



IN THE NEWS

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

If you have not yet reserved your spot at the 10th Annual Membership Meeting of the RRVW please do so today. The Annual Membership Meeting will be on Thursday, February 10 at the Holy Ghost Hall in Sebastopol beginning at 3 p.m. This is a great opportunity to hear what RRVW is doing for you and to find out what you can do for the RRVW. Our guest speaker will be Tony Correia of Correia-Xavier will be our guest speaker and will discuss trends in vineyard and winery values and the fundamentals driving them. We will also be releasing, hot of the presses, the CDFA 2004 Preliminary Grape Crush Report.

Because of the timing of the release of CDFA Grape Crush Report, the annual meeting will experience a new format. The last two years we have had a difficult time getting the Report to the Annual Meeting before our members leave because the report is not released until 12 noon. It takes time for us to download and copy it so everyone can have a copy. So, this year we will meet later in the day and end with appetizers and a wine reception.

The cost of attending is \$10 per person and a bottle of wine to share. Highfeather Catering will be providing RRV wine-friendly appetizers. Please send your reservation in no later than Monday, February 7 to save your seat. Enclosed is a reservation form. If you have any questions please call Judy Walker at 521-2535 or email her at judy@rrvw.org.

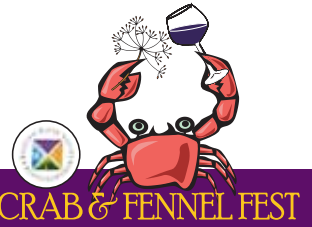
"CONSUMER DIRECT" WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Several speaker presentations from the recent Wine Institute direct shipping workshops are now available online at www.wineinstitute.org/communications/statistics/directshipping-wrkshps.htm. The workshop content focused on growing "direct-to-consumer" sales and increasing profits in tasting rooms, wine clubs and E-commerce sales. The presentations are "Selling Wine Online" by Jeremy Benson, Benson Marketing; "Designing Effective Wine Clubs" by Dr. Janeen Olsen and Dr. Liz Thach of the SSU Wine Business Program; and "A Winery Perspective" (a winery business plan for direct sales) by Jennifer Lamb, Herb Lamb Vineyards.

THE 2ND ANNUAL CRAB & FENNEL FEST

by Judy Groverman Walker

The 2nd Annual Crab & Fennel Fest is just around the corner, Saturday, March 5 beginning at 5:30 pm at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds Hall of Flowers. Ticket sales have been steady and we have successfully been selling tickets to consumers from outside of our area including Kansas, Connecticut, Arizona, Texas, Georgia, Tennessee, New Hampshire and throughout California. And, at the time of print we have following press that will be in attendance: David & Rachel Cane, Jeff Cox, The Quarterly Review of Wines, and Tina Caputo of Wines & Vines.



If you have not signed up to be a part of this great event - please contact me ASAP. In order to make this event a success **we need everyone to help**. We especially need donations of crab friendly wine to serve; we need items for the "Clean out the Cellar" auction; and of course we always need volunteers to help with the wine bar, ticket sales, serving, set up and clean up. We anticipate that this event will sell out. If you have not yet purchased your tickets please do so soon to insure your spot at this great event. Tickets are \$45 each or a reserved round table for 8 is \$450.

For more information or to participate in this exciting annual event please contact Judy Groverman Walker at 707-521-2535 or by email to judy@rrvw.org.

TTB TO HOLD SEMINAR ON NEW WINERY ESTABLISHMENT

The TTB, in conjunction with the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, will hold a free seminar for those seeking to establish a bonded winery. The seminar, "Federal Application Process for New Wineries" will be held on January 26, 2005, 12:30-1:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Carmel Room, 2nd floor, 1209 L Street, Sacramento. Registration for the Unified Symposium is NOT required to attend this seminar. TTB representatives will discuss the Federal qualification process for becoming a bonded winery, and will briefly explain Federal compliance requirements. Following the one-hour presentation, TTB staff will be available to privately answer individual questions on the application process or any TTB issue. Application packets will be available. For more information, contact Doreen Marin at TTB, 916-967-3544.

NEW YEAR, NEW PROJECTS, NEW DEADLINES!

By Mauny Kaseburg

Hopefully all RRVW members have received and opened their large white envelope chocked full of marketing opportunities for the New Year. The mailing, which went out right after the New Year, has a printed sticker on the front that reads "2005 RRVW Marketing Offer Open Immediately - Time Sensitive". We're encouraging members to fill out their forms and return to us by January 26 as all information has to be turned in to Bonzell Design by February 15th in order to make our April 1st print deadline for the Guide to the Russian River Valley. This includes all appropriate art work (logos and labels). If you have questions about the Guide, please give us a call immediately. This includes any corrections to your business information (address, phone, web address, tasting room updates, contact person).

The Food & Wine Magnum Partnership programs are filling up quickly. Only six Chicago packages will be offered and that program is already half filled. **The date of the 2005 Food & Wine Magazine Entertaining Showcase in Chicago is Wednesday, November 16th.** The *Food & Wine* Classic in Aspen package has eight slots available, with half of those already filled. If you are interested in either of these two packages we strongly urge you to respond immediately.

The deadline for the May Wine Country Travel issue double page ad in *Food & Wine* magazine is coming up in February as well. The first ad will be a map of the Russian River Valley, this year illustrated with more enticing features than the 2004 July issue map. We would like to include as many members as possible on this map to give potential visitors a seductive picture of the wide diversity of vineyards, wineries, hotels, inns, restaurants and other retail available in the Russian River Valley. Last year's map included over 45 member listings. We'd like to exceed that this year. We have kept the fee for inclusion at last year's rate in order to include as many small business owners as possible.

Also on the Marketing Committee agenda this year is a more aggressive public relations outreach. The RRVW press package is being updated as well as the *2005 Guide to the Russian River Valley*, accompanied by an informative letter, will be mailed to over 2,000 wine, food, travel and lifestyle press as soon as it comes off the presses April 1st. We will bring members up to date on these public relations efforts at the Annual Membership Meeting as well as upcoming newsletters.

If you have any questions regarding the materials that have been mailed to all RRVW members, or any questions about the deadlines discussed above, please call Mauny at the RRVW office 707/521-2534 or Marketing Committee Chair Ellen Mack at Russian Hill Estate Winery 707/575-9428.

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE THE 10TH ANNUAL GRAPE TO GLASS

Can you believe that August 19-21, 2005 will be the 10th Annual RRVW Grape to Glass? We need your help. Please join us as we put on a celebration to showcase the best of our appellation. Each year we make a few changes to improve an already successful event. So far this year you can look forward to a "Mystery Bus Tour" on Friday in place of canoeing (water issues and a shortage of resources forced us to give up canoeing) followed by a dinner and movie TBD at MacMurray Ranch. Saturday will remain similar to last year with two tours followed by the barbecue and auctions with a slight change in them from "Hog in the Fog". Sunday we will move back to only one brunch and our speaker this year will be Charlie Palmer.

If you have some time and would like to volunteer please give me a call at 707-521-2535 or email me at judy@rrvw.org. Areas we still need help with are the live and silent auctions, wine donations, decorations, volunteers, logistics and more. I look forward to hearing from you.



CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME

The election results are in and we would like to thank all of the candidates that ran for a position on the RRVW Board of Directors. Congratulations to incumbent Merry Edwards of Merry Edwards Wines and Hector Bedolla of La Crema who were both elected to fill the vacant Winery positions.

Congratulations also to Lee Martinelli Jr. of Martinelli Farms who was elected to fill the vacant Grower position on the RRVW Board.

The new officers for 2005 are as follows:

President: Steve Dutton of Dutton Ranch

1st Vice President: Ellen Mack of Russian Hill Estate Winery

2nd Vice President: Dan Aguilar of Silicon Valley Bank

Treasurer: Saralee McClelland Kunde of Saralee's Vineyard

Secretary: LeeAnn Cameron-Reuter

Remember the RRVW Board of Directors is there to represent your interest and concerns - reach out and give them a call and find out how you can become more involved.

STAFF NEWS

Consultant Anne Marie Przyblyski has just joined the RRVW office as a Project Coordinator. She will be keeping office hours most mornings and can assist in any of the various events or marketing programs.

You can reach any of the RRVW staff at the following:

- Judy Walker - Phone: 707-521-2535 or judy@rrvw.org
- Mauny Kaseburg - Phone: 707-521-2534 or mauny@rrvw.org
- Anne Marie Przyblyski - Phone: 707-521-2534 or annemarie@rrvw.org.



WWW.RRVW.ORG

IT'S ALL ABOUT QUALITY, BUT SPEED HELPS

January 17 was the Russian River Valley pruning competition sponsored by Sonoma County Grape Growers, Bahco Tools, Sonoma County Vit-Tech Group and RRVW. It was a typical foggy and cool RRV morning but the competition heated things up as 18 contestants competed for prizes and cash.

Judges Rich Thomas of RLT Consulting, Steve Dutton of Dutton Ranch, Scott Bauer of Chateau St. Jean Winery and Daniel Robledo of Santa Rosa Junior College carefully studied the vines before awarding Eliseo Mendoza of Sonoma-Cutrer first place. Second place ended was a tie between Joel Robledo of New West/Joseph Phelps and Manuel Chavez of goldridgepinot and fourth place went to Jose Mederos of Valdez & Sons. Eliseo, Joel and Manuel will all proceed to the County Finals.



Second Place Tie- Joel Robledo, New West/ Phelps Vineyard Management; First Place- Eliseo Mendoza, Sonoma-Cutrer; Second Place Tie - Manuel Chavez, goldridgepinot.com; Fourth Place- Jose Mederos, Valdez & Sons.

Thank you to all of the members that donated funds to the contest. In addition to the prizes and awards provided by the SCGGA and Bahco Tools, Eliseo also received an additional \$600 from the RRVW and member donations, Joel received \$400 and Manuel received \$200.

NEED SOMETHING NEW TO WEAR?

We have RRVW logo merchandise perfect for birthdays, holiday and thank you gift giving available for purchase at the RRVW office. The following prices include tax.

- Logo fleece blankets \$25
- Logo hooded sweatshirts \$30
- Logo white t-shirts \$10
- Logo aprons \$15
- Riedel logo "O" glasses (6 per set) \$36
- Riedel logo red wine glasses (4 per set) \$30
- Riedel non-logo tasting set (4 different glasses per set) \$65

Look forward to seeing some new logo merchandise at the RRVW 10th Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, February 10.



SAVE THE DATE!
10th Annual
Grape to Glass
August 19-21

ENTER TO WIN AT THE 2ND ANNUAL CRAB & FENNEL COMPETITION

Are you feeling lucky? Here's your chance to enter the following contests and you might just win a prize. The "Fun with Fennel" competition has the following categories to enter:

- Class 1 Largest Wild Fennel Bulb/Root
- Class 2 Longest Single Fennel Frond
- Class 3 Best Fennel Centerpiece
- Class 4 Best Crab Dipping Sauce Recipe Using Fresh Fennel
- Class 5 Best Crab Dipping Sauce Using Fresh Fennel and RRV Wine
- Class 6 Best Medicinal Use of Fresh Fennel (keep it g-rated!)

It is easy to enter. Just fill out the enclosed entry form and return it to the RRVW office no later than March 1. Then bring your item/entry to the Sonoma County Fairgrounds Hall of Flowers on Saturday, March 5 between 12 noon and 4 p.m. or contact the RRVW office to make other arrangements for drop off. Judges will determine the winners at the start of the Crab & Fennel Fest and winners will be awarded that evening. Get into the spirit of the evening and join in the fun. Please contact the RRVW office at 707-521-2535 if you have any questions or need more information.

SMART MARKETER CONTRACT ISSUES WORKSHOPS

Co-sponsored by most of the grape grower association including Sonoma County Grape Growers Association, this two-hour workshop will include an introductory presentation on the current winegrape market climate presented by Allied Grape Growers or Turrentine Wine Brokerage and a panel of local growers and wineries to present perspectives on evolving contract issues. Each workshop will feature Legal Issues on Contracts and Writing Contracts that Clearly Spell Out Expectations and Obligations by Dale Stern of Kahn, Soares & Conway in Sacramento. The workshop in Santa Rosa will be on Tuesday, February 15 at Paradise Ridge Winery. For more information contact CAWG at 800-241-1800 or by email info@cawg.org.

DUES ARE DUE . . . HAVE YOU PAID YOURS?

RRVW annual membership dues are now overdue and still payable. If you have not yet paid your dues please do so immediately so you don't miss out on valuable membership and marketing opportunities through the RRVW. We take VISA, Mastercard, checks and of course cash. If you have misplaced your renewal information please contact the RRVW office at 707-521-2534 and we will send you out another packet.



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U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

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| February 2 | Sonoma County Pruning Finals
10 am at SRJC Shone Farm - Call SCGGA at 707-206-0603 |
| February 10 | 10th Annual RRVW Membership Meeting
Holy Ghost Hall at 3 pm. Must RSVP to the RRVW office by 2-7-05 |
| February 25 | California Championship Pruning Finals
At SRJC Shone Farm - Call SCGGA at 707-206-0603 for more information |
| March 4-6 | Russian River Wine Road Barrel Tasting Weekend
Visit www.wineroad.com for more information |
| March 5 | 2nd Annual Crab & Fennel Fest
5:30 pm at Hall of Flowers at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds
Contact RRVW office for more information at 707-521-2535 |
| June 10-12 | Food & Wine Magazine Classic at Aspen
Call the RRVW office at 707-521-2534 for more info |
| June 11 | SRJC Agstravaganza honoring Richard & Saralee Kunde
Please call the SRJC Foundation at 707-527-4348 |
| June 18 | Wine Library's Sonoma Odessey at Richard's Grove & Saralee's Vineyard
Contact the Wine Library for more info |
| July 14-16 | Sonoma County Wineries Association Showcase
Call 707-586-3795 for more info |
| August 19-21 | 10th Annual Grape to Glass Weekend |
| November 16 | Food & Wine Magazine Chicago Entertaining Showcase
Call the RRVW office at 707-521-2534 for more info |