

SHW

THE GRAPEVINE JULY 2011

July 20, 2011 Program - Evaluation of the 2010 Club Project Zinfandel

Please note meeting time change - this meeting will start at 6:30 PM.

The July meeting will be the evaluation of the **2010 Zinfandel Club Project**. The evening's evaluator will be **Mr. John Smith, owner/winemaker/fork lift driver of Oakstone Winery** in Fair Play. Apparently, SHW's purchase of grapes for the project was so large that John could not get any grapes from the Murrill vineyard last harvest.

To be reimbursed for half of the cost of grapes to make 5-gallons of the zinfandel, bring two 750 ml bottles of the Club Project wine for evaluation. If you haven't bottled your two bottles by now, please do not add sulfites when you do. Remember to clearly write your name on the bottles and bring your wine making notes. No capsules, please.

Due to the large number of members who participated in the Club Project (35), initial evaluations will focus on SHW's newer/novice winemakers but every attempt will be made to evaluate all wines. Thus, with this many wines to taste and evaluate, it would probably be best to only bring wine for evaluation. Please remember to bring 2 wine glasses for your use.

The meeting location is upstairs at the Turn Verein located at 3349 J Street, Sacramento. Parking is available on the street on in the lot behind the building (go around the block to access).

For additional meeting information, please contact Bill Staehlin at bill.staehlin@sbcglobal.net or (916) 216- 1753.

President's Message

Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines! We are about three weeks from veraison (the onset of the change of color of grapes that is a harbinger of the ripening that will occur in the next 6-8 weeks). Take a hint, and get ready for the harvest and wine making!

Take inventory of your basic chemicals and make sure that you have fresh and sufficient supplies of all – yeast, yeast food, tartaric, SO₂, etc.

You should now be planning what varietal of wine you are going to make, and you have about a month to procure your grapes from vineyards. Check out the SHW website for grape sources, as well as the El Dorado Home Wine Club website. Now is the time to choose which yeast you will use to ferment your wines – chose carefully, grasshopper. Check out the back issues of Winemaker Magazine for the varietal articles – great information. If you are a new home winemaker, consider joining one of the Varietal Focus Groups offered by SHW.

Now is also a very good time to make sure that you have enough vessels in which to ferment your grapes and age your must; make sure that the vessels that you do have (whether food grade plastic, glass, or converted stainless steel kegs) are sound. The last thing you want to witness is your juice leaking out of your vessel into the gutter or to have a glass carboy shatter (check for any hair line fractures).

Consider the staging of your fermentations. White wine grapes ripen earlier than red wine grapes. And, certain red varietals ripen earlier than others. So, think ahead about how you are going to handle the crush and the volume.

Think about reserving the club press, or crusher-destemmer, now. We certainly do not know when we will get the call to come pick, or pick up, our grapes, but you need to consider whether the grower has a crusher-destemmer or not, and how you are going to press the must.

Finally, make sure that you buy an inexpensive notebook to record all of your decisions, all of your actions, in making your 2011 wines. This is a must (excuse the pun.)

To summarize, 90% if making quality home wine is in the preparation; 5 % is in the decisions that you make; and 5% is pure luck! Good luck, Class of 2011.

Donna Bettencourt

Winemaking 101 and Equipment Training

In this half day class, we'll cover the basics to help you start making wine. Topics include processes for making red and white wines, grapes, equipment, supplies, yeast and chemicals.

We'll also go over the care and use of Club equipment, something you'll want/need to know to complete the Release Agreement if you plan to borrow the Club's destemmer-crusher, press or filter.

The class is on Saturday, August 6 starting at 9:30 AM in Judy Pinegar's barn; dress casual. Bring a bottle of wine and appetizers/snacks to share. The Class is free for SHW members; \$15 for non-members per person (waived if joining club on day of class) and includes a SHW wine making handbook. Please contact Judy Pinegar to

make reservations or for additional information: jpinegar@calwisp.com or 916 652-5198.

August 3, 2011 SHW Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board of SHW meets on the first Wednesday of the month to conduct club business. All current SHW members are invited to attend. On our agenda for the August meeting is: review of the 2-year SHW plan; fine tuning of 2011 programs; the development of the new web site; and planning for our new affiliate membership status to draw in local wineries, restaurants, and wine educators.

We meet from 6:30 PM to 7:45 PM, followed by fellowship consisting of a potluck supper and enjoyment of each other's wines, whether homemade, or commercial. If you are interested in attending the August 3, 2011 board meeting, please contact Donna Bettencourt at bettencourt1045@softcom.net or (916) 548-3199. If you are not attending the board meeting, please plan on joining us afterwards for fellowship at 7:45 PM. The August Executive Board meeting will be held at 6950 21st Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95820.

If you are interested in hosting the September Board meeting, let Donna know. It is a great way to learn more about your association, and a fun time for all.

August 17, 2011 Program Preview - All You Ever Wanted to Know About SO2

Baffled about this SO2 stuff? Some of you met John Troiano at SHW's June meeting when he talked about acid and other chemical adds to wine. Dr. Troiano comes back to us at the August meeting to discuss the importance of using SO2 in wines and how it can make your wines better. More details in the August newsletter.

Varietal Focus Groups

There's still available slots in three varietal focus groups: chardonnay, cabernet franc and port. Geared for the new or newer winemaker, the coordinators of these focus groups also double as mentors, providing close guidance. To sign up for a group or for more information, please contact President Donna Bettencourt at 916 548-3199 or bettencourt1045@softcom.net. Please note: there is no Club Project this year.

Amateur Wine Competitions

Monterey County Fair - entries due July 20; www.montereycountyfair.com

Placer County Wine and Grape Association - entries due July 21;

<http://pcwga.org/competition.html>

Lake County Fair - entries due August 5; <http://lakecountyfair.com/competitions/contest-handbook.html>

Please check out the SHW web site for additional information on SHW meetings, activities, and wine chemistry.

www.sachomewine.org

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