

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



As spring approaches, our thoughts turn to the upcoming harvest - what varietals will we make? It's "rush week" as we court our local growers to spare us some of their highly in demand grapes. How much can our family spare this year on our insane hobby? Will I buy that new 30 gallon barrel or send my kid to his senior trip to Disneyland? Do I have time to clean up my garage and bang out a new wine room? What to do with all the crap that will now be piled in the driveway?

But WAIT!!! Your 2013 wines have much need of you now. "Dance with the gal you brung!" Don't move on with your exciting plans for the upcoming harvest until your new wines are taken care of. We are all victims of a certain amount of neglect between December and March, but now is the time to refocus on the necessary final tasks before you even consider the upcoming harvest.

Considerations:

Is malo-lactic fermentation complete on my wines?

Have I added an appropriate amount of SO₂ according to the pH of the wine?

Are my wines topped up?

How do they smell and taste? There is time to fix most faults now.

If a white wine, have I hot and cold stabilized them yet?

Will I add some oak to my wine?

When will I bottle, taking into consideration that I may need either to bottle before the 2014 fermentations are over or buy more storage vessels (carboys, barrels, etc.)?

Where am I going to safely store my newly bottled 2013 vintage?

And, finally, especially as the competition season begins, which of my wines will I enter in the June Jubilee, the State Fair, and any of the other regional home wine competitions? Am I seeking out recognition, or helpful feedback from the judges? Or both?

See you all at the March 19th meeting as we welcome back Alison Crowe, the "Wine Wizard" but much, much more, as she presents to us her adventures in making Pinot Noir wines.

Happy Winemaking!"

-Donna

SHW 2014
Elected Officers

President:

Donna Bettencourt

Vice Presidents:

**Sonia Baron
JD Phelps**

Secretaries:

**Joe and Lynn
Mc Gillivray**

Treasurer:

Steve Barrett

2014 SHW Membership Open

SHW continues to grow and at this time the Club is still accepting 2014 memberships.

Your membership supports the Club's activities and events including speaker costs, meeting space rental, equipment purchases and repairs, and other necessities to smoothly run SHW.

The 2014 membership form can be found on the Club's website at www.sachomewine.com. 2014 dues are \$50 per household (up to 2 members). If you have membership questions, please contact membership co-chairs Fred Millar at (916) 576-9596 and fredmillar1@gmail.com or Gin Yang at (916) 217-0294 and ginyangstaehlin@yahoo.com.

SHW CLUB LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS;

Mikc Touchette—Past President

Fred Milar—Past President

Lynn Keay—Past President

Gary Young—Past President



2014 SHW Winemaker of the Year Competition

Every year we encourage our home winemakers to enter their wines in local, regional, and state home wine competitions. At all competitions, judges make careful notes on your wine and suggestions for improvement. In this article of The Grapevine, we have listed a few of these competitions, including our club only June Jubilee competition, and the California State Fair.

To enter the SHW Winemaker of the Year competition you must be a member and have entered at least 2 different and distinct wines in the June Jubilee, the California State Fair, and 1 other recognized organized competition. The cut off date for publishing of scores is November 30th, with the Cellarmaster competition traditionally the last recognized competition. Please go to our website, www.sachomewine.org and click on competitions and you will find both the WOY criterion and the entry form for the Winemaker of the Year competition. Final scores are essentially based on the total of your scores divided by the number of entries. So, you will score higher if the two wines you enter do very well, versus entering six wines and only two do well.

So, choose carefully Grasshopper if your intent is to be the 2014 SHW Winemaker of the Year. (But, if it is only feedback you are looking for, you are free of these considerations.). Let the games begin!

Donna Bettencourt
Chief Judge"



Program Preview - April 16, 2014

For the April meeting SHW members will be asked to bring their 2013 non-Bordeaux varietals for evaluation. Evaluations are open to all 2013 non-Bordeaux varietals with the exception of the 2013 Primitivo focus group wines. This group will meet separately in the near future to compare and evaluate wines.

Wine and Label Competitions

Time to dust off some of your best and enter them into competition!

Home wine and wine label competition details can be found on SHW's website at www.sachomewine.com. Click on the "Competitions" tab on the right side of the page.

Of particular note are SHW's Jubilee wine competition and picnic, slated for June 28-29 and the California State Fair (entries open March 17) contests. Details for both contests will be updated as soon as new information becomes available. On the "Competitions" page, you'll also find the particulars for competing for SHW's Winemaker of the Year award.

"Other Wine and Label Competitions" can be found by clicking on the link at the bottom of the same page. This section lists competitions that might be of interest to SHW members. We try to keep this page continuously updated with the latest info so if we've missed a competition, please send an email to Gin at ginyangstaehlin@yahoo.com.

Why enter your wines into competition?

- * It's fun to see how you stack up against other winemakers.
- * Many home wine competitions also provide the judges' written feedback on your wines so you can see what they liked (or didn't like) about your wine.
- * Wine label competitions are often offered to help you get recognized for your visual creativity.

Hints for entering your wines and labels:

- * Read each contest's entry requirements carefully.
- * Be mindful of the entry and delivery dates.
- * Make sure your writing is legible and accurate.



MEMBER RESOURCES

Wine Making and Vineyard Mentors, and Oak cubes:

bill.staehlin@sbcglobal.net

Call Bill at (916) 216-1753

SHW Logo Wear: Polo shirts and caps:

Fredmillar1@gmail.com

Call Fred at (915) 576-9596

Club Website

[www. SacHomeWine.org](http://www.SacHomeWine.org)

Group Buys and Varietal Focus Groups – What's the Diff?

Do you realize that the 2014 harvest is only 4-5 months away? Whites started in early August last year...

Maybe you'd like to make red Bordeaux varietals to enhance blending down the road. Or perhaps you'd like to focus on Iberian varietals, such as albarino or tempranillo, which grow well in this area – but maybe not so abundantly especially with this crazy weather.

Even more reason to get serious really soon.

Group Buys - one way to gain increased access to grapes that might have been unattainable due to quantity purchase requirements is to go in together with a few others to reach that critical minimum. You can coordinate a group buy and “advertise” for buying partners on the SHW website (contact Judy or Gin, judypinegar@gmail.com and ginyangstaehlin@yahoo.com, respectively). Most group buys involve a division of the grapes and each person is responsible for their own grape processing.

SHW Varietal Focus Groups (VFG) - a coordinator creates a group interested in making a particular varietal or style of wine. Sometimes the group tours wineries and/or the target vineyard to get a better understanding of the varietal. Grapes are usually crushed and pressed as an entire group or in sub-groups. Mentoring is provided by the coordinator or other seasoned winemakers. Later in the following year, VFG wines are evaluated and showcased at a SHW meeting.

Examples of 2014 VFGs:

* Primitivo for Beginning Winemakers – coordinated by Henry Wilkinson (hbwilkinson@jps.net);

* Portuguese Port - coordinated by JD Phelps (group now full).

Guidelines to making group efforts work smoothly:

* honor your commitments to both the grower and the group coordinator. Play an active role in the grape's acquisition to help you understand what you're getting;

* pay up when the grapes are in your hands or as arranged;

* you may not receive the exact amount ordered. Everyone shares in the difference;

* show up on time prepared with the appropriate containers, equipment and transportation.

If you're interested in forming a group buy or coordinating a varietal focus group, please contact Prez Donna Bettencourt at bettencourt1045@softcom.net



CLUB EQUIPMENT:

Destemmer/Crusher: Andy
Walter, (916) 955-6373
andrew.walter@sbcglobal.net

Basket Press: Lynn Keay
(916) 969-4924
Lynn.keay@gmail.com

Filter: Donna Bettencourt,
(916) 454-5487
Bettencourt1045@softcom.net

Please note there is a \$5 per
use fee for the filter, and a
\$10 fee for the
crusher/destemmer. There is
no fee for
use of the club press.

SHW Membership Benefits

You may have noticed that starting with the 2014 year, SHW memberships are confirmed with an annual membership card for members. If you haven't yet picked up yours, please see Debbie Moretton during the meetings.

There are many benefits to Club membership including the long-standing ability to have your wines evaluated at meetings, compete in the SHW Jubilee, and a year's subscription to WineMaker magazine. You can also participate in group buys, borrow Club equipment, and best of all, rub elbows with some of the best home winemakers on this side of the Sierras Rockies.

Lodi Wine Lab (LWL) in Lodi will give you a discount 5% off retail and 10% off lab analysis. LWL's pricing is competitive and we hear that they have the best case price on glass if you're not needing large quantities. Show your card and remind them of the discount. Check their website for their hours:

<https://www.lodiwinerylaboratory.com>.

Help find other discounts such as complimentary corkage at restaurants and special pricing at other wine supply houses and vendors. We'll post your finds on the Club's website. Share your discoveries with Gin at ginyangstaehlin@yahoo.com.

Lake County Winery Tour

Hosted by David Hicks.

June 14/15 2014

I have offered to host members and guests of SWH on an around the Lake winery tour on Saturday June 14 2014. It is at least 2,5 hours to Upper Lake so participants will need to arrive in Lake County on Friday the 13th in order for the tour to begin at 9:30 on Saturday. You will be provided with Lake County information and Wine Trail maps for you use on Sunday should you wish.

We will depart the Tallman Hotel in Upper Lake in an Evens Tours van. Evens has 14 and 21 passenger vans and we will order the size to meet the demand. Evens charges \$1877 for the 21 and \$1782 for the 14. Booking the van will require a prepaid non-refundable payment, which will be divided by the number of participants. If the interest is there we can book two vans.

The Tallman hotel is a 4 star BnB with 17 rooms and has a 2 night minimum. Upon having a head count I will block out rooms for Friday and Saturday nights at the Tallman. Participants will need to make their own arrangements to book rooms. Tallman will provide a box lunch for our lunch picnic at one of the wineries. For those wishing budget rooms or camper hookups, Robinson Rancheria casino is located a few miles SE of Upper Lake. However our departure and drop off spots will be at the Tallman Hotel in Upper Lake. Each participant will book their own rooms and will cover their hotels and any incidental costs directly with the hotel.

We will be circumnavigating the Lake and will visit at least 4 and maybe up to 6 of the best wineries in Lake County. We will end the touring in Kelseyville, which has two winery tasting rooms, depending on time. I will arrange for us to meet the winemakers, taste their wines, and tour their facilities. In the PM the van will return to the Tallman for everyone to change and then return by van to my home in Buckingham Park for a BBQ, wine [bring your best] and other good party stuff. The van will return everyone back to the Tallman after the party I will be working with Donna and Gin to plan the party but will require a group of volunteers to help with is. From my short time in the club it's clear you guys know how to throw a party. The cost of the party will be prorated among the participants. Depending on the number of participants I will need to ask you bring folding chairs and wine glasses.

If you are interested please contact me ASAP so I can put the tour in motion at dh1780@yahoo.com and copy Donna and Gin. Look forward to hearing from all who are interested.

THE GRAPEVINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SACRAMENTO HOME
WINEMAKERS, INC. (SHW)
MARCH 2014

MARCH 2014 PROGRAM

Winemaker Magazine's own, "Wine Wizard," Alison Crowe will be joining SHW in March as she discusses the challenges and rewards of making Pinot Noir. Alison is a graduate from the UC Davis Viticulture and Enology program. She currently serves as the head winemaker for Plata Wine Partners, LLC, in Napa and provides custom winemaking services and consulting to nationally distributed as well as small start-up brands. Alison is the author of, "[The Winemakers Answer Book: Solutions to Every Problem, Answers to Every Question](#)". She is a frequent contributor to *Wine Business Monthly*. Alison also writes the popular wine making blog, "[The Girl and the Grape](#)".

Alison will be sharing three different Pinot Noir's with the club during her presentation. Please bring three separate glasses as the wines will be poured at the same time for comparative tasting. The March meeting as always is free to club members. Non SHW members will be asked to pay a \$10 fee.

SHW MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH STARTING AT 7PM, UPSTAIRS AT THE TURN VEREIN LOCATED AT 3349 J STREET IN MIDTOWN, SACRAMENTO. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SHW MEMBERSHIP, MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES, VISIT: WWW.SACHOMEWINE.ORG

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