



Portland Winemakers Club

March 2023

"From The President"

Monthly Events

January 18th, 2023

Discuss plans and ideas for 2023

January 21st, 2023

Gala at Parrott Mountain Cellars

February 15th, 2023

Barrel sample tasting
Wine trading pool

March 15th, 2023

Tasting & judging, member produced Italian varietals

April 19th, 2023

Tips & Tricks, wine flaws kit

May 17th, 2023

Tasting & judging, member produced Bordeaux Reds

June 21st, 2023

speaker

July no meeting

July 22nd, 2023

Annual Picnic, \$10 ea. fee,
Craig & Mindy Bush

August 16th, 2023

Tasting & judging, member produced all Whites, Rose' & sparkling

September 20th, 2023

Tasting & judging, member produced other Reds & fruit wines

October 18th, 2023

Tasting & judging, member produced Pinot Noir

November 15th, 2023

Crush Talk

December 13th, 2023

Elections, Planning for Next Year

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

March Blurb --

I was checking on my Riesling which has been in the cold in the pole barn inside an empty fridge which is not running this time of year. It is staying a few degrees above freezing, but it does seem like it is done fermenting as the specific gravity is down to 0.99. Tastes good and may not be completely dry but seems balanced at this point.

It was almost done in January, so I feed it some yeast hulls and let it go. Later in the week I will rack and sulfite into carboys to settle for another month or two, then rack one more time before bottling. I am excited about this one too.

Speaking of excited, I think this month is a club first, an Italian varietals tasting. Nine club members made Nebbiolo during the 2020 pandemic, others have been making Sangiovese. I am looking forward to the tastes!

Remember to bring one bottle of wine to put on the trading table. Everyone who contributes a bottle will get a number and then numbers will be chosen at random and you can go pick any one wine from the table you want (except your own of course) This is a great chance to share your wines and possibly get some other members' wine you may have tasted and enjoyed. Bob Hatt

**THE BIGGEST JOKE
ON MANKIND IS
THAT COMPUTERS
HAVE STARTED
ASKING HUMANS
TO PROVE THAT
THEY AREN'T A ROBOT.**

Cop pulled me over and said:
"PAPERS."

I yelled "scissors" and drove off.



Up-coming events / Save the date

The next PWC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 15th in the basement of the Aloha Grange starting at 7:00 pm. We will be tasting, judging and discussing member produced Italian varietals. Put a wine in the line up by bringing 2 bottles per entry. Also bring 2 wine glasses per taster.

NOTE: There will be a pot-luck table for those who wish to participate. Bring a dish to share. If you would rather not participate feel free to bring your own snacks.

NOTE: *Bring a bottle of wine to put into a trading pool. Everyone who brings a bottle draws a number to pick from the wine trading pool. Numbers get picked until the pool is empty.*

February Meeting Notes

Members present: 20

- Welcome new member Eliezer Phillips.
 - From Rob Marr - I have Sarah Linnemeyer coming to our April Meeting. She works for Columbia Distributions. She will touch on the state of the industry, alternative format products and bring things for us to taste. Everyone will need to bring two glasses this meeting. Jeremiah and or Eric have a projector as we need to provide her some way to show a power point. Link to her credentials (25) [Sarah Linnemeyer, CSW | LinkedIn](#)
 - Rob Marr is meeting with Greg McClellan, Co-Owner of Suzor Wines, to determine if we can get him as another speaker or if he is willing to open his tasting room to us. More to come on this.
 - Also, from Rob Marr – If you are entering the Winemaker Magazine International amateur wine competition – Your wines need to be in my possession no later than February 27th. I need to take them to Marlene at Parrett Mountain Cellars on the 28th to be shipped. Cost to enter the competition is \$30 per bottle made payable to Winemaker Magazine and \$8 Cash to me, per bottle to ship. Anyone wanting to enter, needs to out complete their own entry forms online.
- Since this info happens before the next Newsletter goes out, the Secretary will send a separate email.
- Bob Hatt suggested we look into re-opening the Washington County Fair wine competition.

Thirteen (13) carboy or barrel samples were brought for tonight's tasting. Members poured their own wine & described how they were being made so far.

- Ken & Barb Stinger, 69% Touriga Nacional/31% Malbec, (Eclectic), French Oak • Bob Hatt, Touriga Nacional, (Eclectic), American oak • Jeremia Deines, Barbera • Craig & Mindy Bush, Chardonnay, barrel fermented, (Jamison) • Bill Brown, Pinot Noir Pommard, French oak, (Estate) • Jeremia Deines, Viognier (Jamison) • Eric Mireiter, Barbara (The Dalles grapes) • Jeremia Deines, Gewurztraminer (Jamison) • Rob Marr, 2021 Cabernet Franc (Two Mountain) • Jeremia Deines, Pinot Noir • Paul Boyechco, 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon, in carboy • Bob Hatt, Grenache/Syrah/Mourvedre, blend.



- Please 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 discussions and enter some posts of your own. There are 33 members in the group so far.

The results are in from the Newport Seafood & Wine Amateur competition. It appears that Portland Winemakers Club members dominated by an impressive margin. Perhaps it should be called the PWC competition at Newport.

- 37 wine entries total
- 34 medals awarded
- 25 won by 12 PWC members = 68% of all medals awarded
 - 7 Gold including **“Best of Show” by Scott Butler**, way to go Scott!
 - 8 Silver
 - 9 Bronze

Name	Label	Wine	Award
Scott Butler	Sd Butler	Cabernet Franc	Gold - Best in Show
Bob Hatt	Small Barrel Wines	Rhone Blend	Gold
Michael Moore	–	Carmenere	Gold
Scott Butler	Hawkeye Cellars	Barbera	Gold
Ken & Barb Stinger	Stinger Family Wines Journeys	Cabernet Franc	Gold
Robert Marr	Marr Estate Wine	Grenache Rose'	Gold
Scott Butler	Sd Butler	Cabernet Sauvignon	Gold
Bob Hatt	Small Barrel Wines	Dry Riesling	Silver
Bill Brown	Brown Family Cellars	Merlot	Silver
Stephen Fine	Amici Sempre	Malbec	Silver
Bob Hatt	Small Barrel Wines	Sangiovese	Silver
Ken & Barb Stinger	Stinger Family Wines	Zinfandel	Silver
Wayne Moore	Singing Woods	Sangiovese	Silver
Ken & Barb Stinger	Bok' Cellars Estate	Merlot	Silver
Wayne Moore	Singing Woods	Mourvedre	Silver
Michael Moore	–	Pinot Gris	Bronze
Brian Bowles	Wines by Brian & Jolie	Gewurztraminer	Bronze
Stephen Fine	Amici Sempre	Chardonnay	Bronze
Mike Wilsky & Randy Morgan	–	Albarino	Bronze
Stephen Fine	Amici Sempre	Cabernet Sauvignon	Bronze
Bob Hatt	Small Barrel Wines	Grenache Rose'	Bronze
Scott Butler	Sd Butler	Red Blend	Bronze
Brian Bowles	Harmony	Bordeaux Blend	Bronze
Ken & Barb Stinger	Boke' Cellars	Malbec	Bronze

The Changing Face of Carmenère

For the past two decades, the wine industry has accepted that Carmenère is the de facto signature grape of Chile—like another Bordeaux variety, Malbec, in neighboring Argentina. But unlike Malbec, with its ripe, juicy fruit and soft mouthfeel, Carmenère lacks an immediate likeability factor, carrying a pronounced green note from its high concentration of methoxypyrazines. When blind tasting Carmenère wines, those notes of jalapeño or bell pepper are expected and have become strong indicators for the variety in Chile, along with ripe or even jammy black fruit flavors.

But Chilean vintners are increasingly expressing a different side of this variety, one that is subtler and more balanced. Many are using less new oak, fruit is fresher, and the sharp green note that was once a dead giveaway for Carmenère is muted, stepping back to become a more harmonious part of the wine's aromas. Why is the face of Carmenère changing, and how should wine professionals understand the potential of this classic variety in its adopted home? Tracing the history of Carmenère in Chile and winemakers' changing approaches in the vineyard and cellar illuminates the character of this essential—and surprising—grape.

Revival From Obscurity

The stereotypical style of Carmenère is a direct result of the grape's winding history from France to Chile. Though Chile's winemaking history dates back to the 1500s with the País grape (known elsewhere as Mission, Listán Prieto, and Criolla), Bordeaux varieties, including Carmenère, arrived in South America in the 1850s, many brought by elite Chilean families who wanted to mimic the style of wine they drank in Europe. Upon arrival in Chile, vines were not distinguished by variety. Rather, vineyards were co-planted, designated either "Bordeaux red" or "Bordeaux white" and used to create a field blend; varietal labeling was not yet common. Bordeaux grapes came to dominate Chile's vineyards even as much of the wine produced in the 1900s was vinified in bulk, and as vintners came to know their vineyards better, they slowly began identifying vine varieties.

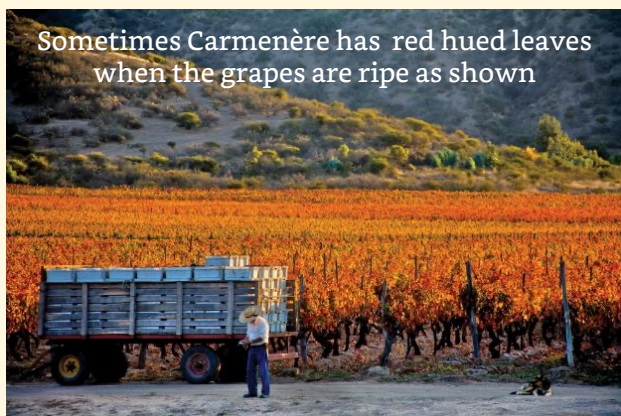
Meanwhile, phylloxera came to devastate Europe's vineyards, reaching Bordeaux in 1869. Tasked with replanting the region's vineyards, most winemakers opted out of including Carmenère among their vines. Besides the fact that Carmenère was difficult to graft, the variety's long, late ripening period made it a risky financial investment in the moderate, maritime climate of Bordeaux. More often than not, Carmenère simply could not ripen. By the late 1900s, most assumed that Carmenère was extinct.

As foreign investment poured into Chilean wineries in the 1980s and the country's military dictatorship lifted in 1990, the country had a new chance to create quality wines. By this time, vintners had distinguished vine varieties from one another and were keen to varietally bottle these wines. Oddly, the country seemed to have two kinds of Merlot planted in its vineyards, with similar leaf and grape cluster shapes but different ripening behaviors and leaf colors. Winemakers simply dubbed the outliers—which ripened later and boasted c—“late harvest Merlot” or “Chilean Merlot” and blended the two together.

That was until French ampelographer Jean-Michel Boursiquot visited Chile in November 1994. At Viña Carmen in the Maipo Valley, Boursiquot encountered these “Chilean Merlot” vines, which didn't look like any Merlot he had ever seen. The color of

the shoot tips and twisted flowers prompted Boursiquot to recognize that these vines were not Merlot at all, but Carmenère—a variety he had never before seen in a vineyard, according to a June 2016 interview with *Decanter China*. Upon returning to his research facility, Boursiquot confirmed the theory that pre-phyllloxera Carmenère was indeed hiding in Chile’s vineyards. (A similar discovery later happened in Italy’s Veneto, where vines labeled as Cabernet Franc were revealed to be Carmenère as well.)

Essentially, Chilean winemakers were presented with a variety assumed to be defunct and left to figure out how to work with it. As of 2017, Carmenère ranks as the third most planted red grape in Chile, after Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, and the only other country with any meaningful concentration of Carmenère vines is China. For 24 years, Chilean vintners have been experimenting with best practices in both vineyard and cellar.



Sometimes Carmenère has red hued leaves when the grapes are ripe as shown

“I think in Chile we have been—and still are—learning about the right way to work with Carmenère,” says Magdalena Mendoza Jordan, the winemaker for TerraNoble. “We didn’t realize how important it was to choose the right vineyard sites, so most of the fruit we were producing was not achieving its best quality. The wines were not very concentrated, and green notes and green tannins were predominant. Most producers thought that the only way to work those pyrazines was to cover them with oak or

harvest overripe grapes with mature, jammy fruits. In both cases, the varietal identity of Carmenère was missing.”

When Elizabeth Butler, the Argentina and Chile brand specialist for importer Vine Connections, tastes trade buyers on Carmenère, she knows what they expect. “Everyone’s first perception of Carmenère is chocolate-covered green bell peppers,” Butler says. “It marred many perspectives of Carmenère as a variety.” But having lived and worked in Chile even before working with these wines in the US market for the past five years, she has seen a huge evolution. No longer is the Carmenère category filled solely with cheap, fruity wines with sharp green notes, or full-bodied oak bombs that retail for over \$100. These wines can be characterful, nuanced, and surprisingly balanced.

Viticultural Approaches

Because Carmenère was mistaken as Merlot for so long, vintners initially continued to work with the two grapes in the same way. Ironically, they couldn’t be more different. Merlot is an early-ripening variety (usually picked in March) that needs plenty of water and more shade due to its sensitive skins. When Carmenère is treated this way, its sharp pyrazines stick out like a sore thumb.

“Carmenère is not an easy grape variety to work with,” says Andrea León, Technical Director for Lapostolle Wines, “and it thrives in very few and specific places in Chile.” The importance of site cannot be overstated. Warm vineyards with sunny conditions that last well into the fall are essential for high-quality Carmenère. “Carmenère is a late-ripening variety that, without a doubt, needs more hot days than other varieties in order to ripen,” asserts Sebastian Ruíz, Chief Winemaker for Viña Tarapacá. Cooler climates (as well as cooler vintages) will result in underripe grapes with higher levels of

pyrazines, and late-season rain will damage still-hanging Carmenère grapes.

Poor soils also help counter the grape's vigorous nature. "Carmenère doesn't do well in deep or fertile soils," Mendoza notes, "because the vine will focus on its canopy more than fruit, which then won't ripen enough." A well-drained mix of stony soils with clay is ideal, also serving to give the vines a controlled supply of water.



Carmenère vines in stony soils at Casa Silva in Colchagua, Chile

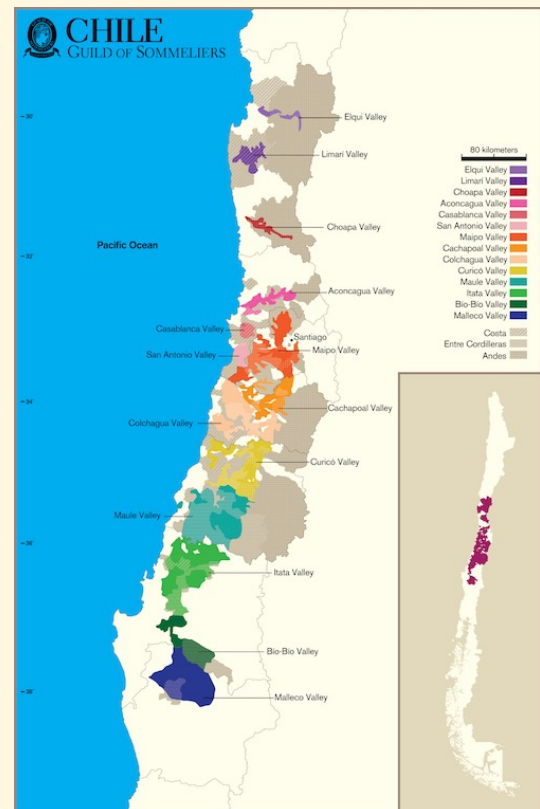
"Carmenère can be 'squeezed' more with regards to irrigation deficit," says Matias Cruzat, the winemaker for Viña San Pedro's 1865 Winery, who places the variety somewhere between Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot in terms of water needs. "With this, we will be able to produce a great wine, since the most important thing during the process is vegetative balance versus production quantity." While Carmenère is grown in several pockets of Chile, including the Maipo, Maule, and Cachapoal Valleys, its finest sites are located in the Colchagua Valley. The newly dubbed Apalta and Los Lingues DOs are ones to know for Carmenère, which achieves that coveted balance between power and finesse on sloped hillside vineyards or flatter, lower ones. But other parts of Colchagua are interesting as well. TerraNoble, for instance, creates two Carmenère wines from opposite ends of the valley to explore the terroir of Colchagua through the grape; CA1 and CA2 juxtapose the differences between the

inland Andes zone of production and the coastal-influenced Costa zone, respectively.

Steps taken during the growing season are also important in order to guide Carmenère toward a well-ripened, balanced style. Green harvesting helps manage yield, and leaf thinning exposes berries to the sun for ripening, which simultaneously diminishes pyrazines. Depending on desired style and vineyard location, a winemaker may choose to do more or less leaf thinning, either on the morning or afternoon sun-facing side of the vines. "We practice leaf thinning to the side that is exposed to the morning sunshine because it is more gentle than the afternoon sun, which can damage the skins of the grapes," Mendoza says. León, on the other hand, practices just a bit of leaf thinning on the afternoon side, as the Apalta Valley is known for its sun exposure.

Finally, the timing of harvest plays a huge role in the style of Carmenère produced, though winemakers still debate the variety's "optimal" harvest time. Grapes picked earlier will generally have higher levels of spicy, green pepper-like pyrazines, along with lower potential alcohol and higher acidity,

while grapes picked later will be higher in sugar and more fruit forward. In a reversal from the days of harvesting Carmenère early, like Merlot, for a time,



vintners harvested grapes too late. Today, many winemakers are looking for the Carmenère sweet spot: ripe fruit, subtle herbal or roasted pepper tones, moderate-plus alcohol, and fresh acidity. Most agree that this ideal moment arrives in late April or May, though the range can swing from March to June.

“It’s important to find the right moment to pick the grapes: ripe but not overripe,” Mendoza notes, “because [with overripe grapes], instead of having the character of the variety, you will get sweeter, jammy notes.” Adds León, “Carmenère, when overripe, becomes very heavy and plump. The acidity levels rocket down and it becomes quite dull.” Arnaud Hereu, Winemaker at Odfjell Vineyards, prefers to harvest very early in order to make a specific style of Carmenère. “We may be the earliest to harvest Carmenère in Chile—around the 10th of March,” he says, noting that earlier Carmenère harvest dates are a trend among Chilean winemakers. While Hereu admits that the wine is greener when picked early, his goal is to maintain Carmenère’s acidity.

Vinification Techniques

Before Chilean winemakers knew how to work with Carmenère in the vineyard, many undertook the tough job of molding the variety into a particular style in the cellar. Now, in a good vintage, the difficult part is theoretically over by the time the grapes arrive at the winery. “The best moment to work Carmenère’s pyrazines is in the vineyard,” Mendoza says. “If the vines are planted in the right place and managed in the right way, the fruit will probably be good enough that it won’t be necessary to practice any ‘makeup’ in the cellar.” Carmenère bunches are typically destemmed and cold-soaked in order to extract color, aromas, and flavor before fermentation. Some winemakers, like Ruíz, like to prolong that extraction with continued maceration post-fermentation as long as the fruit is healthy, while others choose to avoid the potential of alcohol extracting green tannins from seeds.

While vintners are relying less on new oak to define the character of Carmenère wines, many agree that restrained use of old or new oak works well with the variety. “In my opinion, Carmenère is very well suited to oak aging, and it gives it a unique flavor,” Cruzat notes. Though most of the winemakers interviewed age their Carmenère wines primarily or entirely in oak barrels—with the exception of Hereu, who does not use oak—very few taste overtly of new oak. Gradually, this is becoming the new norm for Carmenère wines.

The New Carmenère

Pyrazines will always be present in Carmenère and are therefore a reliable indicator when tasting. Even winemakers looking to craft more balanced styles of Carmenère recognize the importance of this trait. “The spice and herbs are part of the personality of Carmenère,” León says, “and losing them means losing that spicy, savory character that very few grape varieties can have. We have to learn how to embrace this character and make it part of its complexity.” Some continue to make Carmenère wines that are ripe and plummy; others look for a style that is spicy and bell pepper-driven. But more and more, Chilean vintners are seeking a middle ground for Carmenère, one that combines ripe red and black fruit with subtle notes of freshly cut grass, mint, savory herbs, or roasted pepper. Oak may be evident, but so too are notes of turned earth or black rock, black pepper, or canned tomato. Though the warm vineyards necessary to ripen Carmenère tend to create wines with moderate-plus to high alcohol,

the acidity and tannins (soft, but firmer than Malbec) can create a structural backbone that brings balance to the wine. "People must give Carmenère a chance," Cruzat urges. "It is nothing like the Carmenère that was produced 20 years ago." And indeed, Chile isn't even 25 years into its work with Carmenère as a distinct, noble grape variety. It's time to pay closer attention to these wines.



Use an inert gas such as nitrogen, argon, or CO2 to purge oxygen from your bottles.

Use an inert gas such as nitrogen, argon, or CO2 to purge oxygen from your bottles just prior to filling, and to purge the headspace left after filling just prior to corking. A study in Australia of various bottling lines found that headspace oxygen typically accounts for more than 60% of the total package oxygen (TPO) in bottled wine. For bigger bottling jobs, a **purge wand** connected to a **tank of gas and regulator** are a more efficient and cost effective solution.



Only 2 Weeks Left to Ship Out Entries for the World's Largest Competition for Hobby Winemakers!. The Shipping Entry Deadline is March 17, 2023 - Don't wait to submit your wine!

[Click here to download competition rules and entry form or click here for the online form](#) to print out and mail in.

Enter your wines, meads, and ciders and compete for gold, silver and bronze medals in [50 categories](#) awarded by a panel of experienced wine judges. You can gain international recognition for your skills and get valuable feedback on your wines from the competition's judging panel.

Reference Library

Here is a list of hobby winemaking manuals and other materials in the Secretary's file. They are available for downloading by e-mail or via an internet transfer service. Some are downloadable from the source such as Scott Lab. All are PDF format, e-mail Ken Stinger at kbstinger@frontier.com

- Scott Lab 2022 Winemaking Handbook – 6 mb - 135 pages
- Scott Lab 2022 Cider Handbook – 2.1 mb - 75 pages
- Scott Lab 2018-2019 Sparkling Handbook - 8 mb - 58 pages
- Scott Lab 2022 Craft Distilling Handbook – 5.2 mb - 26 pages
- Anchor 2021 – 2022 Enology Harvest Guide 15.7 mb - 16 pages
- A guide to Fining Wine, WA State University - 314 kb - 10 pages
- Barrel Care Procedures - 100 kb - 2 pages
- Enartis Handbook - 4.8 mb - 108 pages
- A Review Of Méthode Champenoise Production - 570 kb – 69 pages
- Sacramento Winemakers Winemaking Manual - 300 kb - 34 pages
- Sparkling Wine brief instructions - 20 kb - 3 pages
- The Home Winemakers Manual - Lum Eisenman - 14 mb - 178 pages
- MoreWine Guide to red winemaking - 1 mb - 74 pages
- MoreWine Guide to white Winemaking - 985 kb - 92 pages
- MoreWine Yeast and grape pairing - 258 kb - 9 pages
- Wine Flavors, Faults & Taints – 600 kb, 11 pages
- Daniel Pambianchi wine calculator set – 13.5 mb, 10 calculators
- Wine flavors, faults and taints - 88 kb, 11 pages



Wine Label: A flamingo with an attitude about COVID19

It was recently discovered that **PWC member Hank Armstrong** won Honorable Mention in the Winemaker Magazine 2022, “Our Favorite Labels” competition. Hundreds of labels were submitted.

When contacted, Hank told us, “Every year I make Flamingo Rosè for my wife, Kate. The year 2020 was a terrible year with Covid, etc, so we commissioned a friend of our son to make a flamingo with a little more attitude than usual. We subsequently submitted it to Winemaker Magazine. I had no idea we had won anything because we never heard back.

We have leftover labels, but all the wine has been drunk :-)”

Portland Winemakers Club

Leadership Team – 2023

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 / Jim Ourada**

bt.grapevine@frontier.com
jmourada57@gmail.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: **Rob Marr**

mdbmarr@live.com

- Arrange for speakers & educational content for our meetings

Chair for Tastings: **Brian Bowles / Jolie Bowles**

bowles97229@gmail.com
jolie97229@yahoo.com

- Conduct club tastings
- Review and improve club tasting procedures

Chair of Winery / Vineyard Tours: **Andy Mocny.**

acmocny@gmail.com

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

Chair of Group Purchases: **Al Glasby / Bob Thoenen**

alglasby@gmail.com
bobthoenen@yahoo.com

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

Chair of Competitions: **Rob Marr**

mdbmarr@live.com

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

Chairs for Social Events: **Mindy Bush / Marilyn Brown**

mindybush@hotmail.com
brown.marilynjean@gmail.com

- Gala / Picnic / parties

Web Design Editor: **Barb Thomson**

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