rice may be added. Products in this category have a fruity fragrance with a slight sour tang. They also have a soft texture and a pleasant aftertaste.

- **Daiginjo** (大吟醸酒)

Daiginjo-shu is a form of ginjo made with rice that has been polished down to 50%. It has a more refined taste and a stronger fruity fragrance than ginjo sake.

- **Junmai** (純米酒)

Sake classified as junmai is brewed only from rice and koji mold. While there is no minimum polishing requirement for polishing rice used in brewing junmai, most brewers polish their rice to at least 80%. Junmai grade sake usually has a high level of acidity and umami.

- **Junmai ginjo** (純米吟醸酒)

This sake is made from koji mold and rice that has been polished down to 60% or less. It has a clear fruity fragrance and low acid levels as it is made using ginjo brewing techniques.

- **Junmai daiginjo** (純米大吟醸酒)

This subclass of junmai ginjo is considered the highest-grade sake. It is brewed with very high-polished rice (to at least 50%). The products in this category are generally light, complex and fragrant.

- **Honjozo** (本醸造酒)

Honjozo grade sake is brewed with rice that has been polished down to 60%. A small amount of distilled alcohol is added to the brew to lighten its flavor. This type of sake has a low level of acidity and umami.

Honjozo-shu can also be of ginjo or daiginjo quality. Note that the suffix -shu in some of the designations simply means “sake,” and is often dropped in conversations.

Drinking Sake

Sake may be served warm, at room temperature or chilled, depending on the season, the occasion, the type of sake and a person’s preference. High-grade sake should be served chilled (around 10 °C or 50 °F) as warming it may mask delicate flavors and aromas. Low-quality and old sake is best served warm – around 50 °C or 122 °F. Warm sake is traditionally drunk from small ceramic cups called o-choko or choko. Chilled sake may be drunk from a clear glass vessel such as a white wine glass.

This Japanese beverage is best enjoyed young – preferably within one year of release. While it won’t “go bad” after this time, it’ll become more intense and concentrated in flavor.



7 BEST SAKES

To save those who want to embark upon a new boozy adventure from navigating the sake landscape alone, compiled here are seven of the best sake bottles on the market. This list has something for everyone and includes sakes from different categories and styles.

1. Choya Sake

This is a soft-textured, savory treat from Choya, the leading Umeshu making company in the world. It is an easy wine to drink and a great introduction to the world of sake for the uninitiated. This sake is made with locally grown japonica rice which is fermented at low temperatures to give it rich rice-centric aromas.

The nice thing about this sake is that it is versatile – it can be served chilled in summer or warm during the cold winter season. Additionally, it pairs well with traditional Japanese cuisine such as sushi and sashimi as well as rich cooked items such as teriyaki, teppanyaki, and sukiyaki. Choya sake is ideal for flavoring gourmet dishes and preparing cocktails.

2. Shiraume Umeshu Plum Infused Sake

Shiraume Umeshu is a popular Japanese liqueur made by steeping Ume plum in premium grade ginjo sake. It is beautifully smooth and has flavors of almond and plum. Imbibers will love this sake as it doesn't have a sharp tang of alcohol that may mar the finish on the palate – as sometimes happens with most plum liqueurs. This plum-infused sake works well as a dessert wine or aperitif and can be served warm or chilled.

3. Ozeki Premium Junmai Sake

This premium junmai sake is one of the three sakes that Ozeki first brewed in California in 1979. It has a full-bodied flavor, fruity aromas, and a very balanced acidity. This pure rice sake has hugely inviting notes of tinned peaches, bison grass, and Danish pastry. Strawberry, melon, and shiso meet in the middle and sign off with a refreshing, off-dry and mildly warming finish. The sake is very easy to drink making it a great option for first-time sake drinkers. Ozeki Premium style sake can be served chilled, warm or at room temperature. It is a wonderful accompaniment to light umami dishes like sushi, sashimi, and chicken. It can also be poured over fresh or grilled oysters to add depth of flavor.

4. Sho Chiku Bai Classic Sake

Sho Chiku Bai is a junmai-shu made by Takara Sake USA, a Takara Group member based in Berkely, North Carolina. The company's products are brewed with tradition in mind, blending old sake-making craftsmanship with modern technology. Additionally, the sakes are made using pure snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada Mountains and calrose rice grown in the fertile Sacramento Valley. This traditional style sake has a hard, crisp texture with mild and complex aromas. It also has a nose of honey and a full-bodied palate with hints of nuts. It is best served warm or at room temperature. Sho Chiku Bai sake pairs great with mildly seasoned foods such as poached or grilled fish or meat, tempura, sushi, and other Asian dishes.

5. Akashi Tai Ginjo Yuzushu Sake

This liqueur from Akashi Tai is made by macerating the Yuzu fruit in Ginjo sake. The fruits are hand-picked locally and hand-juiced immediately to maintain a high level of freshness. The Ginjo Yuzushu Sake bottle is beautiful in its simplicity as the sake is in taste. The sake has bright citrus flavors, with hints of sherbet lemons following it up. It's worth mentioning that this sake feels quite strong in terms of alcohol content and may overwhelm mild food. However, it makes a great accompaniment to strongly flavored stir-fry dishes.

6. Ozeki Karatamba Honjozo Sake

This honjozo sake is a great option for those seeking a true taste of ancient Japan. It has deep rich notes of cocoa, caramel and maple syrup elements. The brew has melon, honey, and blackberry on the backend with strong umami overtones to create a distinctly unique drinking experience. Additionally, it is full-bodied, dry and crisp in nature. The sake can be served chilled or warm with spicy dishes, fried foods, or grilled salmon.

7. Daishichi Minowamon Junmai Daiginjo Sake

Daishichi Minowamon is a multiple award-winning junmai daiginjo-shu, made the traditional kimoto method. This graceful sake has a classic nose filled with cantaloupe, ripe peach, and raisins. Its crisp, clean taste has an underlying richness that creates a natural and gentle mellow texture. This taste makes Minowamon a perfect accompaniment to cuisines with a natural sweetness such as kaiseki cuisine. This junmai daiginjo sake is a great choice for anyone wishing to dip a tentative toe into sake's savory waters.

IN CONCLUSION

We hope that this comprehensive review will help you to understand the world of sake. However, the best way to gain a better appreciation for and understanding of this Japanese liqueur is to drink it. Therefore, make it a point to taste any of the brews described above.



Winemaker Trials

Scheid Family Wines Experiments with In-Vineyard Fermentation of Pinot Noir

At the time of this interview, the experiment was in its early stages. The answers published here are a reflection of an in-progress trial.

Stacy Briscoe, Casy Ddi Cesare

TRIAL OBJECTIVE: To observe the effects of non-*Saccharomyces* native yeast application during an in-vineyard fermentation.

TRIAL DESCRIPTION: Post-harvest, a portion of a block of Pinot Noir from the Scheid Family Wine's Riverview Vineyard was left in the vineyard to ferment with native yeast in a refrigerated trailer. The rest of that same block was processed in the winery with house yeast. Each batch received the same punch-down routine and additives throughout the process.

Lot 1: Riverview Vineyard Pinot Noir, fermented in-vineyard with native, non-*Saccharomyces* yeast

Lot 2: Riverview Vineyard Pinot Noir, fermented in-house with traditional *Saccharomyces* yeast culture

Winemaker Progress Report

Why is in-vineyard fermentation of interest to you?

Di Cesare: This project began because we wanted to preserve the intrinsic character and truly show the terroir from our Riverview Vineyard. We also want to better understand native fermentations, along with the potential byproducts of incorporating non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts at the start of fermentation. We felt minimalistic winemaking and native fermentation would help us achieve these goals. Recent research has concluded that native yeast fermentations at established wineries that have used commercial yeasts aren't necessarily native because the native microflora found in the vineyard can be flushed by commercial inoculum in the winery from previous harvests. To ensure that our fermentations weren't influenced by established, in-winery commercial strains, we set up a refrigerated trailer in our Riverview Vineyard to receive and process the fruit directly.

Native yeast fermentations encourage non-*Saccharomyces* yeast to initiate fermentations and give them a chance to impart beneficial byproducts, such as mannoproteins, polysaccharides, glycerol and precursors to fruit aroma compounds. Depending on the non-*Saccharomyces* strain, they usually don't survive past 5 to 10 percent alcohol, at

which point *Saccharomyces* must take over fermentation. There is also a risk of certain non-*Saccharomyces* yeast and other bacteria in the vineyard creating off-aromas. We wanted to see if our wines could benefit from the character of non-*Saccharomyces* yeast and mitigate the risks of off-aromas.

Why did you decide to try this with Pinot Noir?

Di Cesare: We found a lot of success doing in-vineyard fermentations with our Chardonnay. Each fermentation from the past two vintages had a unique makeup of yeasts that achieved dryness. The native fermentations added a level of complexity and uniqueness to our Chardonnay that we really loved, so we wanted to see if we could capture some of that magic with our Pinot Noir grown on the same site. Logistically, it also worked out great this harvest as our Pinot Noir ripened a few weeks earlier than our Chardonnay. This allowed us to, in theory, complete our Pinot Noir fermentations before transitioning to Chardonnay.

Thus far, are there any notable differences between how the two varieties are reacting during the fermentation process? Any similarities?

Di Cesare: So far, the Pinot Noir fermentation is much faster than the Chardonnay. The Pinot Noir appears to reach dryness in about 10 days when our Chardonnay from the past two vintages took, on average, anywhere from three to six weeks to ferment. We even had one outlier fermentation that took nearly four months to achieve dryness. We find our native fermentations give the wines weight with a round mid palate coupled with higher levels of minerality and salinity. Although it is still early with the Pinot Noir, we have found some of those same characteristics shining through.

How do you plan to collect data?

Di Cesare: We are tracking fermentation kinetics, as well as doing Variable Number Tandem Repeat Analysis during the start, middle and end of fermentation to gain an understanding of what microbes are doing the fermentation.

Have there been any complications during the trial process so far? Are there any issues you are trying to avoid?

Di Cesare: So Far so good! There is always a risk of increased volatile acidity (VA) as well as stuck fermentations when using native yeast, but for now the fermentation has been going smoothly and has been tracking well. If the rate of fermentation continues as expected, and no off-aromas are detected, then we will not need to mitigate. If the fermentation slows, we will start tracking VA daily and potentially bring the must back to Scheid and inoculate. If needed.

Do you/your colleagues have any predictions about the conclusion of this trial? Are there any results you would like to see?

Di Cesare: From the team's experience with native fermentations, predictions range from hot & fast to slow and sluggish. There is a consensus that the native wines will make a differentiated product from our other fermentations. We hope that we have a slow start in order to get an ambient soak with non-*Saccharomyces* initiating fermentation and then a steady march to the finish with native *Saccharomyces*. Overall we expect an increased understanding of our Riverview Vineyard, native fermentations and maybe a bit of "noble funk" to help create a distinguished product. We would love to see if the fermentation in the vineyard is completed by non-commercial yeasts native to our site!

Based on the results of the in-vineyard fermentation of Chardonnay, did you actually change any of your white winemaking routines?

Di Cesare: Yes, with the success of our first two vintages in the vineyard, we have begun to incorporate some native fermentations at Scheid, as well as bring in commercial non-*Saccharomyces* yeast. We have found native yeast and non-*Saccharomyces* yeast can add an extra level of complexity and bring a unique component to the resulting wines. Both vintages of native in-vineyard fermentations of Chardonnay have become a main component in our Metz Road Chardonnay—our small-lot, single-vineyard brand named after the road that runs alongside our Riverview Vineyard. We are looking to potentially bottle our in-vineyard fermentations individually in the future.

Based on the results of the in-vineyard fermentation of Pinot Noir, do you foresee any changes to your red winemaking processes?

Di Cesare: We will see! We will evaluate all aspects of the fermentation and, ultimately, the finished wine. If the resulting wine is of higher quality or brings a desired character, we will consider bringing more native yeast into our

larger production. We have begun to experiment in the winery with commercial non-*Saccharomyces* mixed yeast, non-*Saccharomyces* yeast and native fermentations in the winery to see if we can emulate what we predict would happen out in the vineyard. I foresee a mixture of these practices to continue to be evaluated alongside our traditional practices.

Though the Pinot Noir is currently fermenting, what kind of data have you collected and what have you learned?

Di Cesare: So far, we have core juice analysis, fermentation curves and are waiting for the results from our VNTR samples. I was expecting, at the start of fermentation, to potentially pick up more off-aromas—VA and ethyl acetate—but so far, so good. We had a nice period of ambient soak with a cap forming on the third day of fermentation. Punch-downs have been easy, and the fermentation has not been very vigorous, just chugging along.

Do you think you'll repeat this trial with Pinot Noir again as you repeated with Chardonnay? Would you consider running the experiment on a third grape variety?

Di Cesare: Yes, we will run this trial again. We learned a lot from year one to year two with the Chardonnay, and I look forward to learning more from our repeats of this trial. Each year brings a potentially different microflora, so it will be interesting to see what differences we get from vintage to vintage.

We are always open to trying these techniques with more varieties. Last year we did a native fermentation at Scheid with Sauvignon Blanc that was bottled on its own as Scheid Vineyards Reserve Sauvignon Blanc. We will see if another trial pops up in another one of our vineyards soon!

Doing trials like this can be a large investment by a winery in time and capital. Continuous improvement and innovation are two of our core values at Scheid Family Wines. We find great value in doing trials on a production scale in order to learn more about our vineyards and winemaking. Not every trial is a success, but we always learn something. We have 4,000 acres and 12 unique vineyard sites along a 70-mile stretch of Monterey County, and based on the results of this and previous trials, going native looks to be another winemaking tool to use to express our distinctive terroir.



Veronique Drouhin is known to have said about making wine in the Willamette Valley, "Now that I have 30 years under my belt I think I am beginning to understand how everything works." You can taste the benefits of her patience.

**Update: Winemaker International Amateur Wine Competition
Judging still taking place, but delayed**

**2020 WineMaker[®]
International Amateur
WINE COMPETITION**

COVID-19 Update: Our 2020 event is still on, but the actual judging will be delayed. Due to concerns with COVID-19 and the safety of our dozens of wine judges and support staff, we are postponing the actual judging of wine entries in the WineMaker International Amateur Wine Competition from mid-April until late June. The thousands of wine entries already received are now stored securely in a climate-controlled warehouse near WineMaker's office until late June when it will hopefully be safe to assemble the judges and support staff needed for the full weekend of judging. With our planned WineMaker Competition Awards Dinner no longer taking place on May 30 in San Luis Obispo, California, we will instead be only using email and social media to first announce the winners. All entrants will still be mailed their judging notes and any winners will also receive their medals and certificates by mail this year.

As a result of this postponement we have reopened accepting wine entries again. The new deadline for wines to arrive will be June 1 if you missed our earlier March 17 date due to the impact of the current health crisis.

Thanks from all of us at WineMaker for your understanding and patience as we work through this quickly changing landscape with the goal of still providing expert feedback from experienced judges on your entries. Your bottles are tucked away safe and sound in climate-controlled comfort until late June. Be safe, be well, and cheers!

New Entry Deadline! ENTER YOUR BEST HOMEMADE WINES, CIDERS, AND MEADS IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPETITION FOR HOBBY WINEMAKERS!

**PREPARE YOUR ENTRIES NOW! NEW ENTRY DEADLINE: JUNE 1,
2020 <https://www.winemakercompetition.com/>**

Portland Winemakers Club

Leadership Team – 2020

President: **Bill Brown** bbgoldieguy@gmail.com

- 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 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/Speakers: **Rufus Knapp** Rufus.Knapp@fei.com

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Paul Sowray & Barb Stinger** davids1898@aol.com
kbstinger@frontier.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery/Vineyard Tours: **Damon Lopez**. dlopez5011@yahoo.com

- Select wineries, vineyards etc. to visit
- Arrange tours
- Cover logistics (food and money)

Chair of Group Purchases: **Bob Hatt** bobhatt2000@yahoo.com

- Makes the arrangements to purchase, collect, and distribute
- Grape purchases
- Supplies – These should be passed to the President for distribution

Chair of Competitions: **Paul Boyechko** labmanpaul@hotmail.com

- Encourage club participation in all amateur competitions available. Make information known through Newsletter, e-mail and Facebook.

Chairs for Social Events : **Marilyn Brown & Mindy Bush** brown.marilynjean@gmail.com
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