



Just Off the Vine ...

The Ontario Wine Society's Newsletter

February 2004

Ontario Wine Society Events

❖ Toronto Chapter

• Taking the Mystery out of Wine & Food Pairing, Tuesday, February 24, 2004

While wine and food matching isn't rocket science, it's true that certain combinations can wreak havoc with your taste buds. There are ways, however, to mediate the marriage. Come and learn a simple but sure strategy that will take the mystery out of pairing and put the pleasure back in. Discover how you can drink any wine with any food and love the match.

Join Brock University's Dr. Linda Bramble, from the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) and learn while you sip and taste.

• Hillebrand Double Vertical Tasting, Tuesday, March 23, 2004

Until recent years, Ontario wineries had not been building libraries of past vintages in sufficient quantities to provide for special tasting events. Therefore, we are fortunate to have purchased enough of two of Hillebrand's top wines - Chardonnay "Lakeshore" and Trius Red from 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001. J.L. Groux will take us through the tasting explaining how conditions in each year affected the grapes and, thus, the wine's maturity.

J.L. Groux has been the senior winemaker at Hillebrand Estates for 15 years and was the OWS Winemaker of the Year in 1998. He now is responsible for over fifty different wines each year.

• Ontario Gold, Monday, April 5, 2004

This is our annual tasting of some of the gold medal winners of the Ontario Wine Awards.

• Annual Dinner, Wednesday, May 5, 2004

The Toronto Chapter's annual dinner this year will be held at the thoroughly-Canadian Tundra Restaurant in the Toronto Hilton Hotel. The featured winery for the evening will be Thomas & Vaughan Vintners.

❖ Niagara Chapter

• Matching Wine and Chocolate at Lailey, Thursday, February 19, 2004

Join us as Lyle Bleich, owner of Bernard Callebaut of Oakville, leads us through a melt-in-your-mouth "Matching Wine and Chocolate" seminar. Lyle will

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show us how to pair wine and chocolate, from light white wines, to full reds, and even Niagara's beloved icewine! We're sure there'll be no doubt that together, the hand-crafted wines of Lailey Vineyard and the premium chocolates of Bernard Callebaut, are a match made in heaven.

• **Cabernet Sauvignon Horizontal Tasting at Lakeview Cellars, Monday March 15, 2004**

How much would you pay for a good bottle of wine? How about a great bottle? We'll have bottles ranging from inexpensive to expensive, but before you find out which is which, you'll get to decide for yourself how much you'd pay!

• **Pinot Noir Horizontal Tasting at Niagara College Teaching Winery, Tuesday, April 27, 2004**

Wine writer Christopher Waters will lead the tasting.

• **"Terroir Series" - Terroirs of the World Through Riesling at Strewn, Monday, May 17, 2004**

Winemaker Joe Will will lead the tasting.

Note: Members may attend events in either chapter.

Recent OWS Tastings

❖ Toronto Chapter

CCOVI Library Tasting - Cabernet/Merlot Blends, November 24, 2003

By Dean Tudor

Continuing with its new Monday night profile (and conflicting with my own concert recital schedule), the Ontario Wine Society held one of its most informative tastings ever.

This is now the (presumed) annual CCOVI tasting. The Canadian Wine Library at Brock University offers the Ontario Wine Society a selection from its collection, based on a grape variety, alternating red and white wines. Last year it was Riesling. This year it was Cabernet/Merlot (which seems to be taking on a life of its own, almost as a new grape variety!). Chardonnay will probably be next year's wine offering.

The Canadian Wine Library is an incorporated permanent, revolving collection of some of Ontario's finest VQA wines judged ageable by the directors of the Library, to be used by the industry for promotional, research and educational purposes. The Library wines have been acquired and cellared by Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI).

For many years, the Ontario Wine Society has supported CCOVI by donating speaker fees, and making other donations. The Cabernet/Merlot theme

is essentially a "Bordeaux blend".

All of the wines we tasted were mixtures of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot, with varying percentages over the years. These are also known as "Meritage" wines (if the producer wishes to use that copyrighted term). This was a great opportunity to taste wines from the same year, three different wineries, and different blends. Each bottle cost about \$30 when initially released.

Claudius Fehr, responsible for Old World wines (and hence, Bordeaux) at LCBO Vintages, and a director of the Canadian Wine Library, conducted the tasting.



Claudius Fehr of Vintages and a Director of the Canadian Wine Library

Here are the basics:

- 1999 Cabernet, Cave Spring, 32% Cab. Sauv., 58% Cab. Franc, 10% Merlot: broad sweetness on the palate, lively fruit, but lacks concentration.
- 1999 Meritage, Lakeview, 66% Cab. Sauv., 16.5% Cab. Franc, 16.5% Merlot: good finishing acid, best with food, heavy wine.
- 1999 Cabernet Merlot, Henry of Pelham, 46% Cab. Sauv., 6% Cab. Franc, 48% Merlot: succulent fruit, a big wine. My number three pick.
- 1998 Cabernet Merlot, Cave Spring, 20% Cab. Sauv., 50% Cab. Franc, 30% Merlot: flat, lots of flavours, initially olives and green veggies on the nose.
- 1998 Cabernet Merlot, Lakeview, 75% Cab. Sauv., 5% Cab. Franc, 20% Merlot: excellent body but hot alcohol, dense and chunky.
- 1998 Cabernet Merlot, Henry of Pelham, 34% Cab.Sauv., 17% Cab. Franc, 49% Merlot: good integration of wood and fruit, sweet and light on the palate. My second best wine of the evening.
- 1995 Cabernet Merlot, Cave Spring, 50% Cab. Sauv., 30% Cab.



Franc, 20% Merlot: some bottle variation throughout the room. My sample tasted more like a 1985 Medoc (i.e., ten years older than the label says). Anise in the nose, some raisins. Was the whole lot like this?

- 1995 Cabernet Merlot, Lakeview, 60% Cab. Sauv., 25% Cab. Franc, 15% Merlot: unfiltered, collapsing in the glass, some drying out.
- 1995 Cabernet Merlot, Henry of Pelham, 37.7% Cab. Sauv., 12.5% Cab. Franc, 49.8% Merlot: balanced fruit-acid-wood, some mocha, excellent mouthfeel, depth and development. My pick for best wine of the night.

My favourite wines had a higher proportion of Merlot. My least favourite wines had a higher proportion of Cabernet Franc (and this includes the 1995 Lakeview, with 25%). We were not told the ratios of the blends until after the tasting. Is there a longevity problem with Cabernet Franc in Ontario? This makes me want to re-taste my own older Ontario Cab. Franc bottles. I cannot wait for a CCOVI Cabernet Franc tasting, just as a check.

Customer satisfaction this evening was all over the board, with support for each wine, although when you play the "Merlot card", you get a better response.

Food came out after the formal tasting, and we had a chance to compare and contrast styles with a variety of dishes, such as 4-year old cheddar cheese, smoked duck with caramelized onion on baguette, lamb pie with root vegetables, tortilla wrap with grilled vegetables and goat cheese, and sesame chicken.

Dean Tudor, Wine Writer and Professor Emeritus of Journalism, Ryerson, University, Toronto, www.ryerson.ca/~dtudor

❖Niagara Chapter

Port-Styled Wines and Artisanal Cheeses, Stoney Ridge Winery, December 8, 2003

By Yvonne Halliday

I think one of our most enjoyable tastings of the year!

What a great start. Instead of a glass of wine during the reception, members enjoyed a special white Port cocktail. Made with white Port, tonic and lemon, it was the perfect aperitif. We then made our way upstairs, to the library for the tasting.

It was such a relaxed tone that filled the conversation that evening. Guest speaker Jim Warren led the tasting of Niagara Region Port-styled wines. He started with an educational lecture on the history and facts about Port that was speckled with humour and light-heartedness, as a "possessed light bulb" provided the nights entertainment overhead.

It was then followed by a casual and candid discussion about Niagara Port-styled products and the regulations surrounding the names used. We were then able to taste what Niagara had to offer.

Of course the tasting was blind as usual; to keep opinions as honest as possible. One authentic Port was hidden in the mix of the Niagara port-styled wines to see if anyone could pick it out. Surprisingly, most guests were not able to! And the selection of favourite Port-styled wine was fairly broad. The real Port actually tied for second place!

We each picked our favourite and tallied the results. Here are the top three Port-styled wines that our members rated:

- Henry of Pelham, 1998 Fronto - \$24.95, 750ml, - 7 votes
- Lakeview Cellars, 2000 Vintage Starboard - \$19.95, 500ml, - 3 votes
- Quinta do Castelinho, 1996 Port, \$19.50, 750ml, - 3 votes

Of course, to compliment the Port-styled wines, we had some fantastic cheeses! Each of them was brought in from a fromagerie in Quebec and was a mouth-watering sensation. They matched wonderfully and, believe it or not, not one of them was Stilton!

A special thank you goes to Matt Loney and the Stoney Ridge staff for all their help; to Jim Warren for leading the tasting; and to Robert Trout for planning the meeting and preparing the delicious snacks.

A Vertical Tasting of Baco Noir, Henry of Pelham, January 20, 2004

By Yvonne Halliday

Our host Daniel Speck, middle brother of the Speck family, told us the story of how the Baco Noir grape was originally grown at Henry of Pelham. When the Speck boys first thought about opening a winery, they asked their advisor which grapes to plant. That person said "Riesling". The boys then asked, "OK, but what about a red?" Without much confidence in wine-calibre grapes surviving in the Niagara Region, the person replied "Riesling!" The boys persisted and asked, "If you HAD to plant a red, what would you plant?" So the person replied. "Well, probably Baco Noir..." and the rest is history!

Baco Noir has been a success for Henry of Pelham right from the start and now they are one of the region's leading names for that variety. Henry of Pelham went to their library for this tasting, pulling bottles from 02, 00, 99, 98, 97, and 95. Only the 2002 is currently available for sale. A few of us admitted to being die-hard Henry of Pelham Baco Noir fans and were very excited to have the opportunity to taste these rare vintages.

It was interesting to note that, when asked for a show of hands, the majority of people seemed to prefer their Baco aged about 3 to 5 years. Daniel explained that it had a lot to do with the acidity and how very young

Bacos can tend to be quite harsh, yet older ones can be quite smooth and mellow. However, Bacos with just a few years of aging have a nice balance of tannins that helps bring out all of the flavours and characteristics of this variety.



Left to right, Bert Richards, Sue Couch, Daniel Speck of Henry of Pelham, and Fred Couch.

As an added bonus, Daniel poured a barrel sample of a 2002 Reserve Baco that was fantastic! It drank so well for a young Baco straight out of the barrel. I'm sure a few of us will be back to buy that one!

A special thank you goes to Daniel Speck and the Henry of Pelham staff for all their help; to Wendy Nasmith for planning the tasting; and to Robert Trout for preparing the delicious snacks.

Ontario Winery Events

❖ Angels Gate

Need To Warm Up This Winter?

Saturday, February 14, 7:00pm

Join us for an exciting evening of food, wine and laughter. Celebrity Chef Mark Walpole joins us from the SkyDome to host a 7 course winemaker's dinner!

Each of our courses has been specially paired with one of our premium wines. Our winemaker, Natalie Spytzkowsky, will introduce each course through out the evening.

\$115 per person. Tickets are limited. For details call 1 877 ANG GATE.

❖ Cave Spring

By the hearth

February 7, 14, 21 & 28, 11:00am and 2:00pm

Winter is a time when our attention turns inward to the comforts of home. Taste through an array of hearty fireside wines that will warm the heart and comfort the soul.

\$8 per person. Reservations Required. Call 905 562 3581, Ext. 302.

❖ Colio

4th Annual Festival of Ice

Saturday, February 7, 11:00am to 3:00pm

Icewine Festival

Free Admission.

❖ EastDell

For The Food Of Love

February 12 to 14. Seatings from 5:00pm to 9:00pm

Love is in the air and on the menu with a specially designed Valentine's dinner.

\$55 per person.

❖ Harbour Estates

Romance Her in February!

Weekends in February

February is the month of romance and they say variety is the spice of life! Show the one you love something a little out of the ordinary this year.

Begin your romantic interlude in the cellars of Harbour Estates Winery, by candle light, with a rose, pairing delectable cheeses with fine wines. Continue the adventure with hot mulled wine and an intimate horse and sleigh tour of the estate. After the ride, salute your love with a Harbour Estates icewine shooter...the shot glass will melt in your mouth...it's chocolate.

Next, a special invitation from the proprietors of Ninavik Native Arts, Niagara's largest collection of native stone sculpture. You'll enjoy a private tour of the gallery's collection of Inuit and Iroquois art. The gallery owners, Scott and Carla Daly, will share their favourite carvings and the stories and legends that inspire these incredible works.

The quaint shops of the Jordan Village will be open for you to stroll through at your leisure.

The finale to your day is a romantic dinner prepared especially for you by chef Ronnie Coppens. A sumptuous four course meal, champagne toast, and bottle of wine in the intimate candlelit setting of the Copper Creek dining room.

\$150 plus tax. Reservations are required. To book

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your romantic weekend call Harbour Estates at 905 562 6279 or email romance@hewwine.com.

Want to make it an overnight affair? We have special romance rates from local B&B's and hotels. Reservations required.

If you're staying overnight and want to take the worry out of drinking and driving, call us about chauffeured service. We'll pick you up at your room, transport you to the winery, to Jordan Village and Copper Creek and then back to your room in the evening for \$35 inclusive. Reservations required.

❖ Hillebrand

Hearty Reds

Weekends in February, every hour on the half hour from 10:30am to 6:30 pm

It is important to take care of your heart and February, being the month of romance, reminds people of this. Join Hillebrand Estates for a "Hearty Reds" essence tasting where the mysteries of red wine are unveiled.

\$5 per guest and reservations are required. Join the WineCountry Vintners Shuttle and visit Hillebrand Estates, Peller Estates and the WineCountry Vintners Store. For \$10, tickets include complimentary tours at each property, Icewine chocolates and a donation to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The Shuttle runs weekends in February between 11:00am and 5:00pm. Shuttle schedules are available by calling 800 582 8412

❖ Inniskillin

Heart to Heart

February 7, 14, 21 & 28, 11:00am to 4:30pm.

Inniskillin is proud to present a tasting of rich, hearty red wines together with our featured older vintages. Savour our current Cabernet Franc Reserve and Meritage Reserve vintages and experience an older vintage wine carefully selected from our wine library.

\$4 per person. Call 905 468 9554 Ext. 3.

❖ Konzelmann

Days of Wine and Roses

Weekends in February

We will be offering dark chocolate with a rotation of newly released dessert wines for a nominal fee during the month of February.

Winemaker's Dinner

Friday, February 13, 7:00pm - Champagne Reception, 7:30pm to 10:00pm - Dinner

Experience winter in wine country with winemaker Herbert Konzelmann. Enjoy an exquisite five-course dinner and revel in the Chef's creations paired with

Konzelmann Winemaster Collection Wines.

\$125 per person. Reservations required 905 935 2866. Limited seating.

❖ Lailey

The Days of Wine and Roses

Weekends in February

We will be offering trans-Atlantic companions - 2002 Cabernet-Merlot and Parmigiano Reggiano \$5 per person.

Nuts About Wine with Dr. WineKnow

Saturday, February 28, 12:00pm

Join renowned wine writer, author, TV host, international wine judge, wine educator, lecturer, appraiser and consultant Dr. WineKnow as he leads a tasting of nuts and wine.

Together we will explore the rarely travelled territory of pairing wine with nuts.

Lunch will follow and will include a series of wines to compliment each dish.

To find out more about Dr. WineKnow visit www.drwineknow.com.

\$45 per person plus tax. Reservations required. Call 905 468 0503.

❖ Maleta

Be My Valentine

February 14, 15

For that sweet tooth, visit us and enjoy our luscious reds paired with a gourmet icewine dessert.

Call 905 685 8486 or drop into 450 Queenston Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, just 3 minutes from the QEW Niagara-on-the-Lake exit.

❖ Peller

The Days of Wine and Roses

Weekends in February

Board the Wine Country Vintners Shuttle and visit Peller Estates, Hillebrand Estates and the WineCountry Vintners store. Tickets are \$10 per guest and available upon boarding at any of these Niagara-on-the-Lake locations. This includes complimentary tours at each property, Icewine chocolates and a donation to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The shuttle runs between 11:00am and 5:00pm

Art of Wine and Food Seminar

Weekends in February, 11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm and 5:00pm

Guests are invited to visit the winery for this aphrodisiac inspired event. A wine consultant will guide guests through a pairing of wine and food,



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featuring foods known throughout history to promote romance.

\$5 per guest. Reservations are required.

❖ Stoney Ridge

Refuge from the Cold

February 7, 8, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Come into Stoney Ridge and find refuge with our warm Mulled Cranberry Cider. Enjoy a mug of our secret blend; mulling herbs and spices simmered together with our Award-Winning Cranberry Wine. One Sip and you will forget it is February.

\$2 per sample.

Valentine's Day Event

February 14, 15, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Join us for a wonderful pairing of freshly baked sponge cake lathered in a rich chocolate fondue matched with our Award Winning 2002 Reserve Cabernet Franc.

\$3 per person.

Crantini Mania!

February 21, 22, 12:00pm to 4:00pm

Only at Stoney Ridge will you enjoy this fabulous Martini drink made from our own cranberry wine, served in a flavoured sugar rimmed glass and garnished with a sugar coated cranberry. Bring the recipe home and surprise all your guest with this wonderful exotic drink.

\$2 per sample.

Romantic Winter Warm Up

February 28, 29, 12:00pm to 4:00pm.

Enjoy a premium four cheese fondue with a variety of freshly cut breads perfectly matched with our 2002 Reserve Chardonnay.

\$3 per sample.

Theatre Aquarius

February and March

For two months Theatre Aquarius will make Stoney Ridge the exclusive wine served at all bars. A great way to enjoy intermission!

❖ Strewn

Chocolate and Wine: A Heavenly Match

February 7, 8, 11:00am

There's nothing more romantic than chocolate, but what wine do you match with it? Our hour-long seminar looks at various styles of chocolate and discusses why each is a perfect partner for one or more Strewn wines. You'll sip, sample and pick your favourite combination!

\$15 per person. Don't delay. This seminar fills up

quickly. Call 905 468 1229 Ext. 29 to reserve your spot.

❖ Vineland

Valentines VQA Night at Fairview Mall LCBO, St. Catharines

Thursday, February 12, 4:00pm to 8:00pm

Join us for this FREE tasting event as we are the featured winery for Ontario VQA Night at the Fairview Mall LCBO store in St. Catharines. Our acclaimed chefs will prepare a gourmet tasting item to match with our LCBO General List Cabernet Franc and Vintages release Cabernet Sauvignon.

Valentines Day Pairing Menu

February 13,14

Join us for a romantic gourmet 3-course tasting menu with wines designed for wine lovers.

\$65 per person plus wine, taxes and gratuities. For reservations or menu information, call Dom Miller at 905 562 7088 Ext. 13. Wine Club Members pricing includes flights of wine with each course.

Valentines Day Sweet Tastings

February 14, 15, 10:00am to 5:00pm

Join us in our Wine Boutique this Valentines Day weekend as we offer Bolero chocolates paired with our sparkling Riesling Méthode Cuve Close and sweets prepared by our innovative Pastry Chef, David Berggren.

Great Cooks Food Demonstration

Tuesday, February 10, The Bay, Queen St., Lower Level, Toronto

Join our renowned 4-Diamond AAA/CAA chefs as they prepare a 4-course pairing menu of seasonal Niagara delights to warm your heart this winter.

\$90 per person. For tickets or information, call Esther at Great Cooks at 416 86 4727 or visit their website at www.greatcooks.ca

Ontario Restaurant Events

❖ Home

Lailey and Malivoire Winemakers' Dinner

Sunday, February 8, 6:00pm

Featuring:

- Venison Paté and Pear Chutney with Lailey Vineyard 2001 Riesling
- Tempura Grouper on Arugula with Soya Ginger Vinaigrette with Malivoire 2002 Chardonnay
- Portabello Stuffed with Spinach and Cambozola with Lailey Vineyard 2002 Pinot Noir
- Roast Rack of Lamb with Braised Peppers with Lailey



- Vineyard 2002 Cabernet-Merlot
- Beef Tenderloin with Wild Mushroom Ragout with Malivoire 2002 Old Vines Foch
 - Fresh Fruit and Sorbet with Malivoire 2001 Riesling Icewine

For details and reservations call 519 438 5122.

Home Restaurant, 119 King St., London

❖ The Old Prune

Lailey Winemaker's Dinner

Tuesday, February 10, 6:30pm

This is the next Ontario Celebrity Chefs Series in Stratford. Celebrity chef Bryan Steele is on his own turf at The Old Prune restaurant preparing a compelling menu to be served with Lailey Vineyard wines.

Call the Stratford Chef's School for more information about the Ontario Celebrity Chefs Series 519 271 1414 or visit www.stratfordchef.on.ca.

The Old Prune, 151 Albert St., Stratford.

❖ Arden Park Hotel

Lailey Winemaker's Dinner

Saturday, February 21

Featuring:

- Quenelles of shrimp mousse a la Nage and 2001 Riesling
 - Esculent greens with Canadian blue cheese, fresh figs and walnut vinaigrette and 2002 Zweigelt
 - Peppered beef fillet with braised fennel, potato latke and asparagus and 2002 Cabernet-Merlot
- OR
- Grilled halibut with fish caviar butter sauce, asparagus and chive mashed potatoes and 2002 Sauvignon Blanc
 - Chocolate and tiramisu parfait with marinated strawberries and 2002 Vidal Icewine

\$59.95 per person. For details and reservations: Arden Park Hotel at 519 275 2936 / 877 788 8818

❖ Bb33

Winterlicious

January 30 to February 12

Our winery of the month for February, and Winterlicious, is Stoney Ridge. \$10 for a 3-course lunch, \$20 for a 3-course dinner, in the brasserie only.

Bb33, 33 Gerrard St. W., Toronto

❖ St. Georges Golf & Country Club

Feature Winery - Vineland

Monday, February 23

Vineland is the featured winery for this pairing menu dinner to showcase our wines in this unique and beautiful location. Menu designed by Executive Chef, Mark Picone, C.C.C. and our chefs will be hosted at St. Georges to prepare the dinner.

For tickets or information, contact St. Georges at 416 231 3393 or visit their website at www.stgeorges.org Seating is limited to 50 guest for this exclusive event. So, register soon.

❖ Wigamog Inn

February & March Feature Winery - Malivoire

Wigamog Inn Resort is proud to continue its tradition of supporting our truly exceptional Ontario Wineries. During the months of February and March Wigamog will be featuring the wines of Malivoire. The Globe and Mail recently reviewed a number of Malivoire wines and reported that "It's hard to name a Canadian winemaker producing more consistently elegant wines than Ann Sperling of Malivoire". Martin Malivoire's gravity concept for this winery is frequently touted as having 'raised the quality bar in Ontario'.

The highlight of this two month partnership will be a winemaker's dinner on March 27 pairing Malivoire's world class wines with Wigamog Inn Resort's specially created four course country gourmet dinner. This event will be jointly hosted by Martin Malivoire and Wigamog Inn Resort's Executive Chef James Jennings.

Wigamog Inn Resort is a four season, full service recreational resort and country inn overlooking Lake Kashagawigamog and surrounded by the rolling hills of the Haliburton Highlands. We pride ourselves in providing an intimate atmosphere, charming accommodation and superb dining in beautiful surroundings.

For more details or reservations please contact the Wigamog Inn Resort at 1 800 661 2010 or e-mail at www.wigamoginn.com Feel free to visit the Wigamog Inn Resort at www.wigamoginn.com.

Other Ontario Wine Events

❖ Days of Wine and Roses

Weekends in February

Celebrate the beauty of winter and the romance of Valentine's Day in wonderful wine country. Experience a wide variety of special themed tastings, chocolate pairings, and special events held at the fourteen wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Days of Wine & Roses Gala Event, 'Bouquets', will be held this year at Chateau des Charmes Winery, February 21, \$50 per person, more details and ticket purchases are available at www.niagaraonthelake.com.

Ontario Wine Industry News

Hudak Introduces Legislation to Open Ontario VQA Wine Stores - Toronto, November 27, 2003

In the Ontario legislature today, Erie-Lincoln MPP Tim Hudak introduced legislation to create new Ontario Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) Wine stores.

"I am proud to stand behind and support the Ontario grape and wine industry," said Hudak. "This legislation would allow for the creation of new VQA stores in commercial and tourism hotspots, such as our casinos or downtown Toronto and Ottawa."

If passed, this legislation will give Cabinet the authority to determine the number, location and ownership of the Ontario VQA wine stores. It will also provide greater exposure of award winning Ontario VQA Wines to Ontario consumers and tourists. Current law limits Cabinet to issuing licences to one retail store and new wineries to one licence, prohibiting them from selling VQA wines other than their own.

"The Grape Growers of Ontario encourage the development of VQA only wine stores in Ontario is one of a series of initiatives the grape growers have been working on," said Ray Duc, Chair of the Board for Grape Growers of Ontario. "VQA only wine stores will focus on Ontario wines made from 100% Ontario grown grapes."

Hudak originally introduced similar legislation as Consumer Minister, in the Spring 2003 Rural Red Tape Bill. Unfortunately, due to the timing of the election this legislation died on the order papers.

❖ Icewine Research

Brock University, St. Catharines, January 14, 2004

Four Taiwanese wine writers recently toured the Niagara area to learn about genuine Canadian Icewines. Bogus bottles of Icewine, passed off as the real thing, is of serious concern to the Canadian wine industry.

A senior team of researchers at Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute is conducting a four-year, \$1-million study designed to ultimately ensure the authenticity of Canadian icewines.

The purpose of the project is to identify key compounds specific to genuine Icewines. By

developing a diagnostic test to distinguish genuine Canadian Icewines from faux counterparts, the University will contribute to the protection of a major Canadian export and ensure that authentic icewines meet stringent European import regulations and requirements. The project will also enumerate the impacts of both crop level and yeast strain on the production of unique aroma compounds specific to icewines.

The researchers bring together scientific expertise in the fields of viticulture, sensory perception, biotechnology and analytical chemistry. They contend that grapes destined for icewine production undergo a series of freeze/thaw cycles during the autumn and early winter months. While hanging on the vine, the grapes undergo physico-chemical changes that give Niagara icewines specific odour-active substances and hence a unique aroma and taste.

❖ New Logo & Record Member Levels for OWS

As you may have noticed at the top of the pages of this newsletter, we have a new logo. It was designed by John Raithby, a graphics artist, and colleague of Bruce Barber, President of the Toronto Chapter.

Also, total individual membership in the Society in January 2004 passed the 300 mark. There is continuing strong interest in the Society which is currently perceived as "the" wine tasting society to join. With the new Niagara Chapter and a Muskoka/Haliburton Chapter in the works, we are on a roll!

New Member Drive

This is a reminder to all members, and especially those who have joined in the last year or so, that we still have this program in effect. Here's how it works. Every new member, whether referred or not, will be entitled to one free tasting event.

An existing member will be entitled to one free tasting event for every two new members that they refer and who become members.

So, here's an opportunity for you to help us promote the Society. Make sure that the people you refer note your name on the form when they submit their application.

Potential members can apply on-line at www.ontariowinesociety.com. Applications can also be picked up at Ontario wineries and some Ontario restaurants and business. See our web site for a list. Applications are also available at major Ontario food and wine events.