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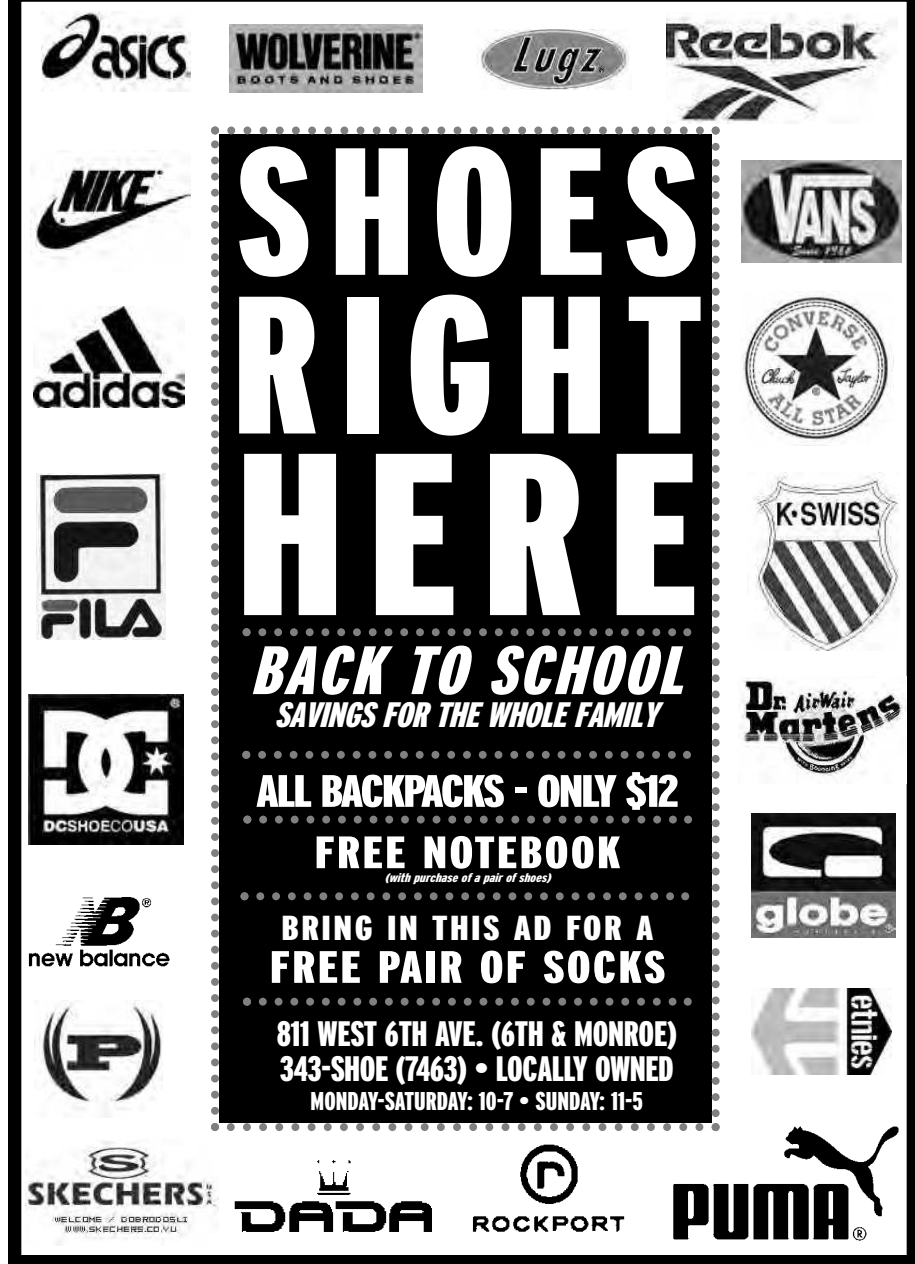
DABBLEDOOYA

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FRIDAY AUGUST 26TH

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music BY DAVE CONSTANTIN



Norman Sylvester



Linda Hornbuckle

The Secret's Out

Wine and blues are cause enough for celebration.

Funny how things change. A couple of generations ago in this country, the idea of wine culture and blues music mixing company probably would have seemed strange. Beer and blues, sure. But wine? Images of rich white guys sipping the elixir of privilege while tapping their expensive shoes to the gravelly voice of poverty and sorrow couldn't have seemed right. But these days, the categories are arbitrary. Any precocious 21-year-old can now expound on the subtle oak and black cherry flavors in his \$6 bottle of Cabernet. Likewise, the blues has become among the most accessible of musical forms. Happily, there's a place where people celebrate these two coming together.

Secret House Vineyards, well known in the Willamette Valley among rich and semi-poor alike for its award-winning Pinot noirs, prepares for its 15th annual Wine and Blues Festival this weekend. In 1986, Ron and Patti Chappel bought the 100 acre Veneta lot where, for 14 years, acres of Pinot, chardonnay and riesling grapes had been making themselves comfortable. After releasing their first commercial crush in 1989, the Chappels immediately expanded their sights to start nurturing another passion: the blues.

"We love the blues," says Ron Chappel.

"We wanted to do some sort of community event, and so the Wine and Blues Fest was originally started to support the Relief Nursery, which helps troubled families." Each year, the couple hosts a number of important music events on the stage set up literally in their backyard.

Wine connoisseurs by trade, the Chappels have earned their appreciation for the blues the hard way.

After all, they've spent the past 15 years fighting against a relentless oppressor — root aphids. The insects effectively declared victory three years ago, halting production from the Veneta vines and forcing the Chappels to rely exclusively on their Bolton Hill property (in addition to the varietals purchased from other sources). Still, a surplus of 1999's superb crop continues to feed popular demand, and will undoubtedly satisfy the projected 1,000 or so patrons at this weekend's festival.

This year's festival features Linda Hornbuckle, the DK Stewart Quartet, the Norman Sylvester Band and others. For anyone with a taste for the grape and a couple of extra bucks, Secret House Vineyards offers daily tastings from 11 am to 5 pm. Contact them at 935-3774 or go to www.secrethousewinery.com **ew**

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