



LFW

G r a p e v i n e

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Shyster Creek Event a Winner!



Our annual Spring trip to the Dry Creek region of Sonoma County on April 30th was a smashing success.

Lawyer Friends of Wine member, Ross Stromberg, generously offered his warm hospitality and the spectacularly beautiful grounds of his Shyster Creek Vineyards to our group to set the scene for a perfect day of wine tasting, food and fun.

On a perfect weather morning, as we walked the path to our wine country retreat for the day, we were greeted by whimsical outdoor sculptures including a giant corkscrew with Shyster



Creek's mascot buzzard (Buzz) perched atop to welcome us. Other zany artwork to set the cheerful mood included a full sized cow with striped socks and a tribute to "Cadillac Ranch" using children's' pedal cars.

Festive wine tasting tents providing nonstop tasting opportunities of local offerings were accompanied by immediately forthcoming tasty hors d'oeuvres in this glorious setting.

We were fortunate to sample some of the best wines that Shyster Creek Vineyards provides, and new loyalists were spawned on the spot. Our host (who began looking more and more like Michael Caine to some of us as the sampling continued) also shared the limelight by arranging for us to be treated to some very good and unusual boutique wines from his vineyard neighbors.



One popular example came from young Harvest Moon winemaker Randy Pitts who supplied tastings of his limited production Estate Gewurztraminer. His creative use of a Chardonnay enzyme in the fermentation process provides a unique bone dry white without the traditional sweetness.

Our new president Bill Smith rated it "wonderful." In fact, Bill took several great candid photos of our event which absent objections from our wine sampling "models" will be included in the forthcoming Gallery section of LawyerFriendsOfWine.com.

The wine tasting was followed by a sumptuous BBQ lunch on the lawn by the pool under the trees and on the nearby patio.

For energetic souls, Ross had swimming, horseshoes and bocce ball available, but many of our members who planned on participating were already having too much fun to get to them as the day raced by.

As for Ross, he was too busy to join in the games because he was furiously packing cases of wine for our members.

The discounts our members received on purchases of all of these wines was yet another benefit of being a member of LFW.

Our thanks to Ross and all involved in making this event such a success.



The Trouble with Magnificent, Truly Extraordinary Wines

- by Christopher Blunden

I meet once a month with a wine appreciation group of about eight or nine guys for dinner, fun and the wines we bring. (In fact, when we started about eight years ago, I was the only one married; now I'm the only one who isn't. But, I digress . . .)

Each month one of us is assigned the responsibility for picking a restaurant and negotiating the corkage. Our pattern is we always bring reds and rarely use more than two different wine glasses per person.

We knew only four of us would make it this last time due to schedule conflicts, so that heightened the likelihood of our being able to savor whatever we brought.

I brought what was for me a not easy to find 2002 Rosenblum Rockpile Road Vineyard Zinfandel. I consider this a pretty great wine. (I once challenged our cellar master Steve Pitcher to identify it in a blind tasting, and he nailed it.) I have a case of it, and I'm sure I'll be thrilled with it again once I return to earth. <http://www.rosenblumcellars.com/>

However, one of our guys brought something from the stratosphere which Robert Parker awarded 98 points.

I think Robert has exquisite taste (because I like what he likes) but what if he had a cold that day . . . because I reached a 100 point of reference with this one: Behrens & Hitchcock 2002 Meritage.

This marvelous Calistoga blend is 64% cab, 12% Merlot, 12% petite verdot (which gives it a fragrance of wild flowers) and 12% cab franc. <http://www.behrensandhitchcock.com>

The distinctive label shows a worn out heavyweight boxer seated on a stool in the boxing ring. The label title simply says: Heavyweight.

The only other wine that has "floored me" like this one is Pride 2001 Cabernet from Robert Foley Vineyards which Robert Parker declares to be a "potentially PERFECT wine" depending on when in the next 20 years you drink it. (I have two left which are wrapped with my warning label to all others, "Open on penalty of death.")

The other two guys in my dinner group didn't exactly bring lightweights: 2003 Two Hands Syrah (Wine Spectator 93 points / only 30 cases made it to the U.S. from Australia), and 2003 d`Arenberg "The Dead Arm" Shiraz (92 Points - Robert Parker).

Between the Rockpile, Two Hands, and Dead Arm, we all bowed to the Heavyweight. So what's the trouble? How does one recover from such a great delicious experience?

But then, that's the fun of discovering great wines. Appreciating the knock outs.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS!

Louis S. Franecke, sponsored by Bob Dossee

Eric D. Sentlinger, sponsored by Debra Bogaards

Carl L. Williams, sponsored by Paul Gutierrez and Eric Behrens

Next Event: June 18, 2005

Steve and Kathleen Martin have graciously invited us to visit their home for a gourmet wine tasting and Italian luncheon in their beautiful gardens overlooking the Bay. Check your private flyer for details. See you there!