

**Portland
Winemakers
Club**



Portland Winemakers Club

September 2019

“Bill’s Meanderings”

Scheduled Meetings

January 16, 2019 Crush
Talk / Planning

January 2019
Annual Gala – TBD

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, 2019
Annual Picnic- TBD

August 21, 2019
All Whites Blind Tasting

September 18, 2019
Other Reds Blind Tasting

October 16, 2019
Pinot Noir Blind Tasting

November 20, 2019
Crush Talk

December 4, 2019
Planning, Tours, Speakers,
Events, Elections



I have a good excuse for missing the last meeting, we had to do some field research and testing. While on a week long camping trip we managed to end it with three days in the Yakima Valley and two days of visiting vineyards and tasting wines in the Rattlesnake Hills AVA. A sub AVA of the all encompassing Columbia Valley AVA Rattlesnake Hills is home to over 30 vineyards and wineries. It's a good example of micro climate as it tends to be a little cooler then other sub AVA's nearby, Red Mountain and Walla Walla. We were able to visit seven with Cultura and Dineen being our favorites. Home of mostly big reds, there are whites and even one winery, Treveri, specializing in sparkling wine. This area is also home to Portteus vineyard and winery that supplies fruit to several of our members from their 66 acres and around 15 varietals. We enjoyed the area that was new to us and would highly recommend a visit to this AVA. Included is a picture of the vast Portteus Vineyard.

Bill -

NOTE: Available from scottlab.com for download, 2019 “Fermentation Handbook”, also, “Cider Handbook” & “Sparkling Handbook”. Seems like I am always referring to these handbooks for information. ... Editor

**Drink Responsibly.
Drive Responsibly.**

Note: The next regular meeting will be Wednesday, September 18th at 7:00 PM at Aloha Grange Hall.

September agenda: "Other Reds Tasting". This will be member produced red varietals blind tasting and scoring. Other reds are varietals such as Tempranillo, Syrah, Petite Sirah, Zinfandel, Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Barbera, Grenache, etc., do not include Bordeaux varietals or Pinot Noir (e.g. Bordeaux varietals are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc & Carmenere).

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. Also bring 2 wine glasses for tasting.

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/>

August Meeting Minutes

Present: 21

- Damon Lopez gave a report on our tour of Anderson Winery & Vineyard.
- Barb Thomson gave a treasurers report. She has some nice, 2 step wine openers with the Portland Wine Club logo for \$5 each.
- Bob Hatt says all grape purchase orders are in, just waiting for crush time.
- State Fair winners were acknowledged, PWC members won over 30 medals this year at the Fair. Jon Kahrs, who was a judge at the Fair, explained the nuts & bolts of the judging process.
- Barb Stinger & Gillian Wildfire poured the blind tasting of member produced white wines. The wines were critiqued and scored for Gold, Silver, Bronze or No Medal. The results are shown below.

Wine #	Name	Varietal	2019 PWC All Whites Blind Tasting				Total Score	Medal Score	Medal
			Gold	Silver	Bronze	None			
1	Barb Thomson	2017 Viognier	2	17	2	0	42	2.00	Silver
2	Hofford/Hooson/Savage	2016 Viognier	2	9	9	1	33	1.57	Silver
3	Randy Carrier	2018 Viognier	0	12	9	0	33	1.57	Silver
4	Jon Kahrs	2018 Chinon Blanc	12	8	1	0	53	2.52	Gold
5	Ken & Barb Stinger	2018 Albarino	8	5	8	0	42	2.00	Silver
6	Jon Kahrs	2018 Albarino	3	13	5	0	40	1.90	Silver
7	Paul Boyechko	2018 Chardonnay	6	12	3	0	45	2.14	Silver
8	Jim Ourada/Paul Rogers	2014 Riesling/Niagra	7	11	3	0	46	2.19	Silver
9	Craig & Mindy Bush	2016 Gewurztraminer	0	10	9	2	29	1.38	Bronze
10	Hofford/Hooson/Savage	2018 Pinot Rose'	5	6	9	1	36	1.71	Silver
11	Craig & Mindy Bush	Pinot Rose'	1	11	5	4	30	1.43	Bronze
12	Jon Kahrs	2018 Candice	3	2	12	4	25	1.19	Bronze

Our PWC annual picnic was held at the home of Craig & Mindy Bush on July 20th. About thirty members showed up for lots of good conversation, plenty of wine to go around and way too much food. See some pictures below.



On Sunday August 18th Damon Lopez arranged for a tour of Anderson Family Winery & Vineyard. Located on a steep slope on top of an ancient pile of fractured basalt in the Dundee Hills consisting of a mixture of soil and fist size rocks. Cliff Anderson said that this fractures basalt extends down at least 1500 feet since that is how far they had to go for water and the driller said they were striking these rocks all the way down. Cliff said this makes for a well drained vineyard. this site has a commanding 270 degree view of the Chehalem valley below.

Their wines are made using a minimalistic approach using only native yeast & very low SO2 levels. Reductive barrel aged in French oak 15 months on fine lees without stirring.

See some pictures below.



PWC members won over 30 medals at the Oregon State Fair, see the table below. Paul Boyechko won 3rd place overall best of show for his 2018 Viognier.

Name	Varietal	Category & Medal	Region
Paul Boyechko	2018 Viognier	Overall Competition - Bronze Overall White Vinifera - Gold Viognier - Gold	Yakima Valley
	2018 Albariño 2017 Pinot Noir	Other White - Bronze Pinot Noir - Bronze	McMinnville/Chehalem Mountains
Don Hoffard, John Hoosen & Robert Savage	2017 Pinot Gris	Overall White Vinifera Bronze Pinot Gris - Silver	Banks, OR
	2017 Viognier	Viognier - Silver	Eastern WA
	2018 Viognier	Viognier - Silver	Eastern WA
	2017 Rhone Red	Overall Red Vinifera - Bronze Rhone Red - Gold	Eastern WA
	2016 Cabernet Sauvignon	Overall Red Vinifera - Silver Cabernet Sauvignon - Gold	Eastern WA
	2017 Cabernet Sauvignon	Cabernet Sauvignon - Gold	Eastern WA
	2017 Pinot Noir	Silver	Banks, OR
	2018 Pinot Noir	Bronze	Banks, OR
	2017 Merlot	Silver	Eastern WA
	2015 Bordeaux (Cab; cab Franc; Petit Verdot)	Silver	Eastern WA
	2016 Bordeaux (Cab; Cab Franc; Malbec)	Silver	Eastern WA
	2016 Bordeaux; (Merlot; Cab Franc; Malbec)	Silver	Eastern WA
	2017 Bordeaux; (Merlot; Cab Franc; Petit Verdot)	Silver	Eastern WA
2017 Bordeaux; (Cab; Cab Franc; Petit Verdot)	Silver	Eastern WA	
2018 Pinot Noir Rose	Silver	Banks, OR	
Jon Kahrs	2016 Chardonnay	Silver	Yakima Valley
	2018 Albariño	Silver	Eastern WA
	2015 Strawberry	Bronze	Multnomah County
Ken & Barb Stinger	2018 Albariño	Silver	Tri-Cities, WA
	2016 Cabernet Sauvignon	Silver	Selah, WA
	2017 Petit Verdot	Silver	Yakima Valley
	2016 Malbec	Silver	Selah, WA
	2016 Zinfandel	Silver	Yakima Valley
Bill & Marilyn Brown Marilyn & Bill Brown	2017 Pinot Noir	Silver	Chehalem Mountains
	2017 Pinot Noir	Silver	Chehalem Mountains
Barb Thomson	2016 Pinot Noir	Bronze	Willamette Valley
	2017 Syrah	Silver	Yakima Valley
	2017 Petite Sirah	Bronze	Yakima Valley
Robert Hatt	2016 Pinot Noir	Bronze	Buxton, OR
Michael Smolak	Non-Vintage Port	Silver	Multiple
	2018 Oregon Plum	Overall Fruit & Berry - Silver Fruit & Berry - Gold	Lake Oswego, OR

Making a Case For Age-worthy Albariño

TIM MCKIRDY - DANIELLE GRINBERG

Perhaps because it pairs so well with oysters and impromptu picnics, Albariño's aging potential is almost always overlooked. But with close attention in the vineyard, and careful decision making in the winery, this grape can make wines capable of evolving over five, 10, and even 15 years.

Famously grown in the Rías Baixas region on Spain's Galician coast, Albariño wines are intensely aromatic, with tart green fruit, peaches, and a hint of ocean spray on the palate. Across the River Minho, or Miño, in neighboring Portugal, the grape is the dominant component of the region's famed Vinho Verdes, and is also produced as a varietal wine labeled Alvarinho.

Typically, these wines are crafted to be enjoyed young and fresh, allowing the fruit character and vibrant acidity to shine. Yields in the vineyard are not always closely controlled, and winemakers often opt for efficient commercial yeast strains and temperature-controlled fermentation to bottle as close to harvest as possible.

But the very characteristics that make young Albariño wines so attractive can also be used to yield very different results. "Albariño's great aging potential comes from its high natural acidity," Javier Izurieta Romero, export manager of Rías Baixas-based Pazo de Señorans, says "Acidity is the natural preservative of wine."

In warmer-climate regions, winemakers have to fight to retain acidity. But in Galicia, where temperatures are moderate year-round, growers are instead challenged to be sure grapes can ripen enough to balance its natural acidity, Romero explains. Prolonged periods of sunshine close to harvest are essential, while lower vineyard yields and old vines can help provide concentrated fruit with impressive depth of flavor.

Following harvest, winemakers employ a number of techniques to promote ageability. Some opt for an oxidative winemaking style, using old oak for vinification and aging prior to bottling. Others stick with the large, stainless-steel vats used for younger styles. Everyone, however, agrees on the importance of lees — the flavor-giving spent yeast cells suspended in wine during and after alcoholic fermentation.

Left in contact with these cells, wines gain body and complex flavors but lose some of their freshness and tart fruit character. At his eponymous winery in Portugal, Luis Seabra champions this weightier, ageable style of Alvarinho and describes lees as the "mother" of the wine that plays a protective role in helping wines to age.

For his Granito Cru Alvarinho, Seabra harvests grapes from 25-year-old vines. Following vinification, he leaves the wine in contact with lees for one year but opts against *battonage* (disrupting the particles), as he feels the process adds too much weight to the wine. Other winemakers might choose to carry out *battonage* on a weekly basis, or leave their wines in contact with lees for periods of up to five years, without stirring.

The younger, fresher style of Albariño by far remains the most common form of production. But Seabra and Romero are not alone in favoring the concentrated, ageable style. While reporting this article, I sampled a number of bottles of varying age, each cementing a belief that not only can Albariño age, but it becomes even more interesting and enjoyable when vinified to do just that.

Bottles that were around five years old, including Granbazán's 2014 Don Álvaro de Bazán, and Compañía de Vinos Tricó's 2015 "Tricó," were punchy and rich, with intense candied tropical fruit aromas and persisting, piercing acidity.



At close to a decade old, bottles became more interesting still. Paco & Lola's 2010 Vintage Albariño could easily have been mistaken for high-quality aged German Riesling, while Adegas Castro Brey's 2010 "Sin Palabras" Edición Especial was bone-dry with a pronounced oxidative character, tasting like a blend of fino sherry and still Champagne. Both wines spent five years aging in the winery before bottling.

The undisputed highlight was Bodegas Forjas del Salnés' 2005 Leirana Ma. Luisa Lázaro. Nearly 15 years have passed since its grapes were plucked from the vines, but the wine remains remarkably vibrant and fresh, in contrast with its deep golden color. Powerful fruit notes arrive as dried apricots and ripe pear, but bottle age has added almond, cashew, and earthy aromas, and a similar oxidative calendar to the 2010 "Sin Palabras." The influence of lees aging shows by way of lightly toasted brioche notes, while electric acidity maintains balance and firmly holds everything in check.

For as long as the concentrated, age-worthy style of Albariño remains the minority in terms of production, picking up a bottle with age requires sleuthing. Producers who age their wines before bottling, like Paco & Lola and Adegas Castro Brey, offer the easiest access to the style. Specialist Spanish wine shops such as Despaña Vinos y Más in New York; La Tienda in Williamsburg, Va.; and The Spanish Table in San Francisco are also good sources.

Max Working, assistant portfolio manager for Spanish, Portuguese, and Greek wines at New York importer and distributor Skurnik Wines & Spirits, believes that, until the market recognizes Albariño as an ageable grape, the easiest option might be to buy a bottle that's suitable for aging and cellar it yourself.

"There's a perception, not just among importers but among retailers, that it's not the greatest look to have a five-year-old bottle of Spanish white on the shelf," he says. "It's a mindset that we're trying to combat on a daily basis, but it takes time and it takes a lot of quality wine to overcome this perception."

Spanish restaurants, especially those focusing on Galician cuisine, are another avenue to explore. Tomiño Taberna Gallega, located in NYC's Little Italy neighborhood, currently carries a handful of aged Albariños (including Brey's "Sin Palabras" Edición Especial) on its wine list. According to owner and sommelier Phil Gonzalez, "the reaction is always great" whenever he opens one for guests. "From a quality and value standpoint you just wow people," he says.



What Is Cassis and Why Should We Care?

The word cassis is a common descriptor of red wine and a very annoying one. Just ask 25 of your best friends if they know what cassis is, and you will get 25 blank stares followed by several wrong answers. This habit of equating wine flavors to other fruits, vegetables, woods, tobacco, and dirt has always struck me as questionable anyway. I taste for balance to evaluate a wine, the balance of fruit, alcohol, acid, tannin, and oak, all of which I can explain and demonstrate. But I, too, can succumb to the occasional use of florid language when describing a wine although I've never used the word "cassis" because I had no idea what it was and simply relegated the word to junk talk. You can imagine my surprise when I learned that cassis is something real.

Recently in the home of a friend, I spotted a 750 ml bottle of G.E. Massenez Crème de Cassis de Dijon, Product of France, 20% alcohol, importer Drefus, Ashby & Co., New York. I was instantly on it. Here was the opportunity of a life time, a chance to taste real cassis without any effort whatsoever. It appeared before my eyes, seductively beckoning, and at the same time accusing because I had never made an effort to get acquainted even though I make my living selling and talking about wine.



Cassis turns out to be deliciously intriguing. First of all, it's the deepest red color that you'll ever see, and it tastes like an intense berry, which it is, but it also tastes like liquorice, maybe Cuban cigar, and probably cherry cough drop. Honest. Altogether, it's astonishingly delicious, strange, and compelling. And I finally get what they mean when they say that a particular red wine tastes of cassis. And by the way, if you've never smoked a Cuban cigar, you've never lived. But if you've never tasted cassis, you haven't lived either.

So what is cassis, you ask breathlessly. First, cassis is the French name for "blackcurrant," a species of the Ribes berry native to central and northern Europe and northern Asia. If you still don't recognize this edible fruit, which grows on a small shrub, it's because this once popular berry was banned in the United States in the early 1900s when it was considered a carrier of white pine blister rust, which threatened the logging industry at the time. As late as 2003, blackcurrant plantings were banned in New York State. Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire still ban its cultivation, probably because the legislatures haven't gotten around to un-banning it. In other words, writers are describing red wine by equating it with a berry that doesn't exist in the United States, which is decidedly un-patriotic behavior and maybe deliberately deceitful. I wonder what Sarah Palin would have to say about this.

In Europe, the berry is common and consumed in various ways because of its nutritional content, especially vitamin C, potassium, phosphorus, iron, and vitamin B5 as well as healthful phytochemicals. The English make a black current cordial and mix it with cider or Guinness. The French macerate the berry in the aperitif crème de cassis or mix a bit of crème de cassis with white wine and call it Kir or Kir Royale if mixed with Champagne. New Zealanders make cassis or blackcurrant into jams and jellies, while Russians use the leaves to flavor their tea and sweeten their vodka. The Germans and Danes use it in desserts, and in Belgium and the Netherlands, cassis is a soft drink.

The easiest way to experience the taste of cassis or blackcurrant here in the United States would be to purchase a bottle of crème de cassis, making sure that the liquor is from Dijon where the best cassis is made. You will be astounded by how delicious it is and will thereafter never be duped or dismayed by irresponsible wine writers, who tell you that the Cabernet Sauvignon in your glass tastes like cassis or blackcurrant, expecting that it's a safe descriptor because you won't know if they're right or wrong.



46th Annual U.S. Amateur Wine Competition



Saturday
November 16, 2019

Entry Dates:
October 1 to November 10.
Entry Fee:
\$20 per bottle.

For more information:
www.CellarmastersLA.org

CELLARM^{STERS}
of Los Angeles

Burgundy wine grapes tell climate story, show warming accelerated in past 30 years

29 August 2019

A newly published series of dates of grape harvest covering the past 664 years is the latest line of evidence confirming how unusual the climate of the past 30 years has been. The record shows wine grapes in Burgundy, eastern France, have been picked 13 days earlier on average since 1988 than they were in the previous six centuries, pointing to the region's hotter and drier climate in recent years. The results are now published in the European Geosciences Union (EGU) journal *Climate of the Past*.

"We did not anticipate that the accelerated warming trend since the mid-1980s would stand out so clearly in the series," says Christian Pfister, a professor at the Oeschger Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of Bern, Switzerland. He conducted the study with other scientists and historians in Switzerland, France and Germany. Thomas Labbé, a researcher at the universities of Burgundy and Leipzig and lead-author of the study, meticulously reconstructed dates of grape harvest in Beaune – the wine capital of Burgundy – going back to 1354. He used a large number of unedited archival sources, including information on wage payments made to grape pickers, Beaune city council records and newspaper reports. The continuous record of grape harvest dates now published in *Climate of the Past* extends until 2018 and is the longest ever reconstructed.

"The record is clearly divided in two parts," says Labbé. Until 1987, wine grapes were typically picked from 28 September onward, while harvests have begun 13 days earlier on average since 1988. The team's analysis of the series shows very hot and dry years were uncommon in the past, but have become the norm in the last 30 years. Grape harvest dates can be used as a proxy to study the climate because wine grapes are very sensitive to temperature and rainfall. As an article in the French tourism website *france.fr* puts it, "Mother Nature is really the one who decides" when grapes are ripe enough to be picked. In years when the spring-summer (the growing season) is hot and dry, the grapes are ready for harvest earlier than in colder years.

The team validated their grape harvest series using detailed temperature records of Paris covering the past 360 years. This allowed them to estimate the April-to-July temperatures in the Beaune region for the entire 664 years covered by their record of grape harvest dates.

"The transition to a rapid global warming period after 1988 stands out very clearly. The exceptional character of the last 30 years becomes apparent to everybody," says Pfister.

"We hope people start to realistically consider the climate situation in which the planet is at present," he concludes.

This research is presented in the paper "The longest homogeneous series of Grape Harvest Dates, Beaune 1354–2018, and its significance for the understanding of past and present climate" published in the EGU open access journal *Climate of the Past* on 29 August 2019.



Wine Critic Robert M. Parker Retires

The Wine Advocate announced in May the retirement of wine critic **Robert M. Parker Jr.** The creator of the 100-point wine rating system worked as an attorney in 1978 when he first published *The Baltimore-Washington Wine Advocate*. The magazine became *The Wine Advocate* a year later. Its success allowed him to leave his law career behind in 1984 to concentrate on the magazine, according to *The Wine Advocate*. Ten writers took over the wine reviews two years ago. Parker has received two of France's most prestigious awards.

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