



LFW

G r a p e v i n e

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2006 A Vintage Year for LFW

By Bill Smith

We started 2006 with our annual Winter Follies in San Rafael at the home of Ellen and Paul Gutierrez. We returned to the St. Francis Yacht Club for our annual March meeting. Our Spring bus trip to [Lynmar](#) was outstanding.



Then 36 of us ventured to France for our first international event in June. Lauren and I were overwhelmed by the response and everything worked out better than expected. We managed to caravan around the countryside without losing anyone, and we consumed countless bottles of local wine. I feel that the French group bonded on the trip, and this has made our club even more special to us.



In July, LFW spent a terrific evening with legendary winemaker, Mike [Grgich](#).

The Harvest Moon Dinner in Sept. at Stags' Leap Winery was mystical. The

tables set on the the stone porch glittered with glass and candlelight, and the wine was endless. Mike Marron's rendition of *Shine On Harvest Moon* continued the tradition started by Steve Martin.

The ghosts were on their best behavior.



The dinner at the Villa Taverna in San Francisco featuring Jeff & Alexandra Cohn of [JC Cellars](#) in October was another hit. It gave us the opportunity to get to know an enterprising couple who have developed a first rate winery in Alameda.

We continue to be welcomed at the wineries we visit, due in large part to our association with Cellar Master, Steve Pitcher and the generous discounts he has been able to negotiate for us. We nearly exceeded our one day wine purchase record this year, and our annual purchases were the highest on record for our club.

We are victims of our own success in that some members have been unable to attend certain events. Rest assured that we are addressing this issue at the Board level, and it is more complex than you might imagine. We do not want to do anything to change the special character of our club.

Of course, many of our events have no size limitations whatsoever, but it is always wise to promptly reply to the invitations.

Our club has never been stronger or more popular. There was a large waiting list for our Claret Holiday Dinner at [Harris' Steak House](#).



At this year's event, Eric Behrens shared the Holiday Tie Contest award with wardrobe support from his spouse Joyce.

The secret is out about Lawyer Friends of Wine, and we will reach our membership limitation early this year. We soon will have a membership waiting list.

I hope you will join us frequently during 2007 and help us continue to make our club the best group in town. Happy holidays!

Welcome New Members!

Daniel Furniss, sponsored by Bill Smith; **William Gagen**, sponsored by Christopher Blunden & Bill Smith; **Stuart Gardiner**, sponsored by Mike Marron.

Membership Packet Essentials

Please review the LFW roster mailed with this newsletter. If any revisions to the information on record for you are needed, contact [Denise Malatesta](#). Please pay special attention to two deadlines: On or before January 31, 2007: dues for 2007 should be paid to Denise, **and** the Nomination Notice should be returned to Mike Marron. **Reminder**: you must be a member in good standing (dues paid) in order to attend any LFW function.

LFW's Winter Follies: 2007

By Christopher Blunden

The Seventh Annual Winter Follies event (again at the beautiful home of Paul and Ellen Gutierrez) is coming Jan. 20, 2007. (Check your flyer for details.)

This catered event is one of the most fun all year and features wine brought by our members. Bring your favorite bottle you'd like us to experience, and enter it in the

LFW Wine Contest to be decided that day. Want to introduce us to a favorite winery? Here's your chance!

When you arrive, turn in your Contest Wine already wrapped in foil **by you** to conceal it for blind tasting. We'll check off your name and give your wine a number (for voting and to identify who brought it).

Our Cellar Master Steve Pitcher will taste every entry and determine the Cellar Master Awards: one Red and one White.

There will also be People's Choice Awards.

You'll get a scorecard with highlighted



numbers (e.g., 1-8) of 8 Red bottles (randomly assigned) to taste and score. Decide which **one** bottle you like the most (even if it's nearly a tie), circle its number, and turn in your scorecard. If you're judging the White Wines, use the **same** scorecard to circle that **one** favorite bottle, too.

Once you've finished tasting and judging your assigned bottles, feel free to have single one ounce tastes of any bottle **not** assigned to you; please don't repeat taste any bottle assigned to you as we want enough for judging by our Cellar Master and the other judges (who will all be tasting while you are tasting).

The winners of each 8-bottle group will be tallied, announced, and entered into a drawing to determine the final Red and White People's Choice awards.

Last year, we discovered some truly great wines, and we also learned that our People's Choice ratings and our Cellar Master ratings are a close match. Help us discover our next winners!

LFW's Wine Blog

I'm trying two formats enabling our LFW members to share events and insights: <http://lawyerfriendsofwine.blogspot.com/> and <http://blog.lawyerfriendsofwine.com/>.

Please indicate your preferred format. Start blogging and sharing what you know!