



Portland Winemakers Club

February 2026

"Bob's Blurb"



We spent a week at the end of January around the Sacramento area tasting wine. Towns like Murphys, Placerville, Clarksville, Plymouth/ Amador county , so many excellent wines so little time, and way too many wineries. Fortunately this area has lots of "Other Reds", it is not all Bordeaux, in fact , it felt like the Cabs were in the minority, Italian/Spanish/Portuguese varietals make up the many of the available wines (maybe we just ignored the cabs). Lesser known varietals like Negroarmaro, Nero d'Avola, Tannat, Verdelho, Vermentino as well as lots of Zinfandel and Primitivo. Murphys, CA was a cute old mining town where main street is lined with shops and tasting rooms. You can park and go to more tasting rooms than you should The good news is that most of the wineries we stopped at wave the (\$15/\$20) tasting fee when you buy a bottle. This is not Napa, and that is a good thing. I would recommend a visit to the Sacramento area if want to taste something we don't find in Oregon.

2026 Monthly Agendas

January 17th
Gala – Parrett Mountain Cellars
5:30 – 8:30 pm, clean up 8:30 – 9:00, \$15 per person

January 21st
#1-Tasting & judging member's other reds, no Bordeaux varietals or Pinot Noir

February 18th
Speaker: Winemaker, Ken Wright

March 18th
Tasting & judging, member's Bordeaux varietals

April 15th
Speaker: Sommelier

May 20th
Barrel Tasting & judging & discussion / problem solving

June 17th
Tasting & judging, member's White, Rose' & Sparkling

July - No meeting

July, TBD
Annual Picnic, \$10 ea. Fee, 1:00 – 5:00

August 19th
#2-Tasting & judging member's other reds, no Bordeaux varietals or Pinot Noir

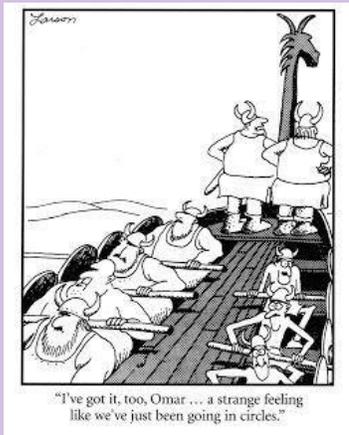
September 16th
Speaker: TBD

October 21st
Tasting & judging, member's Pinot Noir

November 18th
Crush Talk, Tips & Tricks

December 9th
Elections, Planning for 2027

Wine-related tours may be scheduled on non-meeting days.



On Saturday, January 17th The PWC held their annual Gala at Parrett Mountain Cellars. We all celebrated a successful winemaking year. Many thanks to our gracious hosts, Dennis and Marlen Grant for letting us to use their beautiful winery. A few pictures are shown below.



Upcoming Events / Save the Date

The next PWC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18th in the basement of the Aloha Grange starting at 7:00 pm. Ken Wright , who has 48 years in the wine business will be our speaker.

Bring a snack for the potluck table and a bottle of any of your wines for the exchange table.

- Take time to visit the PWC website: portlandwinemakersclub.com where there are Newsletters archived back to 2007.
- Also, visit our public group Facebook page: “Portland Winemakers Club” [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/portlandwinemakersclub), give it a look, Join the group and submit some posts of your own.

January Meeting Notes

Officer Roundtable

Secretary:

- Looking for someone to volunteer to take notes at the February meeting – if willing, please take notes and send to Ken.

Tours and Speakers:

- Speakers - Ken Wright will be speaking at the February meeting.
- “Vinovate” custom crush tour has been postponed.

Treasurer:

- Gala: 45 people attended. Note that Gala fees only cover about ½ of event costs, remainder picked up by member dues.
- Dues - 33 people have paid so far, dues are \$25 per year.

Events Committee:

- Event went very well, members had a great time.
- Gala setup and clean up went well.
- Members expressed desire to have next year’s gala at the same location if the hosts are willing.

Old Business:

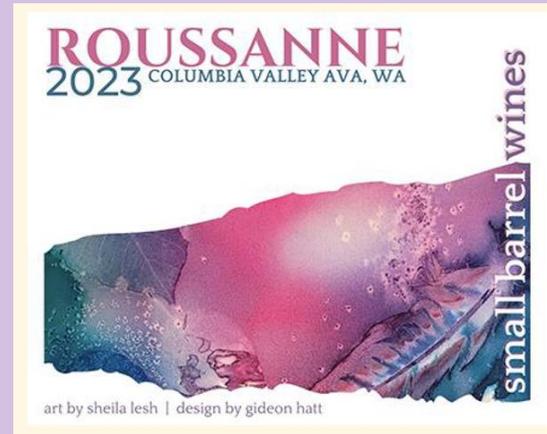
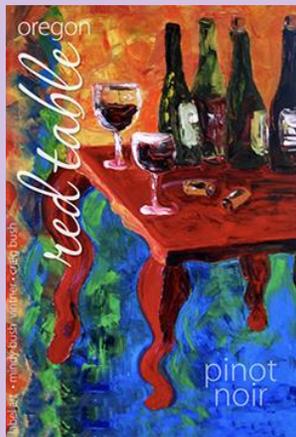
- December discussion was about a group of winemakers making a 60 gallon barrel together.
Discussion centered around members wanting to make their own wine. Decided not to move forward.
- Discussion was held about members joining together to make a large buy of one varietal.
Members would come together to pick the varietal and vineyard. Crush may be done as a group (not decided).
Members would then make their own wine at their home location.
- Discussion centered around potential vineyards and varietals. Consensus on a red varietal seemed to be reached. Craig Bush following up on Southern Oregon options. Will continue discussion in February meeting.

New Business (post meeting)

- Steve Fine mentioned that there is a series on Apple TV called “Drops of God” about wine tasting. Check it out if you have that streaming service.



Member Mindy Bush won honorable mention in the latest WineMaker Magazine label contest shown on the left below. In the previous year member Bob Hatt also won honorable mention for his label shown on the right.



There is still time to ship your wines to the **WineMaker Magazine contest**. They must be in Vermont by March 13th.

Entry Deadline: March 13, 2026

Please note **NEW** shipping address:

Battenkill Communications, Inc.

c/o Hardpack Distributors

116 Hills Court / P.O. Box 730

East Dorset, VT 05253 USA

ph: (802) 362-3981 ext. 106

email: competition@winemakermag.com

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

Editor: Bill Brown discovered this short piece on Facebook. It describes the history of the Portland Winemakers Club meeting place, the Aloha Grange building at 3425 SW 185th Avenue at Alexander Street. Some of you who were raised in the Tualatin Valley might have heard some of the old names.

The Aloha Grange building, 3425 SW 185th Avenue at Alexander Street, was constructed by volunteers in 1932.

After meeting on the second floor of the S.N. Buck & Son's "Buck's" Market, later Shopeze, Aloha Grange #773, a group representing farmers' interests, was organized on January 31, 1931 with 119 charter members. They voted to build a grange hall building in March 1932 on a donated lot, and incorporated on May 7, 1932 at a time when the US unemployment rate was 23% and technology transitioned from horsepower to mechanization and the internal combustion engine. The building, financed by a \$2,500 mortgage, was completed by volunteers including Mrs. T. Nault, Mrs. H.C. King, Mary Grand, Mrs. S. Whitehead, Mrs. E.C. McElroy, Mrs. Jay Frost, Mrs. L.E. Klatt, Mrs. C.E. Barker, Mrs. E.J. Johnson, J.L. Schmid and Mrs. W. F. Norman, and others within five months. The first meeting in the new hall convened on September 1st and the building was dedicated on October 14, 1932.

Founded by former Agriculture Department employee Oliver Hudson Kelley in 1867, the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, the oldest American agricultural advocacy group with a national scope, was a social organization that encouraged families to band together to promote the economic and political well-being of the community and agriculture. Local affiliates were known as "granges" and the members as "grangers." Granges elected officers, scheduled social gatherings, and meetings of educational value to farmers. They also formed credit unions where members pooled savings, and cooperatives to purchase farm equipment and supplies, or grain elevators where non-perishable crops were stored until the optimal time to sell.

The first Aloha Grange Master was Henry Hagg of Reedville, a dairy industry leader and advocate of cooperative education, who served for six consecutive years. He was the son of Swedish immigrants David Hagg, born on January 20, 1856 who immigrated to New Britain, Connecticut in

1883, and Augusta Stone Stenstrom Hagg. They were charter members of the Temple Baptist Church in Portland where Frederick David Hagg was born in 1888, the year the family purchased a 160-acre parcel south Reedville and the Ladd and Reed Dairy, for \$16 per acre. Henry was born in 1889, Edith in 1894 and Oscar Nathaniel in 1902. Five years later, after they cleared timber, cultivated wheat and developed a dairy herd, the Hagg family dairy began to export products to Portland in 1907.

The Hagg children attended Reedville Elementary School, where David Hagg served on the School Board for 18 years. Henry and Oscar Hagg graduated from Hillsboro Union High School, and the Oregon Agriculture College, now Oregon State University (OSU) in 1926, with degrees in animal sciences; the study of applied principles of animal physiology, nutrition, breeding and genetics, ecology and management.

At the time the grange building was constructed in 1932, Aloha farms and small businesses listed in the 1931-32 R.L. Polk & Company directory included Garrett Schalk's Aloha Dairy and Lon Kinnaman's Guernsey Dairy, poultry breeders Bert Crandall, George Lippert, Paul Dudley and Joel T. York, and nut and fruit growers Fred Grabhorn, Fred Grover and others.

Henry Hagg joined the Board of Directors of Mayflower Dairy in 1935, the year the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was created. The following year, the Hagg farm exceeded the national record for butterfat production in a herd of over 50 cattle. He served on the General Committee and was also Chairman of the Dairy Committee, and Oscar Hagg served on the Agricultural Economics Committee, at the Washington County Agricultural Outlook Conference, February 4-5, 1936 in Hillsboro.

A Distinguished Alumnus and a Charter Member of the Withycombe Club, OSU Department of Animal Sciences, Henry Hagg also served on the board of directors of the National Milk Producers Federation, and the Consolidated Dairy Products Company for 19 years. He was a co-founder of the Oregon Dairy Breeders Association and president for nine years. He was also a member of the agriculture committee of Portland Chamber of Commerce, the Oregon State University research committee, the board of trustees for Tuality Community Hospital and a 30-year member of the Washington County Irrigation District.

Oscar Hagg, also a founding member of Aloha Grange #773 and a Grange Master, was the lobbyist for the Oregon Dairyman's Association 1939-49 and served as president and on the board of directors 1939-44. While a director of the Oregon Grange Wholesale Cooperative 1944-50, he advocated for passage of the Oregon Pasteurized Milk Act in 1945.

He joined the Oregon State Extension Service as the dairy marketing specialist in 1950. As President of the Oregon Dairyman's Association, Oregon Jersey Cattle Club, and director of the Oregon Dairy Council, he promoted laws to eradicate Brucellosis in cattle.

Oscar Hagg was also a popular speaker, master of ceremonies, and television personality. He served six years on the Reedville School Board and on the Washington County Budget Committee, was executive secretary of the Agricultural Cooperative Council of Oregon, and chairman of the Tualatin Valley Irrigation District 1971-77.

Henry Hagg Lake in the Scoggins Valley southwest of Forest Grove in western Washington County, part of the Bureau of Reclamation's Tualatin Project, was created 1972-75 with the installation of Scoggins Dam, a 2,700x151foot earthfill structure, to provide water to residences, farms, and businesses throughout Washington County.

For nearly a century, the Aloha Grange building has been used as a community gathering place for civic and social activities, meetings, classes, dances and movies, music and theatrical performances. Hoedowners and Valley Squares square dancing, ballroom dancing, Round dancing, Zumba classes and the Grace and Truth Gathering.

Editor: There was also this comment on the Facebook page.

Cold stabilization will take a few weeks at temperatures below freezing, but longer when temperatures are above freezing. If chilling isn't an option, an alternative to avoid potassium bitartrate crystals from forming in the bottle is using carboxymethyl cellulose (for whites only) or potassium polyaspartic acid.

Once the wine has been stabilized it can be racked off the potassium bitartrate crystals while still cold. Cold wine is especially sensitive to oxidation, so racking and transfers of cold wine, and storing the wine with head space, should be minimized.



In the last decade there have also been several additives introduced to the market that promote bitartrate stability without chilling, saving time and energy. Carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC) is recommended for white wines only, and potassium polyaspartic acid (KPA) is recommended for all wine types. Wines must be relatively clear and protein stable before addition, thus these additives are usually added just before bottling. If you live in a warm winter climate and don't have access to cooled tanks, these additives can keep your wines crystal-free.

Heat Stability – Timing

Heat stability, or protein stability, entails removing dissolved protein from the wine so that it is unavailable to unfold, aggregate with other proteins, and fall out of solution as a haze or sediment (this process is accelerated by higher temperatures, thus this visual defect is also termed heat instability).

Heat stability is commonly achieved by performing a heat test and adding a prescribed rate of bentonite to the wine while mixing. Bentonite is relatively slow to settle and may take 1-3 weeks to settle completely. Bentonite often produces “fluffy,” diffuse lees, which means more wine is lost with bentonite lees than other fining agents. Because of large lees losses, some winemakers combine bentonite fining with cold stabilization, as the potassium bitartrate crystals help form a more compact bentonite lees layer. Bentonite fining is good at attracting and removing proteins from wine but usually does not produce a completely clear wine. To achieve brilliant clarity, other fining agents or filtration are usually employed.

Lees Aging – Another Timing Consideration

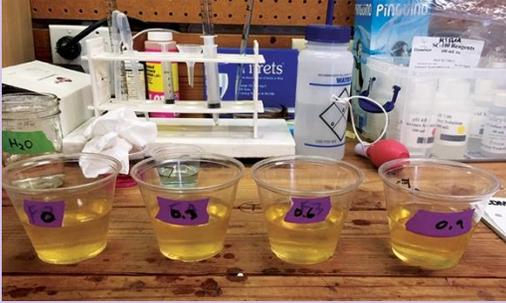
A technique I frequently practice with white wines is lees aging, where the wine is allowed to mature with the yeast lees for an extended period, with periodic stirring to re-suspend the lees in the wine (AKA *bâtonnage*). I find that lees aging adds body to white wines and increases the aroma complexity of the wine. Winemakers I've spoken with say it takes at least 7–9 months to see noticeable changes from lees aging. You can lees age for shorter periods of time, but the impact on aroma and body will be subtle. I think lees aging is most interesting in wines with subtle aroma and crisp acidity. Allowing wine to age on lees for long periods tends to decrease the fruity, fresh aromas of the wine, so it might not be appropriate for especially fruity and floral varieties like Sauvignon Blanc or Traminette. Long aging of whites also increases the chance for oxidative damage to wine, so it is a bit risky and proper storage is important.

If you employ lees aging for 8 months or more, you clearly won't be bottling until summer to late fall. As I write, it's mid-November and I'm cold stabilizing a Pinot Gris I've aged on lees from the previous harvest more than a year ago and plan to bottle soon. The wine has aged gracefully and after so long on the lees it has clarified so that filtration will be unnecessary.

Blending and Other Adjustments

Blending is a great way to make synergistic improvements to wines that may be out of balance on their own. For instance, blending a bland wine with high acid levels into an aromatic but flabby wine may produce a wine blend that smells and tastes better than the two wines on their own.

Blending is more art than science, and it requires that you have different wine lots available to blend. Blending should not be used to hide a faulty wine; it generally takes a very large quantity of sound wine to hide a wine fault. Don't ruin a good wine by blending it with a bad one. It's better to treat the faulty wine on its own, if possible, or dump it and try again next year.



When a wine is lacking, you may consider blending, acidification, adding sugar, or even more significant adjustments such as adding something like herbs or citrus. No matter the adjustment, you should always conduct bench trials to dial in the optimum addition rate before scaling up.

If the aroma is not where you would like it there are not a lot of options for traditional wines other than blending. Some

whites and rosé wines benefit from oak aging, but it's easy to overdo it with oak aroma overpowering the wine, so be careful. There are some fining agents available to minimize faulty aromas, so you can research these additives on home winemaking supplier websites if you have a problem wine. If all else fails, you could consider making a formula wine, where you add some food-grade ingredients to create a more compelling tippie. Citrus and herbs popular in Vermouth or "aromatized" wines like Lillet might be an interesting choice for a wine that you don't find very compelling on its own.

Acid or sugar adjustments are also a great way to bring a flabby or tart wine into balance prior to bottling. Acidification and deacidification late in the process are usually accomplished by adding tartaric acid to acidify, or carbonates (potassium carbonate or potassium bicarbonate) to

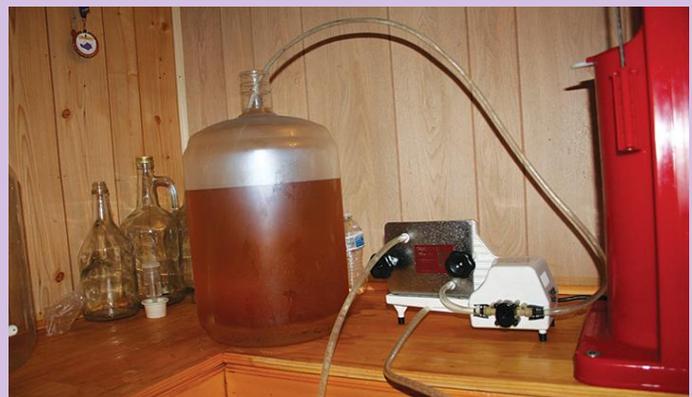
deacidify. Bench top trials for these additives are best so that you can determine the optimum level of acidity or sugar prior to treating the entire lot. Keep in mind that if you are changing the acidity of the wine, or adding potassium, that you may be impacting the potassium bitartrate stability of the wine and therefore a stability check should be performed prior to bottling if that is important for you.

Clarification and/or Filtration

Whether or not you decide to fine or filter your wine for even greater clarity, or age the wine on its lees, the wine will need to be racked off accumulated lees at some point. Racking is the process of removing clear wine off sediment at the bottom of a tank, barrel, or carboy. For barrels and carboys, a racking wand is employed with a stand-off that keeps the suction end of the wand out of the sediment. For tanks, a pump and hose are employed through the top or racking door of the tank to slowly lower the liquid level of the tank until the sediment layer is reached. Racking is a critical skill to develop in winemaking to remove sediment from wine (or wine from the sediment) with the least possible wine loss. Depending on the grape variety and your level of concern for haze in the finished product, skillful racking can produce very clear wines that may not need further processing.

If you choose to filter your wines, it should be one of the final steps taken just before bottling.

If you decide you'd like a more brilliantly clear white or rosé wine than simple racking allows, but don't have the equipment or philosophical inclination to filter your wines, I've found that isinglass fining and careful racking produce quite clear wines. Isinglass is a structural protein isolated from the swim bladder of sturgeon. While it doesn't sound like something you should be adding to wine, it is approved for use in wine production and does work quite well. The only downside to isinglass fining is that it is quite slow to settle, often taking 3–4 weeks to settle completely.



Filtering wine should be one of the final activities prior to bottling, as the wine should be free of anything that could cause precipitates prior to the final filtration. Again, filtration specifics are covered elsewhere, so in this article we will just be discussing timing and the importance of filtration for specific styles.

Are fining and filtration necessary? This is a philosophical question each winemaker needs to answer for themselves. I personally don't mind a slight haze in my wine, or a few potassium bitartrate crystals in the bottom of a bottle. Potassium bitartrate crystals and haze are only aesthetic defects, after all, and don't impact aroma or flavor. However, I've also had bottling disasters with wines where I retained some sugar for balanced taste. These wines were not sterile bottled effectively and thus ended up refermenting, and sometimes exploding, in bottle. If your wine contains residual sugar, it is necessary to either sterile bottle or add a yeast inhibitor like potassium sorbate. Sorbate works well but does tend to add some aromas to wine (celery-like when young and honey-like when aged), which may compete with delicate wine aromas in varieties with subtle aroma properties (e.g., Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Cayuga White, etc.).

As mentioned earlier, filtration is usually one of the last activities to occur prior to packaging, especially for wines that are sterile bottled. Because of the tight membrane filtration required for sterile bottling, fine filtration using a pad or cartridge should be performed no more than 48 hours prior to bottling to ensure colloidal agglomerates do not plug the sterile filter membrane. The other aspect to consider in sterile bottling is that the filling and packaging equipment needs to be sanitized as well.

Timing of Packaging and Considerations Prior to Packaging

So, is it possible to package wines in late winter or early spring? Of course! But if racking, heat and cold stabilization, and filtration are necessary for the wine style and your preference, then these activities need to be completed relatively quickly after harvest. If you wait until after the holiday season, then the time it takes to complete stabilization and clarification can easily push bottling into late spring and early summer.

Another consideration for packaging early is that it precludes the ability to adjust the wine balance based on the evolving flavor of the wine. Some of the aromas produced during fermentation will fade relatively quickly (within 3–6 months). Cold stabilization can change the acidity slightly, malolactic fermentation even more so, thus waiting and tasting the wine in early spring may give you an opportunity to adjust the acidity or blend wines for better aroma and balance. If wine is kept in a full, airtight container at a reasonably cool temperature there is little downside to allowing the wine to age for a few months prior to bottling.

Packaging Checklist and Final Adds

Once you've determined the wine is ready for bottling, it's important to confirm you have everything prepared for packaging:

Bottling Equipment

A bucket with a spigot connected to tubing and a bottling wand, a bottle tree and sanitizer injector if reusing bottles, and a corker (floor corkers work best for anything more than a few bottles) or crown capper, depending on bottle type.

Mandatory Raw Materials

Bottles and corks or crown caps – corking should be checked prior to bottling day to ensure the corks fit in the bottles and the corker works with the bottles and corks.

It's also good to double-check an appropriate quantity of bottles and closures are on hand for the volume of wine you plan to bottle. If you are reusing bottles, they should be clean and free of sediment prior to bottling day. It's best also to rinse bottles immediately after use if you plan to

reuse them, but bottle washing adapters for home dishwashers make bottle cleaning relatively convenient. Regarding corks, we could spend a whole article discussing cork products, but in my opinion the current best cork products available to home winemakers are micro-agglomerated corks labeled as TCA-free.

Optional Raw Materials

Labels, capsules, wax, etc. It's not necessary for home winemakers to label and capsule wines at the same time as filling and closing the bottle, but if you plan to do so you should have the appropriate number of labels/capsules/etc. available, as well as a capsule applicator and labeler if you plan to produce many bottles.

The Final Step – an SO₂ Addition

The final step prior to packaging is usually the addition of SO₂ in the form of potassium metabisulfite. Most winemaking texts recommend a 20–30 ppm SO₂ addition for white wines, but the exact amount you add is dependent on several factors. If you haven't added SO₂ in some time (within the last 3-6 months), then a significant percentage of the SO₂ added will be bound to acetaldehyde and unavailable for protection against continued oxidation (both during the packaging step and the slow oxidation through the bottle closure as the wine ages). Thus, it's appropriate to add more SO₂ if the wine has not had a recent addition, perhaps in the 40–50 ppm range.

Another consideration for SO₂ addition is the length of time the wine will age prior to consumption. If you plan on aging the wine for long periods, a high SO₂ addition (perhaps 50–75 ppm) will help the wine stay fresh for many years. The downside of too high an SO₂ addition is that the wine will smell like a struck match, obscuring the fruity and floral aromas in the wine, and the wine may even have a slightly metallic taste. The struck match aromas blow off when the wine is oxidized, so a hint of this aroma when the wine is first poured is OK, but high levels of SO₂ are off-putting and may not dissipate quickly. In commercial wines I notice this hint of struck match most often with German Rieslings. Some consumers like to age Riesling for many years, like 20–30 years, thus I think German producers often add a higher level of SO₂ at bottling than producers in other regions. If you plan to consume your wines in the next year or two, as most white and rosé wines are intended, then a standard addition of 20–30 ppm is fine.

To summarize, let's end with a bottling checklist:

1. Does the wine smell and taste acceptable?
2. Is the wine cold and heat stable, if desired?
3. Is the wine clarified to the degree desired?
4. Do you have the correct number of bottles and closures for the wine volume you plan to package?
5. Has the bottle, closure, and packaging system been tested to ensure each component is compatible and there will be no surprises on bottling day?
6. If the wine will be sterile filtered at bottling, has the wine been pre-filtered less than 48 hours prior to bottling?
7. Has the final SO₂ addition been added to the wine? SO₂ may be added as the wine is racked into the filling bucket, but you should mix the bucket gently to ensure it is fully distributed.
8. Has the bottling equipment from the membrane filter to the filling and corking equipment been sanitized?
9. Have the bottles been sanitized and left to dry on the bottle tree?

When the answer to all of these questions is “yes,” you are ready to bottle your wine.

Portland Winemakers Club Leadership Team – 2026

President: **Bob Hatt** bobhatt2000@yahoo.com

- Establish the leadership team.
- Assure that objectives for the year are met.
- Set up agenda and run the meetings.

Treasurer: **Barb Thomson** bt.grapevine@frontier.com

- Collect dues and fees, and update the membership list with the secretary.
- Pay bills.

Secretary: **Bob Thoenen** pwc_secretary@outlook.com

- issues.
- Communicate regularly about club activities, amateur competitions & other club
 - Keep an updated list of members' email, name tags, and other club information.

Chair of Education / Speakers **Paul Natale** paulnatale6@gmail.com

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings.

Chairs for Tastings: **Mike Sicard / Steve Fine** msicard@willamettehvac.com
steve.fine@comcast.net

- Conduct club tastings.
- Review and improve club tasting procedures.

Chair of Winery / Vineyard Tours: **Paul Natale** paulnatale6@gmail.com

- Arrange & manage tours.
- Select Wineries, Vineyards, etc. to visit.
- Cover logistics (food and money).

Chairs of Group Grape Purchases: **Mark Hernandez / Hank Armstrong**

- Arrange for member group grape purchases. Distribute information to the membership. Manage arrangements to purchase, collect and distribute. Provide written rules.
- mark_hernandez14@comcast.net
HANKARM@gmail.com

Chair of Group Supplies Purchases (consumables). **Brian Bowles** bowles97229@gmail.com

- TBD

Chairs for Social Events: **Jolie & Brian Bowles / Barb Thomson**
jolie97229@yahoo.com
bt.grapevine@frontier.com

- Gala /Picnic/parties

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