**The Missouri Winemaking Society Newsletter for February 2019**

We hope everyone survived the cold, is enjoying the warm up and looking forward to enjoying Port wine in February!

**Next Meeting**:  Port and Fortified Wines

 Meeting Place: St.Gerard Majella Church

1971 Dougherty Ferry Rd

St Louis, MO 63122

 Time:  February 21 at 7:00 p.m.

***February Program .*** We look forward to a presentation by Dave Anderson re Port and Fortified wine.  Please bring your Port or Fortified wine to share.  Please reply to me or Dave Wert and let us know if you have a home made port or fortified wine that you can bring so we know that we have enough.

Also, the officers have reviewed the Society’s bylaws and will be proposing some updates at the February meeting.

***January Meeting***Our January meeting was Our Favorite Red Wine Contest. Eleven members brought wines to be tasted and scored by their fellow winemakers. Each wine was delicious! And the winners were....drum roll please…

The winemakers 1st place vote went to Terry Stromberg for his 2016 98% Chambourcin (from his vineyard) and a 8% Cab Sauvignon.

 It was a delightful blend. **Congratulations** Terry! 2nd place went to John Merkel for his Petit Syrah (80%) and 20% Petit Verdot.

Lisa Nordmann came in 3rd with her 2017 - 50/50 blend of Chambourcin and Norton.

It was a very fun evening and it was wonderful to hear how each winemaker made their wine.

 Details re the vote tally from January and past contests is attached as prepared by **Steve Brunkhorst**.  Thank you Steve!

 Also, **Terry Stromberg** was nice enough to provide us with the following notes of his First Place Chambourcin.  Thank you Terry for sharing your insights!

**Notes from Terry Stromberg’s first place 2016 Chambourcin**

 As the winner of the red wine competition I was asked to share some tips/keys/essentials on red wine making.  The voting results were very close and this is my first time winning.   I think to win in the future I will need to keep improving my wine making skills.  I think the most helpful thing to do is to just talk about the areas where I made different choices from the other wines entered.

**Yeast .** For my 2016 Chambourcin I used AMH (Assmanshausen) yeast.  I stumbled onto this yeast while reading the MoreWine "Yeast & Grape Pairing" guide.  It was the first yeast listed for Chambourcin (also in the Norton list).  Scott Labs list the yeast properties as:

*Enhances spicy (clove, nutmeg) and fruit flavors and aromas while adding overall complexity.*

I love the aroma this yeast gives off during fermentation.

**SO2 .** This is one of the first wines I have crafted since upgrading my SO2 testing capabilities.  Special thanks to Bob Rizzolo who helped get me setup with a quality aeration/oxidation testing apparatus.  Being able to accurately measure free SO2, when needed, helped a lot.

**MLF and Sweetening .** For this wine I used VP41 MLF bacteria.  Scott Labs has the following description for VP41:

*enhanced mouthfeel and wine structure –- increased richness and complexity*

I don’t hear many people talking about MLF selection, but it seems like another useful tool to add to your toolbox.  The Scott Labs Handbook has descriptions for several MLF strains.

 I did not want to sweeten this wine, but given the grapes I started with and the additions of tartaric acid to reduce the pH, I ended up with an unbalanced wine.  I chose to add stevia.  I have used stevia several times with good results.  I know some people think of stevia as an artificial sweetener (I think because of its super sweetness, 250 times sweeter than sugar), but I think of it as natural, because it comes from a plant (I have grown the plant).  Note: consuming **large** amounts of stevia is not recommended because it can cause health issues.   Two other alternatives I would consider are Erythritol and Xylitol.

**Canopy Management**

I think canopy management played a big role in the quality of this wine.  I do a lot of shoot positioning (combing) and leaf pulling during the growing season to enhance airflow around the grape clusters and to allow sunlight to reach the berries for part of the day.  The other thing I work on is crop load (keeping the number of grapes in balance with the number of plant leaves).  In 2016, I think the crop loading was good leading to quality grapes.  For those interested in canopy management, I highly recommend the book “SUNLIGHT INTO WINE” by Richard Smart.  I think Bernard Cleve was the first person I heard mentioning this book.  I plan on posting grape growing pics to the club’s Facebook page this next growing season.

 Happy wine making,

Terry

***President’s Message: Phil Rahn***

On a cold winter night there is never any question what to drink after dinner. A nice port fills that spot just fine. Port is a rich and warming treat that sooths the throat and sends wondrous vapors up through the sinus cavities and out the “sniffer”. I poured a 20-year-old tawny last night and it was great. I wonder if Dave Anderson will serve a 20-year-old port at our next meeting; hum, maybe, if he started it when he was president of our club, and then didn’t drink it all up (what are the chances?).  These are special wines and difficult to make at home, however several of our wine club members have been doing a great job with local grapes. Let’s start the new year by raising our glasses to our member’s ever increasing wine making skills; TO PORT!, and maybe some chocolate too.

 See you then.

Phil Rahn

***Looking Ahead:***

 March  -  Guest Speaker

 April  -  Tasting at Total Wine

 May  -  Picnic at Lost Creek Winery

***Society Dues:***

The yearly fee, per person, will be $50 ($25 after June), with no additional meeting fee (or tasting fee, if you prefer) – this is a savings over the course of the year if you attend all the meetings (and you should).  But if you do not want to pay the full $50, you can pay just $25 for a full year’s membership, but then you will need to pay a $5 per meeting “tasting” fee at each meeting you attend.  So it’s your choice to determine which way works best for you. Please pay by check but cash is also accepted.

***Missouri Winemaking Society Facebook Page***

A benefit to being a member of the Missouri Making Society is being able to join our closed Facebook page for members only.  We have had a great year with many members sharing valuable information.  It is also fun to see what all of our members are up to in their vineyards and wine cellars.  If you have not joined yet, log into Facebook and search for Missouri Winemaking Society.  Ask to join and I will let you in.  Remember though, **this is a closed group just forMWS members.**

***Wine Making Tips:***

Don’t forget, there is lots of useful files on our website.  To access all the terrific things in the Library section, click on the website link at the top of this newsletter, scroll down to the *Membership* section, and click on the *Click here* link under MWS Library.

 MWS Website:  [www.mowinemakers.org](http://www.mowinemakers.org/)

 Submitted by: Dan Peters