

The Grape Communicator

A Newsletter for the Illinois Grape & Wine Industry

Volume 1, Number 1

March/April 2005

Welcome to the first issue of *The Grape Communicator*. This Illinois grape industry newsletter is meant to truly be what its title implies, a means of communication between members of Illinois' grape and wine industry. Therefore, any number of people could contribute news articles, which means that readers will learn about the Illinois grape industry from numerous perspectives. While it was intended that this newsletter fill a void from the loss of Vignoble Illinois, the newsletter Imed Dami authored in the past, it may not always present the same kinds of stories. Then again, it may often cover the same industry issues, because many of those issues are still current, such as the question of how will the industry support its growth? Or, will Multi-colored Asian Lady Beetles be a challenge throughout the state this year? Or, how much has the industry grown in this new century? Or, you get it. There are a lot of issues to talk about in this industry. Hopefully, the Grape Communicator will facilitate that conversation.

The newsletter will be published in electronic format. This is the 21st century

anyway. It will be posted on the IGGVA website, www.illinoiswine.com. The IGGVA Executive Secretary, Bill McCartney, has agreed to send an email message to grape industry members with notification of a new issue and a link so you can just click on the link and bring up the web-page with the newsletter. He will also mail it to IGGVA members who do not have email addresses and who cannot access it through the web. Hopefully, before long, everyone in Illinois' grape and wine industry will be reading *The Grape Communicator*.



2005 Budget Breakdown

Governor Rod Blagojevich and the Illinois General Assembly placed \$550,000 in this year's budget for support and promotion of the Illinois Grape & Wine Industry. This money was not given to the Illinois Grape Growers & Vintners Association. The Association was asked by the Governor and General Assembly and Departments of Agriculture & Commerce to provide suggestions in the form of scopes of work as to how this money should be used.

The funds were appropriated from the Agriculture Premium Fund and General Revenue Fund. From the Agriculture Premium Funds \$150,000 was placed in the Illinois Department of Agriculture Budget to hire or contract with an enologist and a viticulturalist. This money had to be used for salaries and expenses associated with these positions. From the General Revenue Fund \$250,000 was placed in the Illinois Department of Agriculture Budget for promotion and support of the grape and wine industry. Also, from the General Revenue Fund \$150,000 was placed in the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity's Tourism budget for Public Relations and Marketing.

A BIG THANK YOU

The IGGVA Board of Directors wish to thank Julie Curry, Kristin Richards, Agriculture Director Chuck Hartke, Tom

Jennings, Gib Frier, Kim Janssen, Jan Kostner and Cindi Fleischli for their assistance, patience and support during the process of developing the scopes of work for the \$550,000. Most of all a big thank you to the Governor for recognizing the economic impact of the grape and wine industry and through his efforts and the efforts of the General Assembly appropriating the money to promote and support the grape and wine industry.

Following is a break down of how the \$550,000 will be spent and the scopes of work for each program.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture's \$150,000 Agriculture Premium Funds

Funds will be divided between the enology and viticulture programs. Dr. Richard Carey will work with wineries in the northern half of the state and Phil Grazyck will have responsibilities for the wineries in the southern half of the state. Their scope of work includes: Winery Reflectoquant Review Meetings – January in the north and February in the south; three seminars on winery sanitation basics – March; Three seminars on Achieving wine structure and mouthfeel – April; Central Region Seminar – May and three seminars on laboratory support for harvest parameters – June. These people will be available for individual consultation. Dr. Carey can be contacted at: Vitis

(2005 Budget Breakdown cont.)

Research, Inc., P.O. Box 5186,
Lancaster, PA 17606; Phone: (717) 560-
1650; e-mail: info@vitisresearch.com.
Phil Grazyck can be contacted at: 2104
Fairhaven Drive, Jennings, MO 63136;
phone: (314) 869-8242; Cell: (636) 448-
1828; e-mail: pwinemaker@aol.com.

The viticulture program will be divided
into three regions. Bill Shoemaker will
be the contact person in the northern
region. Bill can be contacted at:
University of Illinois St. Charles
Horticulture Research Center, 535
Randall Road, St. Charles, IL 60174;
phone: (630) 584-7254; e-mail:
wshoemak@inil.com.

Denise Cimmarrusti will be providing
technical assistance at the St Charles
Horticulture Research Center.
dcimmarr@aol.com

Elizabeth Wahle, University of Illinois
Extension Center Edwardsville, Illinois
will be the contact for viticulture
consultation and information regarding
grape growing in the central region of
the State. Elizabeth can be contacted at:
200 University Park Drive, Ste. 280,
Edwardsville, IL 62025-3649; phone:
(618) 692-9434; e-mail:
wahle@uiuc.edu

For the southern region Alan Dillard will
be the contact person. Alan can be
contacted at: 1250 State Route 127,
Jonesboro, IL 62952; phone: (618) 534-
9049; e-mail: adillard@midwest.net. In
addition to one on one consultation a
series of workshops will be held in each

region between February and June 2005.
As the workshops are developed due and
timely notice will be sent to individuals
as well as published in the news media.
Please contact these people with
questions regarding vineyard
management.

**The Illinois Department of
Agriculture \$250,000 General
Revenue Funds will be used for the
following activities:**

Cultivar Test Sites Support

There are two existing test sites that
funding will be used to support the
ongoing programs. These are located at
Southern Illinois University at
Carbondale, Illinois and St. Charles
Horticulture Research Center at St.
Charles, Illinois. At Carbondale
technical leadership will be provided by
Dr. Brad Taylor, with a team of
researchers, assistants, and graduate
students.

For more information, contact:
Dr. Brad Taylor:
SIU-Plant, Soil & Gen. Ag.
Mailcode 4415
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 453-2496

Funds for the St. Charles site will be
used to support the position of Vineyard
Technician. Funding will also provide
for materials and supplies for several
grape research projects.

(2005 Budget Breakdown cont.)

Funds will be used to establish a Cultivar Test Site on the University of Illinois owned Orr Agriculture Research & Demonstration Center in Pike County, Illinois. The establishment of this site will provide test sites in the three main regions of Illinois – north, central and south. Elizabeth Wahle will be providing the leadership for this project.

Vineyard Survey

The University of Illinois will conduct a vineyard survey to determine the acres of the various grapes, yields, sales information, etc.

Promotional Activities

The IGGVA will provide oversight to the following activities.

- *Update & Print a Winery Guide*
- *Update & Print a Winery Rack Card*
- *Du Quoin State Fair*
- *Marketing Workshops for Wineries*
- *Development of Wine Trails & Branding*
- *Wine Festivals & Food Expo*
- *Enology & Viticulture Workshops*
- *Galena Vineyard Demonstration Site*
- *Vineyard Worker Training Program*

The Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity \$150,000 General Revenue Funds will be used for the following activities:

- *Edelman Worldwide*
- *IGGVA Web Site Update & Maintenance*



Vine Growth Stage in Northern Illinois Vineyard

As of April 9, 2005, all dormant pruning of the vineyards at the St. Charles Horticulture Research Center has been completed and bud break is currently underway on some of the earlier maturing varieties.

Image shown below represents bud development stage as of April 13.



Rubiana (GR-7), at budbreak.

IGGVA Conference Overview

On the weekend of February 25-27 individuals gathered at the Pere Marquette Hotel in Peoria, Illinois to attend the 2005 Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Associations annual conference.

The day of the conference began with two pre-conference workshops, which were a part of "Opportunity Returns", Governor Rod Blagojevich's comprehensive plan for restoring economic opportunity to Illinois. These workshops were promoted in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and they offered a fabulous wealth of information on their respective topics. The two workshops were held concurrently, and while one focused on viticulture, the other held enology participants at bay.

Dr. Bruce Bordelon, of Purdue University presented the viticulture workshop, "Pest Management". This very comprehensive session included the topics of fungicides, grape insects and insecticides, and herbicides for grape production. It was primarily aimed at vineyard owners & managers but anyone in attendance would have found the workshop to be very useful and informative. Many in attendance used the workshop as a stepping stone as a refresher course on pest related concerns before taking the Pest Management Applicators Certification Test sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Dan Connelly, Department of Agriculture Pest Management

instructor was on hand to discuss and administer the test after the workshop.

In the concurrent session, Ellen Harkness-Butz, Purdue University Enologist, presented a informative workshop in enology entitled "Mastering Microbes & Wine Spoilage". Her workshop provided an overview on the impact of the "good" and "bad" bugs on wine quality and a discussion of user friendly methods for microbial evaluations of wine, equipment and facilities.

Michelle Norgren, V.E.S.T.A. Project Co-Ordinator of Southwestern Missouri State University, presented the Viticulture and Enology Science & Technology Alliance program, and showcased the interactive and internet winemaking courses that are now being offered through V.E.S.T.A. Michelle's focus during her presentation was to provide attendees the opportunity to learn "Where and How" these beneficial courses can fit into the Illinois grape and wine industry.

After the mornings full agenda, the afternoon was filled with several marketing sessions. The first session, presented by SUSU Block-Edelman Worldwide gave the presentation "Marketing on A Tight Budget". A short break followed in which conference attendees had the opportunity to mingle and chat with industry vendors. All the vendors had very appealing displays of their offerings and many attendees took

(IGGVA Conference Overview cont.)

the opportunity to meet these vendors and shop. Immediately after the break, Barbara Adams, Executive Director of the Seneca Lakes Winery Association gave her presentation, “The Good & Bad Experiences of a Successful Wine Trail”. This presentation was immediately followed by Dr. Keith Streigler, Director of Vitis Research at Southwest Missouri State University, who presented his topic “Contract Grape Marketing”. After the afternoon sessions ended, the evening held a fantastic opportunity to taste wines from some of Illinois Wineries as they were on hand to pour and discuss the wines they had brought for the fabulous tasting event.

Saturdays agenda was very well rounded, featuring a morning packed full of viticulture sessions, followed by an afternoon of enology sessions. There was something for everyone. The viticulture sessions began with Dr. Keith Streigler speaking on vineyard mechanization, followed by Greg Berg & Chris Schloesser of OXBO Corporation. Their presentation was focused on “Equipment, Costs, and Operations” in the vineyard using mechanization. The morning ended with the grape Growers Panel which was comprised of Illinois Grape Growers Robert Hall (Galena), Mike Boegler (Ava), Matt Schulte (Ursa) and Gordon Schnepfer (Olney) and moderated by Jim Nickell.

Afternoon Enology sessions found Linda Jones of the Michigan Grape and Wine Council presenting a talk on ways to “Strengthen Your Business through

Branding”. Catherine Peyrot des Gachons, Ph.D, gave participants the chance to hear her presentation on “Phenolic and Aroma Compounds”. Then, after a short break, Catherine teamed up with Dr. Richard Carey, Ph.D, of Vitis Research, Inc to present a hands on blending session in which participants had the opportunity to blend wines to create a personalized style of their own brand. Rounding out the rest of the afternoon was speaker Hennie Van Vuuren of Lesaffre Yeast Corporation who presented the “Benefits of the First Genetically Modified Yeast Strain in the Wine Industry”. Some participants left the sessions wanting to immediately acquire such a unique yeast for their winemaking endeavors. The afternoon ended in discussion through a winemakers panel moderated by Phil Graczyck.

After a full day of informative sessions, the crowd gathered in the Marquette Room ready to kick back and relax with some social time and a great meal. An entertainer was on hand to liven up the crowd with humor and laughter as the dinner banquet got underway. The banquet which consisted of five spectacular courses was perfectly paired with outstanding Illinois wine. Winemakers, Chris Lawlor and Paul Renzaglia did a fantastic job giving the highlights of their showcased wines. A short award ceremony followed, to show recognition to key members of the IGGVA for the service over the past year. As the banquet progressed into the evening, an auction ensued and many great items found new homes.

(IGGVA Conference Overview cont.)

Business was on the agenda for Sunday morning as members met to discuss past and future goals. Regional elections were held during this time and regional representatives were elected.

In Summary.....one great weekend!



NORTHERN ILLINOIS GRAPE PEST MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

A series of pest management workshops will be held in northern Illinois for commercial grape producers. These will be held in El Paso, St Charles and Elizabeth, IL and will be led by Bill Shoemaker, Sr. Research Specialist - Food Crops, of the University of Illinois Dept of NRES. Each will begin at 10:00 am and will cover the major pest problems faced by commercial grape growers, including insects, diseases, weeds and wildlife. These challenges to grape production have the potential to make the difference between profit and loss, or between high or low quality fruit. The workshop will discuss the fundamentals associated with each class of pest, giving the grower a basic

understanding of the nature of the pest and it's interactions with the vineyard. It will also emphasize the principles of integrated pest management, or IPM, in developing pest management strategies. The goal is to give commercial grape growers versatile tools for managing pest challenges in grapes.

Grape growers or anyone interested in commercial grape production is welcome to attend. They can choose to attend any of these scheduled workshops. The workshop in El Paso will be held at the Furrow Family Winery on 4/26. The workshop in Elizabeth will be held at the Massbach Ridge Winery on April 30. Directions to these two workshops can be found by going to the website for the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Association at www.illinoiswine.com and clicking on the links to their wineries. The other workshop will be held at the St Charles Horticulture Research Center in St Charles, IL on 4/27. The Research Center is 5.5 miles east of IL Rt. 47 or 1 mile west of Randall Road on IL Rt. 38. At the corner of IL Rt. 38 and Peck Road, turn north. The Research Center is the first driveway on the left. No pre-registration is necessary. More information is available by contacting Bill Shoemaker at 630/584-7254 or wshoemak@inil.com.

Viticulture Profile In Northern Illinois



Bill Shoemaker, University of Illinois

Among the resources the IGGVA has developed through the support of the state of Illinois is a team of viticulturists to conduct grape research and present workshops for grape growers throughout the state. As issues of the Grape Communicator are released, profiles of each will be published to give the Illinois grape community a better understanding of who is doing the work, what their backgrounds are, and what they plan to do. The first profile is of Bill Shoemaker.

Bill serves as a Sr Research Specialist , Food Crops, for the University of Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, which conducts the University's horticulture program. Bill began working in 1982 with an emphasis on vegetable crops at the Illinois River Valley Sand Field in Mason County. There he worked on plasticulture for melons and worked with

colleagues on projects related to processing vegetables. He also learned about sand burs, lizards and Illinois cacti.

He then moved to St Charles to help set up the St Charles Horticulture Research Center, which was a brand new station on the western edge of the Chicago metropolitan area. Through the years his program expanded into raspberries. In 1998 he helped Dr. Bob Skirvin establish a cold-hardy grape trial at St Charles. Since then, his work in grapes has expanded to studies in canopy management and breeding. He is also expanding the trials to include new cold-hardy experimental lines from other grape breeders.

Outreach programs have always been a part of his program. In 2005, Bill intends to conduct grape-grower workshops across northern Illinois, including the topics of dormant vine pruning and training, grape integrated pest management and canopy management. With the support of the IGGVA, he will be able to spend more time visiting growers in northern Illinois. To learn more about the workshops, visit www.illinoiswine.com . To learn more about Bill, visit www.nres.uiuc.edu/faculty/directory/shoemaker_wh/html . He can be contacted at 630/584-7254 or wshoemak@inil.com

Viticulture Profile In Southern Illinois



Dr. Brad Taylor, Southern Illinois University

Brad Taylor is an associate professor, horticulturist and fruit crop specialist in the Department of Plant, Soil and Agricultural Systems at Southern Illinois University. His research interests are focused on food crops, particularly vine and tree fruit with experience and expertise in cultural methods to maximize efficiency of production and input use. He also teaches Successful fruit growing, Vine and small fruit culture and From the vine to its wine. He has also served as an academic advisor and the Apple Cider Contest Convener/Coordinator for the Illinois State Horticulture Society and was an original member of the Illinois Grape and Wine Resources Council.

Taylor enjoys experiencing the trials and tribulations – and successes of growing fruit crops and the sharing of that experience with students and growers. He is currently conducting over a dozen research trials in southern Illinois, primarily at the Horticulture Research Center of the College of Agricultural Sciences of Southern Illinois University and he is developing several new projects currently.

Southern Illinois Chambourcin Wine

Wines made from Chambourcin grapes grown in the Shawnee Hills of Southern Illinois continue to build a reputation for quality in national and international competition.

Limestone Creek Winery in Jonesboro has been awarded a gold medal by the American Wine Society for its 2002 Illinois Chambourcin. The Society, founded in 1967, has been judging wines from around the world, including France, Germany, Australia, Italy, the United States, and other international wine areas ever since. Gold medal wines from this competition average only about 3 to 4% of the more than one thousand wines entered annually. This gold medal for Limestone Creek Chambourcin follows a bronze medal for the 2000 Chambourcin, Limestone Creek's first year of production.

This is the most recent in a series of awards for Chambourcin made in the area. In the past year Alto Vineyards and Winery in Alto Pass, twelve miles from Limestone Creek, won the prestigious Jefferson Cup for their 2001 Chambourcin. The Jefferson Cup honors the best wines from America's wine regions and is open to about 500 wines annually, by invitation only. Of the wines entered, only about 2% have won gold. This award continues a tradition of award winning Chambourcin wines
(cont. on page 13)

Northern Illinois Vineyards Update

Sit back, tip your glass, wait for winter to end. Just kidding, though winter is still hanging in there. Soils are still significantly frozen, though longer days and warmer nights are beginning to thaw them out. The available time left for dormant pruning is diminishing and can only be measured in weeks, not months. In more southerly locations of northern Illinois it might be measured in days, though certainly there are still a couple of weeks before budbreak there as well. If pruning hasn't begun, it should soon. Growers should take stock of the time anticipated to do the work and prepare a schedule, giving some flex time for weather problems. At this time it looks like budbreak will be at an average date as no mild exceptionally weather has occurred nor is any forecasted. That means bud-break in northern areas should be around mid-April. More southern locations in northern Illinois (Bloomington to LaSalle) will probably be 7-10 days earlier. Take a look at the recommendations for southern growers. Their activities are a harbinger of upcoming plant development.

Growers may want to consider a lime-sulfur spray once pruning is done. This spray can lead to suppression of fungal diseases, especially anthracnose. It's difficult to predict how important this spray will be but it's cheap and effective. Sure, it stinks but not as bad as disease problems.

We're already in the late dormant period but I'd like to speak to the benefit of pruning dormant grapes late. Obviously it provides the luxury of having seen what winter has done to the plants, making it possible to adjust projections for yield potential if necessary. Damage to wood and buds, especially primary buds, can be gauged by cutting samples and evaluating for signs of damage. Pruning late also offers the advantage of potentially delaying budbreak by a few days. That can facilitate an escape from late frost events by keeping shoot material from being exposed during the frost because it simply had not emerged from the bud yet. This works because the buds are forced open through hydraulic pressure built up internally by moisture moving up through the root system. Buds at the ends of shoots open first because that's where the pressure runs into a block in the vascular system, leading to a build-up of internal pressure. If a fresh cut that hasn't dried up or healed has been made on the shoot, it will bleed, releasing the pressure. Lack of pressure means the buds won't experience their internal pressure until the cut heals (dries out), which will force the internal vascular pressure to build again. It doesn't take too long for healing to take place so the pruning must take place within a couple of weeks of budbreak. But it's often difficult to anticipate exactly when budbreak will take place. Further, if there is a shortage of labor, the grower does not want to be pruning after budbreak has taken place.

(N. Illinois Vineyard Update cont.)

Growers may want to consider their IPM strategies for the upcoming season. Look for projections in such places as the Illinois Fruit and Vegetable News, a biweekly newsletter coming from the UI fruit and vegetable specialists. It can be found at their website for IPM, <http://www.ipm.uiuc.edu/ifvn/index.html> It provides an excellent source of information on many of the insect, disease and weed problems growers face in Illinois, covering all specialty crops, including grapes. It's easy to subscribe to and notices will arrive by email, making it simple to connect, download and read.

“PREPARE YE,..” FOR THE SURVEY

The day is coming when you will find an envelope in your mail containing a survey of the Illinois wine and grape industry. This project is being done by faculty at the University of Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and will be sent out soon. Project leaders include Gene Campbell, a survey specialist whose work most recently has been with the Illinois Green Industry, and Bill Shoemaker, a Sr Research Specialist -

Food Crops, who is stationed at the St Charles Horticulture Research Center in northern Illinois. Cooperators include Elizabeth Wahle, Alan Dillard and Bill McCartney.

The survey is designed to capture the state of the industry as it exists in 2005 and includes questions about both the viticulture sector and the enology sector. The survey is seen as a high priority project by leaders of the industry as they recognize the rapid pace of growth experienced in recent years. Results should characterize the nature of that growth and help the industry plan appropriately for future continued growth, which most expect will continue it's rapid pace.

Growers and winemakers are encouraged to respond to the survey as soon as it is received. It is a small step to take but it contributes significantly to the success of the survey. On the other hand, failure to respond can undermine the effort to accurately characterize the state of this amazing industry. If confused when reading the survey, contact information is provided to help you address the questions properly. Survey results will be bulked to maintain anonymity before information is released to the public.

Southern Illinois Vineyard Update

Rough pruning is wrapping up in Southern Illinois and cool temperatures have held back bud development thus minimizing our risks of spring freeze damage, but we are not entirely “out of the woods” yet. Growers need to plan on follow up fine pruning—if not already done to balance vine capacity (pruning weights) with shoot number (potential fruiting sites) and thus ultimately cluster number and crop yield potential. Even though balanced pruning has been accomplished, it is critical that plans are made for adjusting crop after fruit set has been determined to avoid overproduction beyond vine capacity.

Cluster thinning is particularly necessary for large clustered varieties e.g., Seyval. Properly done the balanced cropping will allow the vine to support the crop to optimize fruit composition at harvest and also the long term thrift of the vine.



Brad Taylor demonstrates pruning on vines trained to Scott Henry at the experimental vineyard at Carbondale with students in the Plant, Soil and Agricultural Systems Department of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Southern Illinois University, left to right: Robert Britenstein, Nathan Johannig, Frank Dorris (standing), Randy Hopper, Brad Taylor and Jeff Wheeler.



OTHER ITEMS FOR THE VINEYARD “TO DO LIST”---

Develop/cement marketing plans.

Plan to attend regional viticulture meetings and workshops.

Start planning on site preparation for 2006 and 2007 plantings.

Review last year’s vine health and performance and plan adjustments in pruning, fruit thinning, other canopy management, pest management, and herbicide and fertility program.

Review notes and proceedings from this winter’s meetings.

Last chance to line up pre-season pesticide purchases—price savings and availability may result.

Check out sprayer under actual use conditions i.e. fill with water and calibrate and then do not forget to protect from freezing.

Make lime sulfur applications.

Line up summer labor.

Review last month’s list.

ILLINOIS WINES GETTING MORE RETAIL ATTENTION



More wine retailers in Illinois are choosing to put Illinois wine products in their stores. In many cases this is being done on a local scale, but it marks a significant development in the marketing of Illinois wines. It brings these products to the attention of Illinois consumers who might not otherwise be inclined to encounter Illinois wines. It may also represent a new way of looking at Illinois wines for some consumers, prompting them to try them. While many Illinois wineries are working with local retailers who may carry wine from a local winery as a product of the community, some retailers are looking to carry Illinois wines in a bigger way. As an example, Friar Tuck's is a central Illinois retailer who is carrying a broad selection of wines from Illinois retailers, including wines from all of the major producing areas. Particularly impressive is the display case, which shows a broad selection of Illinois wine products displayed attractively.

Southern Illinois Chambourcin

(Continued from page 9)

made at Alto Vineyards since the late 80's.

In addition, a relative newcomer, Hedman Vineyards, won gold in the Illinois Amateur Competition with their 2002 Chambourcin and plan to open as a commercial winery in Alto Pass in the spring. Some of the grapes used in Limestone Creeks Chambourcin were grown by Hedman's, so the promise is there.

These awards for Chambourcin wines from the Shawnee Hills area are evidence of their quality and add credibility to the hopes of winegrowers in the area for a designation as an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in the near future. Once established, an AVA would denote quality grape and wine production from a unique area and would allow the wines to be labeled as Estate Bottled, but only if at least 85% of the grapes were grown within the AVA boundaries.



MN Grape Growers Hold Conference

Bill Shoemaker, University of Illinois

Grape growers from Minnesota and nearby states gathered in Rochester, Minnesota at the Kahler Grand Hotel on February 18-19 to hear host of quality speakers address the topic of producing grapes and wine where the winter winds blow hard. The Minnesota Grape Growers Association (MGGA) needs to be commended for bringing together an outstanding group of speakers, including Richard Smart, author of "Sunlight Into Wine" and a world-traveling viticulture consultant. Members of the MGGA started out the conference on Friday by putting on a beginning grape-grower workshop designed to get novice growers off on the right foot. All workshop speakers were member-growers and did a fine job of helping inform new grape growers about the trials and tribulations they'd face and to prepare them for solving typical grape-growing problems. A wine tasting, later that evening highlighted wines from Minnesota and surrounding states.

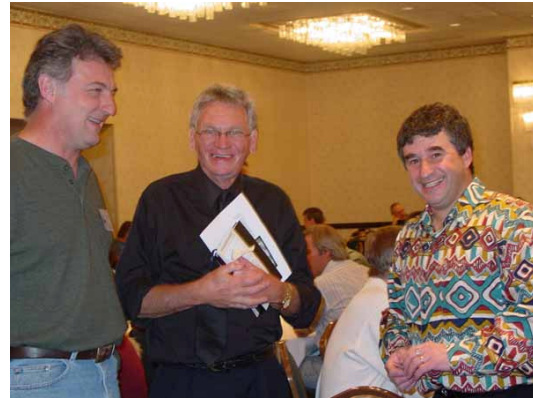
The second day started out with a general session presented by Dr. Richard Smart. Though Dr. Smart primarily works in the more well-known viticulture regions of Australia, New Zealand, California and Europe, he gained his PhD at Cornell University, where he did some of the early work on the Geneva Double Curtain training

system and worked with cold-hardy grapes. While his presentation was consistent with his famous book, he filled out the information, making it relevant to this unique audience. He also presented a great deal on the potential for technology to create new tools for improving growers' efforts to produce quality grapes. Lastly, he heralded the key, essential role grape growers' play in the process of producing quality wines. It was nice for a viticulturist to hear.

Breakout sessions were offered afterward in viticulture and enology. Speakers in the viticulture sessions included Dr. Bill Hutchinson, UMN entomologist, who described his considerable efforts to help the industry address the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle crisis. There is much work to do there yet. Peter Hemstad discussed the wine grape breeding program at UMN. While he discussed Frontenac, he also introduced the crowd to La Crescent, Frontenac Gris, and several other new lines that look very promising, including MN 1211, a red which should be released soon. It is hardy, disease-tolerant, fruity, less acidic, and has good tannic structure. Tom Plocher, author of "Northern Winework", then addressed the crowd on the work of Elmer Swenson, describing a number of Elmer's hardy grape cultivars that have developed a following. He also described the effort of a volunteer group to preserve and advance Elmer's breeding program.

In the afternoon viticulture session Dr. Paul Read of the University of Nebraska presented some of his work. He described the physiology of cold hardiness in grapes, particularly the role of starch accumulation in bud development. He then discussed those vineyard practices which influence grapevine hardiness. He was followed by Phillipe Couquard of Wollersheim Winery in Prairie DuSac, WI. While Phillipe is well-known for his excellent winemaking skills, he has formal training in viticulture and grew up with grape-growing in the Beaujolois region of France. While he re-iterated many of the key viticulture practices described by the previous speakers, he made them quite personal by demonstrating, through images of his vineyard, how important these practices are in maintaining hardiness in the vines while balancing productivity and fruit quality.

While many other quality experiences were available to growers and winemakers, the concluding banquet, which served as a tribute to Elmer Swenson, was a clear highlight. The fine meal was followed by a digitized video of Elmer working in his breeding nursery and discussing his work.



Ed Swanson (left), Richard Smart (center), and Phillipe Couquard share a brief moment of laughter.

Several speakers offered background on the life and work of Elmer Swenson. Finally, many from the crowd shared personal experiences of the warmth, humor, generosity and intelligence of this unique man. Clearly, Elmer will be an icon for cold climate viticulture long after we're gone, but it was nice to learn that Elmer was a simple gentleman who didn't let his humble background get in the way of his powerful intellect and passion for grapes. It seemed a fitting conclusion to a very well-done conference on viticulture and winemaking in the Upper Midwest. Kudos to the MGGA!



Wine & Grape Industry Profiles

In each edition, this newsletter will select one winery and/or vineyard from across the state and give a brief profile of that enterprise. Regions will be chosen randomly with each region represented. It's a great way to see what is happening statewide and give a brief glimpse into their overall establishment. It's also a great way to see who is behind the success of this growing industry.

Who's Who: From the Northern Region



Fox Valley Winery, Inc.

The Fox Valley Winery & Vineyard founded in 2000, is owned and operated by Richard & Christine Faltz.

The Fox Valley Winery is located in the heart of the rapidly growing Fox River Valley in the western Chicagoland area. Situated well at 5600 Route 34, Oswego Il., the 8,000 square foot winery features a beautiful 3,000 square foot tasting room & unique gift shop. 17 family

members are involved in this successful operation.

Their normal business hours are:
10 A.M.-6 P.M. Monday thru Saturday
12 P.M.-6 P.M. Sunday

The winery produces 24,000 gallons of wine each year from the following varietals/blends: Chambourcin, Cythiana/Norton, Frontenac, Marachal Foch, Cabernet Franc, Concord, Vignoles, Vidal Blanc, Traminette, Chardonel, Seyval Blanc, Villard Blanc, Cayuga White, Reisling, Illinois Chardonnay, and Niagra.

In 2004, the Fox Valley Winery won the Illinois State Fair awards and the California Grand Harvest Award. The winery produces three brands: Fox Valley Winery, Inc., Old Glory and RA Faltz Vintners Reserve and the prices range from \$12.95 to \$34.00.

The Fox Valley Winery also has a vineyard component. The vineyard, located approximately 24 miles west of the winery in Sandwich, Il., is comprised of 7 bearing acres, 19 non-bearing and 36 acres yet to be planted. Each year at least 5 major public events are held onsite in this vineyard location.

For more information, visit their website at: www.foxvalleywinery.com

This newsletter welcomes new contributors. If you would like to make a newsletter contribution, please contact Denise Cimmarrusti at dcimmarr@aol.com, or Bill Shoemaker at wshoemak@inil.com.

If you are a vineyard or winery and would like to be included in the business profile, please contact the editor before submitting material.



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Contributions are very important to the success of this newsletter and we wish to extend our sincere appreciation to all newsletter contributors.