

Portland Winemakers Club

February 2019

“Bill’s Meanderings”

Portland
Winemakers
Club



Scheduled Meetings

January 16, 2019

Crush Talk / Planning

January 19th, 2019

Annual Gala – At Dennis & Marlene Grants new tasting room at Parrett Mountain Cellars

February 20, 2019

Bordeaux Tasting

March 20, 2019

Speaker:

April 17, 2019

Barrel / Carboy Sample Tasting.

May 15, 2019

Speaker:

June, 19, 2019

Best practices; member demonstrations of tips & tricks

July 13 2019

Annual Picnic

July 27 2019

Tour

August 21, 2019

All Whites Tasting

August 24, 2019

Tour

September 18, 2019

Other Reds Tasting

October 16, 2019

Pinot Noir Tasting

November 2019

No Meeting

December 4, 2019

Planning, Tours, Speakers, Events, Elections



While it may seem like we are in the throws of winter, spring is coming fast. Vines are getting pruned for the 2019 vintage and 2018 Rose is getting bottled. Events are starting like competitions, (see Newport Seafood and Wine results below), seminars, tours, and tastings. A favorite of Marilyn and mine is the Cuvee Stroll at The Allison. It's a bit pricey for a tasting but there are some of the best wine and food pairings of the region presented. Our next meeting will be at another test site, the Robinwood Station in between Lake Oswego and West Linn. It may not be the most convenient for some but keep in mind our choices are limited and wherever we end up it will not be convenient for everyone. Lastly, again a big thank you to members Dennis and Marlene Grant for hosting the wine club gala at their beautiful new Parrot Mountain Cellars tasting room. A great venue and a good time had by all and a pat on the back of the event coordinators for a job well done. -- Bill



Congratulations are in order to **Bob Hatt** for winning “**Best in show**” at the Newport Seafood & Wine Festival amateur wine competition. PWC members made a good showing winning 6 out of 9 gold (including best of show); 5 out of 14 silver & 3 out of 20 bronze. There was a total of 63 entries.

Bob Hatt – Pinot Noir – **Gold, Best in show**

Bob Hatt – Sangiovese -- Gold

Phil Bard – Cabernet Sauvignon – Gold

Ken & Barb Stinger – Petit Verdot -- Gold

Ken & Barb Stinger – Cabernet Sauvignon – Gold

Stephen Fine – Cabernet Sauvignon – Gold

Bill Brown – Sangiovese – Silver

Phil Bard – Cabernet Franc – Silver

Ken & Barb Stinger – Malbec -- Silver

Ken & Barb Stinger – Bordeaux Blend – Silver

Mike Whiskey – Merlot Blend – Silver

Paul Boyechko – Cabernet Franc – Bronze

Curt Jutzi – Cabernet Sauvignon – Bronze

Gillian Wildfire – Chardonnay -- Bronze

Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.

Misc. Information

- “Wineries are being created faster than the market is expanding.”

- “I’ve made some Pinot Noir, and I feel like you almost have to whisper around the barrels, tip-toe, where Syrah wants you to play Rolling Stones as loud as it can go. It wants to be pumped over, it wants lots of oxygen and the Rhône varietals express a lot of fruit.”

- “We’re seeing companies like Kroger, Publix and Safeway carving out real estate in their wine sections for cans. This is the year where it was validated. The can wine segment is actually a segment—not just a fad.”

- “The hard seltzer category, which didn’t exist two years ago, sold more than \$400 million over the course of 52 weeks by the third quarter of 2018. It’s now a huge multi-million dollar category, aimed in particular at younger female drinkers.”

- **Bonded vs. Virtual Wineries**
U.S. wineries are categorized as either bonded or virtual. Bonded wineries have been licensed by the **Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau**, a federal agency. They are responsible for all production activities on a winery’s premises, including recordkeeping of all activities and filing reports to the TTB. A virtual winery has a physical location, which may be shared with another winery. It produces at least one brand and has its own management and winemaker. Virtual wineries are not bonded; they use the services of a bonded host facility—either a winery or custom crush facility—to produce and bottle wine.

Note: The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, February 20th at 7:00 PM. Note that the meeting location has again changed and will be held at **The Robinwood Station; 3706 Cedaroak Drive, West Lynn**. This is another trial run location in our effort to find a new, permanent meeting place (see google map or use your smart phone). There is parking in front of & on the South side of the building or on the street.

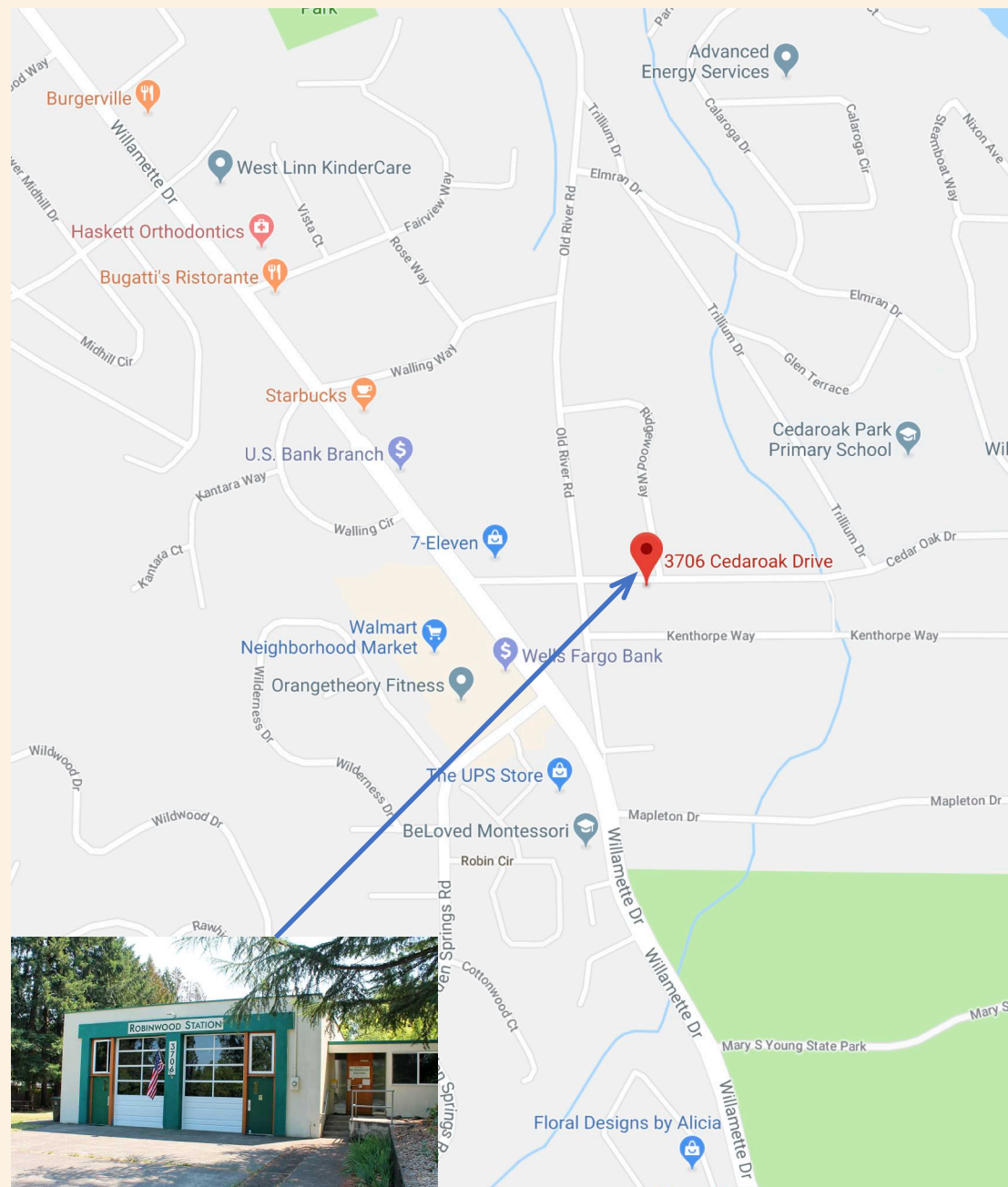
February agenda: Blind tasting & judging of member produced red Bordeaux varietals & Bordeaux blends. Red Bordeaux varietals are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Carmenere or any blend containing 2 or more of these 6 grapes.

If you haven’t already, be sure to renew your club membership and sign a new waiver.

The regular meeting will be a potluck, bring a small snack to share.

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

Website: <http://portlandwinemakersclub.com/>



January Meeting Minutes

Present: 23

- Allan Glaspay said he knows of another potential meeting place. He will send contact info.
- Barb Thomson reminded everyone to fill out waivers for the new year.
- Marilyn Brown reminded everyone of the upcoming Gala. She still needs a poultry dish.
- Damon Lopez asked for tour ideas. Mike Smolak suggested Oregon Barrel Works. Another suggestion was Argyle. Another was Brianne Day of Day Wines Collaborative.
- There was discussion about increasing club dues since we will have to pay for a meeting place from now on. Mike Smolak suggested we increase now, not waiting till we know for sure what we will need for meeting place will cost. It would be best to ask for increased dues at the Gala. There was a motion and a second to increase dues immediately to \$25, approved.
- Discussion about our next meeting place. Possibly Robinwood Station in West Lynn. \$20 per hour, good parking, lots of room. Long way to drive for some members. Another possibility is the Scholls Grange Hall. \$20 to \$30 per hour, \$2 million dollar waiver, good parking, A ways South of Scholls store.
- There was a discussion about re-arranging our yearly schedule. Possibly have a meeting in November and push the December meeting a week further out. Move Bordeaux tasting to the end of the year? There was a motion to move Crush Talk to November. There was no second so it was tabled until next meeting. Some were in favor of moving the Gala to a warmer month. Phil offered that January is a good month to recap the year. Also, all competition awards can be summarized. There was no action taken. More discussion next meeting.
- Barb Stinger asked for potential speaker ideas. Those mentioned were: Brianne Day wine Collaborative; Bertony Faustin of Abby Creek Winery; A distributor; Cider making; former member Boyd Teagarden; Rollin Soles of ROCO Winery; Corby Stonebraker - Soles - to talk about IPNC; Wine judging.

General feeling about meeting at this location: The room is nice and more centrally located. However, we had 23 members present and it felt too tightly packed. Tastings, where you need room to pass between tables, would be difficult.

Ken Stinger ... Secretary

2019 WineMaker International Amateur WINE COMPETITION

ENTER YOUR **BEST HOMEMADE WINES**
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FOR HOBBY WINEMAKERS!

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Entry Deadline: March 15, 2019
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ph: (802) 362-3981 ext. 106 • fax: (802) 362-2377
email: competition@winemakermag.com

You can also enter online at: www.winemakercompetition.com

SENSORY EVALUATION: NOT QUITE COMMON SENSE!

Article by *Mike Horton*

'Proper' sensory evaluation of wine actually involves a surprising amount of knowledge. Indeed, there are entire courses dedicated solely to this discipline. Starting off with the basic knowledge is necessary, then it becomes a 'practice makes perfect' scenario.

The basic technique for sensory evaluation goes as follows: pour wine, look, sniff, drink. Let's look at the three senses we use for sensory evaluation:

Fill Height – This obviously isn't a sense, but I thought it was worth mentioning. Typical fill heights when serving wine are usually recommended as follows: one-third for red, half for white, and three-quarter for sparkling. During sensory evaluation and regardless of the wine type, you want to fill your glass about one-third full in order to leave enough room for aromatic evaluation.

Sight – Visual assessment is the first step. A wine's color can help with identifying grape varietal, wine style, age, and faults. Tilt your glass at a 45° angle over a white background; this is why white tasting benches are ideal, but a tablecloth or sheet of paper will do. Look through the wine, noting the 'core' (the color at the center of the glass) and the 'rim' (the color around the edge); the core is useful in identifying grape varietal and wine style, while the rim can be used as an indication of age. Also look for the presence of bubbles, which may indicate faults (unless, of course, you're tasting sparkling wine). 'Legs' is a term used to refer to the process of wine adhering to the glass when swirled, hinting at a wine's alcohol content and viscosity.

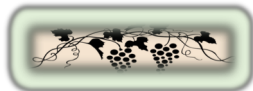
The haziness of a wine will hint at potential faults, including protein instability, bacterial infection, insufficient filtering, and/or leftover yeast. Protein instability will often result in crystal formation, sometimes referred to as 'wine diamonds', in the bottom of the glass or bottle. While not harmful, these are not desirable. Bubbles around the rim indicates the presence of gas, typically carbon dioxide. For sparkling wines, you obviously want some bubbles (will discuss in depth in a following post), but small levels are common in younger white wines because dissolved carbon dioxide levels are left higher at bottling to help retain the wine's freshness. Bubbles may also indicate partial fermentation (primary or malolactic) in bottle for both red and white wines, or the presence of spoilage bacteria.

Smell – A wine's aroma and bouquet are very important during evaluation. Before you start swirling, sniff the wine and record what you detect. Then swirl the glass vigorously for a few seconds. This will oxygenate the wine and release volatile aroma compounds. Sniff the wine again and focus on the different elements. The term 'aroma' is used to refer to flavors originating from the grape, while 'bouquet' refers to flavors originating from winemaking (fermentation, maturation, bottle-aging). Experienced tasters will be able to determine most wine faults during this stage (thus the prevalence of DNPI, 'do not put in mouth', during sensory evaluation).

Taste – As you taste something, the air inside your mouth flows into your nasal passages. The combination of the smell of this air with the sensations of sweet, salt, sour, and bitter in your mouth is how you determine flavor. So, smell is really the biggest tool in sensory evaluation.

The proper way to taste sounds a lot more confusing than it really is, but I guess it takes a bit of practice. Sip a small amount of wine, then draw air through slightly opened lips while resting the wine on your tongue. Record what you sense: acidity, sweetness, bitterness, astringency, body, balance, flavor profile, saltiness, and anything else.

Just like with aroma/bouquet evaluation, you want to try to separate the different elements you perceive and define them as best you can. Don't get frustrated or embarrassed if you do not perceive the same as others you may be tasting with (or with tasting notes provided by wineries or critics). Everyone has different levels of perception for different flavors. Like I said before, everyone's sensory abilities will improve with practice so drink up!



Wine-cider hybrids: best of two worlds

Portland Oregonian – Michael Slberty 01/18/2019

There's a new hybrid in town, and it has nothing to do with automobiles or cannabis strains. A handful of local winemakers are mixing wine grapes and orchard fruit to create the best combination since gin met tonic.

If you enjoy ciders and floral white wines, this new trend offers the best of both worlds. These hybrids are refreshing, crisp food-friendly beverages that pair nicely with everything from spicy Thai noodles to the Thanksgiving turkey. Wine-cider blends clock in at 8 to 10 percent alcohol and have a lightly effervescent quality, so they also make for a lively aperitif.



Oregon wine-cider hybrids (from left): 2016 Art + Science Symbiosis, NV Smockshop Band Grape and Pear Country Wine II and 2017 Chris James Cellars Prost! *Michael Albery*

I recently tried the “Symbiosis” from Art + Science, outside Sheridan, for my first wine grape-apple experience. The label shows two birds sitting inside a pair of human lungs, so naturally, I was intrigued. One sip and I was smitten with Symbiosis’ dry, fruity freshness.

I had to learn everything I could about this floral, spicy beverage, so I immediately called the couple responsible for Symbiosis: Dan Rinke and Kim Hamblin. Rinke is well-known for the superb wines he makes for Dag Johan Sundby, owner at Johan Vineyards in Rickreall.

It turns out the Symbiosis was born of equal parts necessity and inspiration. When Rinke began making cider at Art + Science, he had a batch made with foraged apples that just didn’t have enough tannic structure for his liking. Rinke knew the grüner veltliner grapes he worked with at Johan Vineyards had skins that produced a surprising amount of tannins, so he decided to combine some of the white wine with his apple juice.

It wasn’t a complete shot in the dark, as Rinke had already tasted a combination of apple cider and a French-American hybrid grape called traminette made by Aaron Burr Cidery in Wurtsboro, New York. “I liked it, but I knew it would taste even better if made with a vinifera grape like grüner veltliner,” Rinke says.

When Art + Science released its inaugural Symbiosis from the 2015 vintage, it was the first Oregon winery/cidery I know of to make such a blend. Luckily for us, other Oregon winemakers have followed suit. Here are three wine-cider hybrids worth tracking down.

2016 Art + Science Symbiosis

The second vintage of Symbiosis is equal parts fresh-pressed apple juice and grüner veltliner that Rinke co-fermented for 26 days. After fermentation, the juice was placed in a 600-liter acacia wood barrel and a single French oak barrique for 10 months of aging.

The resulting Symbiosis has a golden color that matches the scent of fresh-cut hay that drifts up from the glass. Other aromas include baked apples, lemongrass and saddle leather. Flavors of spicy cinnamon, Golden Delicious apples, lemon verbena and green tea swirl about the mouth, leaving a wee bit of chamomile on the finish as the tiny bubbles fade into the night. Symbiosis’ chewy tannins are matched by the pucker power of its acidity.

NV Smockshop Band Grape and Pear Country Wine II

Country Wine is made by Nate Ready at Hiyu Wine Farm in Hood River. Ready begins by preparing cider using the Bartlett, Comice, Anjou and Bosc pears that grow next to his estate vineyard. After a year of aging in barrel, the pear cider is added to a batch of the next vintage’s whole-cluster gewürztraminer grapes. A second fermentation is allowed to finish in the bottle, and the trapped carbon dioxide bubbles are guaranteed to tickle.

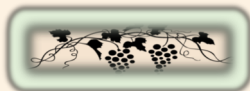
The Country Wine has a dark gold color and spicy, floral aromas of clove, honey-suckle and tangy nectarines. Flavor-wise, it’s a cornucopia of white peaches, golden raspberries, ginger, orange peel and cinnamon. Serve it with couscous and lamb and prepare to be dazzled.

2017 Chris James Cellars Prost!

This under-the-radar winery near Carlton has come up with a delightful, lightly effervescent combination of gewürztraminer and apple wine made from locally grown Porter’s Perfection apples.

The color of the Prost! may be as pale and delicate as a moonbeam, but its aromas and flavors are full-throttle fun. Spices like mace and ginger abound, along with bursts of lychee and star fruit. There is even a scent of dried flowers that goes on in the glass well after the wine is finished.

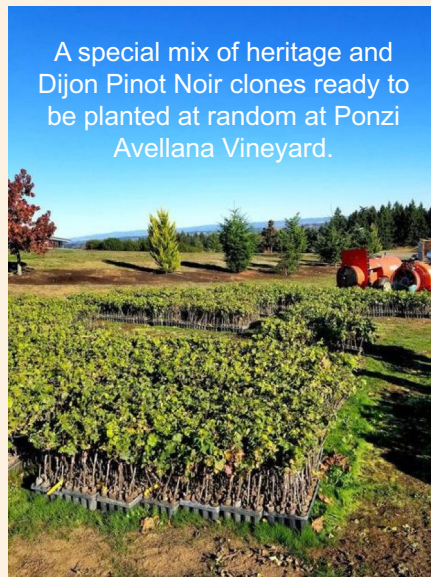
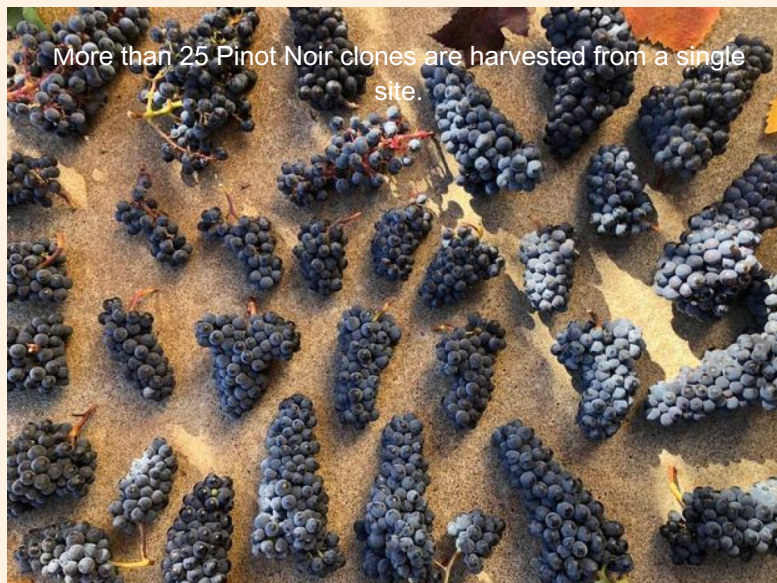
I had the Prost! with a bowl of spicy sausage and crab jambalaya on New Year's Day and it was so good, the combination is a new tradition in our household.



Oregon winemakers test blending in the vineyard

BY TAMARA BELGARD

December 21, 2018



Some think all great wine is made in the cellar – processed, fermented, blended and bottled under the careful watch of the winemaker. But some of Oregon's most innovative winemakers are learning to relinquish some control to create the complex, spontaneous and sometimes unexpected results known as field blends.

With field blends, different types of grapes are grown, picked and fermented together regardless of variety, clone or perceived ripeness. Nurtured along gently by the winemaker, the wine actually blends itself in the field weaving the different varieties, soil types, elevation and harvest conditions into a complex result, long before it reaches the winery's crush pad.

Luisa Ponzi, winemaker of Ponzi Vineyards, defines the technique she uses as Clonal Massale, which is a variation of the old-world technique Selection Massale (a French term for the practice of replanting new vineyards with cuttings from exceptional old vines from the same or nearby property). Ponzi's Avellana Vineyard was planted to over 27 clones (Dijon and Heritage), a percentage of each clone literally blended in the field.

Luisa believes, "Each clone has a personality. When many are combined in a single block, the multitude of characteristics naturally brings complexity and dimension to the wines. By planting these clones at random, like wildflowers, it further relinquishes the question of clone, and focuses completely on the terroir of the site."

Initially, the varying ripening times, morphology, and general mystery over ideal pick time was unsettling for Luisa. But after working with this vineyard for a decade, she's come to realize that it's less about flavor development or chemistry, and more about walking the rows and tasting and looking at the fruit. She says, "There's a point where you just close your eyes and pick." She admits she loves that relinquishment of complete control and trusts in the site and this variability of clonal expression, to bring the balance and layers of flavor and structure that make great Pinot. And though she says she would not suggest this method for winemakers who thrive on control, it does suit her general philosophy of setting things up for success and then getting out of the way as much as possible.

For the Ponzi's, field blends were something of an accidental discovery. Their Abetina Vineyard, with 22 Pinot Noir clones was part of an Oregon State University clonal test site in the 70's, and Ponzi Vineyards' founder, Dick Ponzi, diligently kept this test going for years. After the research was concluded, Dick began fermenting these clones together. According to Luisa, "This was our first indication that the whole was better than the parts, and Abetina remains the jewel of our cellar year after year."

Walter Scott Wines is also a proponent of field blends. Their X Novo Vineyard is planted to 15 different clones of Chardonnay (Heritage and Dijon), that results in uniquely expressive and unforgettable wines. According to Erica Landon of Walter Scott, “Clones ripen at different paces and have different personalities. When you have multiple clones in a block, you have them all translating that site with different voices. When picked together, you have some riper and some less ripe, and they come together to balance each other out and create a more complex wine. For us, it expresses what the site has to say more completely.”

After traveling through Spain and Portugal, John House and Ksenija Kostic House of Ovum Wines realized the most exciting wines came from vineyards that were planted to multiple varieties and then co-fermented. It occurred to them that many of Oregon’s vineyards share the same macro-climate yet have different soil types. John thought, “If they were picked at the right time, and allowed to spontaneously ferment together, perhaps the final wine could be as exciting as what we discovered in Iberia.”

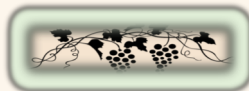
Ovum’s Big Salt is the culmination of fruit from six vineyards located throughout Oregon, reaching as far south as Cave Junction, however it’s precisely that diversity that John says yields complexity to the wine. Big Salt is about capturing Oregon’s cool climate and geographic diversity in a bottle.

Brianne Day of Day Wines also talks about how creating field blends means giving up some control to allow for the full natural expression of a site. Her inspiration came from Jean-Michel Deiss in Alsace, France, who very convincingly advocated for obtaining a true expression of terroir through co-fermenting all of the varieties grown on a particular site. Day recalls, “He was adamant about not even knowing through any means of calculation, the percentages of the varieties. Literally tuning out that aspect of the process and picking and fermenting the ‘field.’”

That experience was a major influence on Brianne’s style. With her Running Bare and Hock & Deuce wines, she came to notice that the blend becomes more harmonious and knitted together when fermented together in a way that she didn’t believe could be achieved when blending happens later on, after *élevage* (the French winemaking term for the art of raising a wine, from harvest through bottling). She now makes all her blends, whether sourced from one vineyard or more, through co-fermentation.

Through experimentation, many winemakers are finding mother nature can create more depth and complexity than they can create by their own hand. John says, “Giving up winemaking controls to allow the wine to find its natural harmony is bound to create complex results, assuming you start with the right ingredients—the right fruit.” Which all starts in the field.

Editor: I made a field blend one time. We have a small vineyard in Yakima growing Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot & Malbec. In 2015 we only had enough grapes total from the vineyard to fill one 44 gallon fermenter. So, by default, we made a field blend. It turned out good enough to win a Bronze at Newport & a gold at the Oregon State Fair.



Fukushima’s nuclear signature found in California wine

The Japanese nuclear disaster bathed north America in a radioactive cloud. Now pharmacologists have found the telltale signature in California wine made at the time.

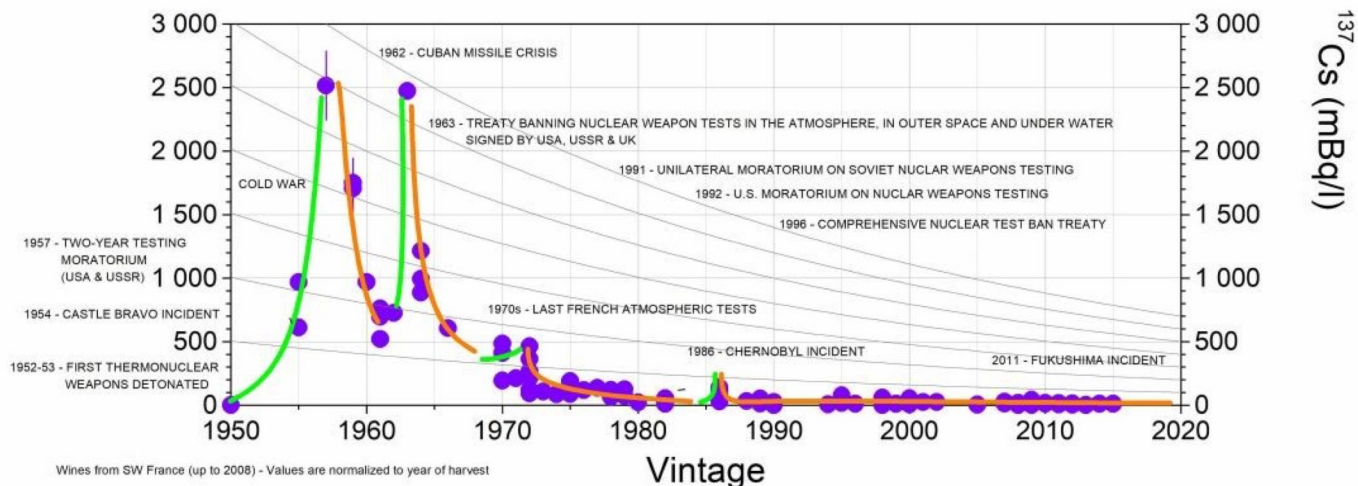
by Emerging Technology from the arXiv
July 19, 2018

Throughout the 1950s, the US, the Soviet Union, and others tested thermonuclear weapons in the Earth’s atmosphere. Those tests released vast quantities of radioactive material into the air and triggered fears that the nuclear reactions could ignite deuterium in the oceans, thereby destroying the planet in a catastrophic accidental fireball.

Atmospheric tests ended in 1980, when China finished its program, but the process has left a long-lasting nuclear signature on the planet. One of the most obvious signatures is cesium-137, a radioactive by-product of the fission of uranium-235.

After release into the atmosphere, cesium-137 was swept around the world and found its way into the food supply in trace quantities. Such an addition is rarely welcomed. But in 2001, the French pharmacologist Philippe Hubert discovered that he could use this signature to date wines without opening the bottles.

Measured Cesium-137 Radioactivity of Wines



The technique immediately became a useful weapon in the fight against wine fraud—labeling young wines as older vintages to inflate their price. Such fraud can be spotted by various types of chemical and isotope analysis—but only after the wine has been opened, which destroys its value.

Cesium-137, on the other hand, allows noninvasive testing because it is radioactive. It produces distinctive gamma rays in proportion to the amount of isotope present. Dating the wine is a simple process of matching the amount of cesium-137 to atmospheric records from the time the wine was made. That quickly reveals any fraud. Indeed, if there is no cesium-137, the wine must date from after 1980.

There is one blip in this record, though. The Chernobyl disaster in 1986 bathed much of Europe, and other parts of the world, in a radioactive cloud that increased atmospheric levels of cesium-137 again. Hubert and colleagues can see this blip in their data from wines.

And that raises an interesting question about the Fukushima disaster of 2011, an accident of Chernobyl proportions caused by a meltdown at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan following a huge earthquake and tsunami. It released a radioactive cloud that bathed North America in fission by-products.

Is it possible to see the effects of the Fukushima nuclear disaster in California wines produced at the time?

Today we get an answer, thanks to a study carried out by Hubert and a couple of colleagues. “In January 2017, we came across a series of Californian wines (Cabernet Sauvignon) from vintage 2009 to 2012,” say Hubert and company. This set of wines provides the perfect test. The Fukushima disaster occurred on March 11, 2011. Any wine made before that date should be free of the effects, while any dating from afterward could show them.

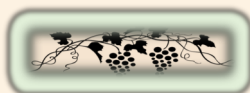
The team began their study with the conventional measurement of cesium-137 levels in the unopened bottles. That showed levels to be indistinguishable from background noise.

But the team was able to carry out more-sensitive tests by opening the wine and reducing it to ash by evaporation. This involves heating the wine to 100 degrees Celsius for one hour and then increasing the temperature to 500 degrees Celsius for eight hours. In this way, a standard 750-milliliter bottle of wine produces around four grams of ashes. The ashes were then placed in a gamma ray detector to look for signs of cesium-137.

Using this method, Hubert and his colleagues found measurable amounts of cesium-137 above background levels in the wine produced after 2011. “It seems there is an increase in activity in 2011 by a factor of two,” conclude the team.

That probably won't be very useful for fraud detection in California wine—the levels of cesium-137 are barely detectable, and even then, only if the wine is destroyed.

But the result does show how nuclear disasters can have unexpected consequences long after the fact.



Portland Winemakers Club

Leadership Team – 2019

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: **Barb Stinger** kbstinger@frontier.com

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

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

Conduct club tastings

kbstinger@frontier.com

- 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

* Gala / Picnic / parties

mindybush@hotmail.com

Web Design Editor: **Alice Bonham** alice@alicedesigns.org