



LFW Grapevine

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LFW Holiday Cellar Dinner: Another Festive Celebration!

By Eric K. Behrens, 2013 President



For me, the last two Holiday Cellar Dinners (2012 and 2013) at the St. Francis Yacht Club have been the most fun events of my presidency. Everyone is in a festive mood, the wine is always excellent, and the ruckus at each of the tables is evidence of folks who enjoy each other's company.

The setting at the Squire Room, with its illuminated Christmas trees, was spectacular.

The celebration began with Canard-Duchene Brut Champagne, a discovery of our Cellar Master Rod Santos which we are fortunate he shared with us.

While I don't quite agree with the promotional flyer's description of the hors d'oeuvres as "sumptuous" and "delicious," the champagne helped improve their taste – somewhat.

Every one of the wines was delicious, but I have to agree with Rod that the crisp White Rock Chardonnay tasted far better on its own than when drunk with the Spring Mix Salad with its strong Sherry Vinaigrette.

Of all the wines, my personal favorite was the velvety smooth 2004 Adelaida Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon which nicely complemented my perfectly cooked Prime Rib.

The crowd illustrated its enthusiasm for the event by its reaction (or more accurately, non-reaction) to the blaring of a warning system which asked us all to leave the room calmly. No one budged, having all just been served the main course which we were anxious to consume along with its flavorful wine pairing.

I'm glad it was a false alarm! It would take a lot more than a life threatening alarm to disrupt this hardy group of LFWers!



Tastevins were presented by Rod to the following three members who earned them by putting up with this rowdy group for three years: Suzanne Boucher, Pam Marraccini and Beryl Potter.

As Rod pointed out, this is the first time in recent memory (or ever?) that all the LFW tastevin recipients were female.

Congratulations, Suzanne, Pam and Beryl, and don't forget to wear your tastevins at our annual meeting in March next year!



I had the pleasure of expressing my gratitude to our tireless Program Chair, Steve Martin, (pictured left) who almost singlehandedly organized most of the outstanding events of the past year. I also acknowledged Christopher Blunden, whose creative and colorful program

announcements and newsletters helped contribute to the attendance at all of our LFW events.

(Incidentally, Christopher is offering to any interested volunteering member the opportunity to create Lawyer Friends of Wine program fliers announcing upcoming events. He will gladly provide templates he's developed to make this assignment as easy as possible.)

Volunteering to help run LFW is the best way to qualify as an "active member" to get on its Board. In addition to contributing your time and energy to the club, Board members enjoy the company of other Board members at our quarterly lunch meetings accompanied by delectable wines selected by our skilled Cellar Master.

Our group also honored our club administrator, Denise Malatesta, whose organizational skills keep LFW humming year after year.

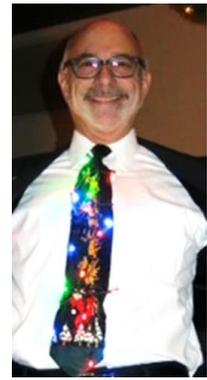


The tie contest was won by Skip Walker (left) with his "sex sells" salesmanship and applause meter help from his boisterous table. Jay Folberg's wildly blinking tie (above right) placed him a close second. Those

who didn't participate this year should reconsider for next year: the quality of the bottle of wine awarded to the winner easily makes up for the self-selling/humiliation* needed to win!

All in all, the Holiday Cellar Dinner was a great launch to the 2013 holiday season.

Best wishes to you and your families for an enjoyable rest of the holidays!



Paso Robles Wine Country Weekend Getaway Fun!

By Christopher Blunden



For October 25 – 27, 2013, Steve Martin forged the perfect California weekend getaway during the most colorful time of year in Paso Robles Wine Country.

Relying on Steve's advance research and sage advice, most of our group of twenty wine enthusiasts started our adventure at the Black Cat Bistro in Cambria on Friday night.

Although we were on our own that night, arriving at will, our LFWers flocked together for a great evening of wine, food and fun before making our way back to the nearby Fogcatcher Inn.

After dinner, Steve even hosted us in a hospitality suite for some night-capping wine, jokes and storytelling by the fireplace. Next morning, after a hearty Fogcatcher breakfast, our group boarded our chartered fancy bus (driven by comedian Louie Anderson's nephew) to take us to the first of our three winery visits for the day: a wine tasting visit to the architecturally stunning Denner Winery.



Despite its beauty, apparently someone there didn't get the memo: our little group sets one-day purchasing records.

So, in this idealic setting with perfect crisp sunny late morning weather, along with a clueless person providing lilting winery-visit background music of "War! What is it good for?" we were informed there would be no group discounts on wine purchases.

Indeed, as a group, we paid for the tasting, but vitually nothing else. "No soup for you."

Our next stop was the opposite when it comes to hosting visitors: Adelaida Cellars was Nordstrom on steroids.

Tony Hermann, Resident Wine Educator and Hospitality Director and his staff greeted our band of inquisitive enophiles with a vast array of fine varietals at the ready for tasting along with breadsticks and estate grown almonds.

Tony scorred an A+ conferring eloquent erudition on myriad topics of local wine lore, winery history, and the provenance of the wines we were tasting.

We dined on location there at the shaded outdoor tables consuming pre-arranged gourmet box lunches and perfectly timed group discount purchases of Adelaida wines. (Our collective purchases ran into the thousands of dollars. "Soup for you.")

As our visit concluded, we not only bought additional wine for ourselves, but also obtained some cases that were served at our December dinner event.

We were very pleased our Cellar Master Rod Santos recommended this visit, and if you ever go there, ask for Tony, indicating Lawyer Friends of Wine sent ya.

On our way back to the Fogcatcher, we made our final stop at Opolo Vineyards. It was crowded with lots of folks enjoying their wines and outdoor bar-be-que in a pleasant

setting. Our hosts provided us a private tasting of some very nice wines in a separate area, and purchases were made prior to our return trip to our Cambria hotel. Our group then had just enough time to freshen up and get to nearby Robin's Restaurant for our flavorsome and fun filled banquet dinner. Cambria had their delightful annual scarecrow contest in full swing, so just driving through town was enjoyable.



With our LFW President's permission, I distributed some notable amusing sayings about wine to random dinner place-setting locations, and folks who sat there obligingly participated in reading them aloud to get our dinner event started.

The food, wine, and company all combined to provide a great ending to our adventure in the Paso Robles wine country.

Next morning, before checking out, many of us enjoyed the boardwalk along the sea across the street from our hotel to view the tide pools, seals and sea birds.

While we can't thank Steve Martin for the perfect weather, we do owe him gratitude for his hours of preparation for yet another excellent Lawyer Friends of Wine adventure.

If you have friends to whom this or other events would appeal, invite them to join Lawyer Friends of Wine for 2014!

Lawyer Friends of Wine Membership Packets

You'll soon be receiving your membership renewal notice by postal mail. Please submit your (green page) Roster data and dues payment by January 31.

We look forward to your active participation in LFW events all year long. Despite the poor economy, tighter venue demands for advance deposits, and occasionally undersubscribed events, our Board of Directors has kept our club on firm financial ground.

Most events are self-supporting by event-specific reservation charges, and our initiation fees and dues support our cellar wine events, administration fees, etc.

We have a cap of 100 members and frequently fewer than a dozen memberships available, so if you do not intend to renew your membership, please let us know so that others can participate in our upcoming events.

Also, please mail in your (blue page) Nominations for Board Members as there are Board member positions that expire in 2014. We actively encourage nominations (including self-nominations) and your help in making our club better than ever!

Save the Dates!

Saturday, January 18, 2014: Our raucous Winter Follies catered bring your own wine contest event in San Anselmo. Please check your e-mail for the flyer.

Welcome New Members!

Katherine Fones, sponsored by Richard Idell; *David Block*, sponsored by Chris L'Orange.

[Refer potential new members to our website LawyerFriendsOfWine.com with years of back issues of our newsletter.]



*For those who are pursuing the asterisk (and who teach others it's not an "asterick") we offer this rewarding quiz: Who is that festive member with the red tie?

While pondering the answer, special thanks to Joyce Hicks for all her help volunteering her photographic skills and for contributing photos to this issue in this col 1 then col 2 – page order: #1, #2, #4, #5, #9, #10.



Showoff Word for your Holiday Dinner: What is the official name for this symbol: # sometimes known as the "pound" sign or "number sign?" It's called an Octothorpe. Used in mapmaking, it originally represented a village surrounded by eight fields, literally meaning "eight fields".