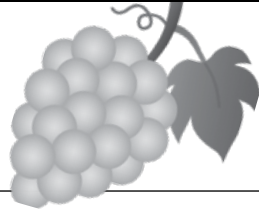


GRAPE TALK

The grape and wine community



BY DEBBIE TOLLEFSON

A theme of this issue of the *Applegater* is “community.” A significant part of our community are the people who grow grapes, create wines, and enjoy wines from the Applegate Valley.

In 1982, the Oregon Winegrowers Association recognized the grape-growing community in southern Oregon as the Rogue Chapter of the association. In 1991, the Rogue Valley received approval as an American Viticultural Area (AVA). In 2001 the Applegate Valley was designated an AVA within the Rogue Valley AVA.

The Applegate Valley Oregon Vintners Association (AVOVA) is the organization of wineries and wine makers in the Applegate Valley, of which there are 18 members. This group of wine professionals shares information and resources during their quarterly meetings. Current officers of AVOVA are president Joe Ginet of Plaisance Ranch, vice president Liz Wan of Serra Vineyards, treasurer Duane Bowman of Cricket Hill Winery, and secretary Debbie Schultz of Schultz Wines.

AVOVA’s main activity is fundraising for advertising and marketing Applegate

Valley wines. Their twice yearly “Uncorked” events occur the Sunday before Memorial Day and the Sunday before Thanksgiving.



Top photo: Suzy and Joe Ginet, current president of AVOVA.
Bottom photo: New tasting room at Cowhorn Vineyard and Garden.

Growers and wine makers are just one part of the wine community—there is also a much larger community of wine aficionados and connoisseurs.

Among this community of wine enthusiasts are members of many wine clubs throughout the Applegate Valley. Sponsored by individual wineries, these clubs allow both wine novices and wine experts to try new releases, participate in tastings, receive special discounts, and mingle with wine makers.

Most clubs have a multilevel system, with each level requiring the purchase of a certain number of bottles. Many clubs offer a choice of white or red or a combination, but some clubs don’t offer choices. Each level also has different discounts, perks, and special events available to its members. Some wineries have a limited number of openings in each tier, and often there can be a waiting list to join a winery’s wine club.

If you are new to the Applegate Valley and you appreciate wine, wine

clubs are a great way to meet other wine lovers and be introduced to various local wines. Stop by your favorite winery to sign up or check online to see what they have to offer. Through the years, I have joined numerous wine clubs in Monterey and the Applegate Valley, and one of the perks is getting access to some of the wineries’ wine libraries, including past wines not available to the general public.

There are lots of ways to enjoy our local wines with friends, at informal clubs and gatherings. I have thrown parties where everyone brings wine of a certain varietal and covers the bottle so they don’t know what they are drinking. Then everyone votes on their favorite. Or gather together a number of local wines of all varietals, cover the label, and ask guests to vote on their favorite. I also have participated in pairing parties where each couple pairs a wine with a dish they have created.

I would love to hear from the Applegate Valley community about some of your informal wine clubs and gatherings. Get the wine conversation going—it’s lots of fun and educational too, but please drink and drive responsibly!

Debbie Tollefson
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Debbie Tollefson

Southern Oregon medal-winning wineries from 2017 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition

Double Gold

Schmidt Chardonnay 2014

Gold

Moulton Family Wines Bordeaux

Blend Trinity 2013

Serra Tempranillo 2014

Silver

Red Lily 2013 Tempranillo

Red Lily 2014 Night School

Schmidt 2015 Viognier

Schultz 2012 Merlot Steelhead Run

Schultz 2014 Pinot Gris

Steelhead Run

Schultz 2012 Syrah Steelhead Run

Bronze

Lorelli 2011 Quattro Foglie

Moulton Family Wines

2013 Cabernet Franc

Red Lily 2013 Red Blanket

Tempranillo

Schmidt 2013 Tempranillo

Schmidt 2013 Syrah

Schmidt 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon

Schmidt 2015 Pinot Gris

Schmidt 2015 Albarino

Schmidt 2013 Duncan’s Choice

Schmidt 2013 Soulea

Serra 2014 Malbec

Congratulations to all the great grape growers, wineries, and wine makers in our valley.

Voices of the Applegate Spring Concerts

A wonderful concert is on the calendar this spring with Voices of the Applegate. Our director, Hope Harrison, has provided us with a spectacular variety of music from jazz to classical, including “Lazy River,” “Riverdance,” “Blue Skies,” “A Celtic Blessing,” and an assortment of classical pieces.

Upcoming concert dates

- Friday, April 7, 7 pm, at the Historic Jacksonville Presbyterian Church, 405 East California Street, Jacksonville
- Sunday, April 9, 3 pm, at Applegate River Lodge, 15100 Highway 238, Applegate

There is no admission charge, but donations are greatly appreciated.

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New director, Hope Harrison, has an impressive background in music: 30 years of choral directing in Oregon schools, a masters degree in musical education from the University of Oregon, and the recipient of many professional achievements as a music instructor, including awards as the choral director for Klamath Falls High School, McLoughlin Middle School, and Hedrick Middle School. Voices of the Applegate members are so pleased to have Hope as our choral director for this coming year. For more information, call Joan Peterson at 541-846-6988.

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