



The Wine Press



Newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc.

Volume 45, Issue 2, February 2021

President's Message

January has sure started off with a “**bang**,” and not just with New Year’s fireworks! We have a new United States President, and time will tell how this will all play out over the next months and years.

During the past 10 months, the Wine Society has been paying a lot of ongoing expenses, which has tapped into our financial reserves. We understand that since we have not had in-person activities, members have not had the usual events that our membership offers. Last March, the Board of Directors chose to suspend membership renewal fees starting April 1, 2020, and as a result, we have retained all of our members. The Board has now decided that after 12 months, we will resume requesting renewal fees starting April 1, 2021. If your renewal was April 1, 2020, we will request you renew on April 1, 2021. If your renewal was June 1, 2020, we will request you renew on June 1, 2021.

The Wine Society continues to have our social events virtually since we are still under pandemic restrictions. We know that several of our OCWS members have contracted COVID-19, and we wish them all fast and complete recoveries.

We have several Sunday sessions planned, which are always entertaining and well attended. In January, we added new events,

our “Varietal Hours,” which are conducted as Zoom meetings (as opposed to Zoom webinars), allow us to see everyone on the screen. Our first two Varietal Hours were on January 11 and January 18 and were well received by everyone. We can all use more social interaction in these trying times, and we hope to see a lot more of you in the coming weeks!

We are still making preparations to conduct our Commercial Wine Competition and Home Wine Competition in June, pending opening up our environments as we approach these events. The Orange County Fair & Event Center (OCFEC) is making their plans for the 2021 OC Fair, and we plan to be fully involved, so keep the dates open. I will keep you informed as we hear more information from the State and the OCFEC for any updates to the situation.

The vaccinations for COVID-19 are now available for many people, with more of us becoming eligible every week. We hope that as more and more people get vaccinated, the OCFEC and the whole world will start opening up, and we can begin to resume our OCWS activities.

In the meantime, I hope everyone stays healthy and safe in these trying times.

- **Kevin Donnelly, President**

OCWS Merchandise



Interested in purchasing OCWS hats, shirts, or other OCWS-logo merchandise? Be on the lookout for an email announcing a special sale coming this month!

- **Courtney, Merchandise Committee Chair**

Upcoming Events:

February 12 5
Mineral Wines

Winter Seminar Series 5
Sunday Virtual Seminars:
February 21 and February 28

March 12 7
Cannonball Wine Company

April 9 7
Russian River Vineyards

Special Points of Interest:

OCWS Merchandise 1

Membership Update 2

Wine Facts/Movies 2

Winemaker Brett Keller 3

OCWS Varietal Hour 4

Calling on Volunteers 4

“Best of” Recipe & Wine Pairings 6
Winemakers Newsroom 8

Wine Education Seminars . 8

Save the Date Calendar ... 10



Kevin Donnelly
President
 Kevindonnelly@ocws.org



Sara Yeoman
Vice President
 Sara@ocws.org



Mel Jay
Treasurer
 Mel@ocws.org



George Cravens
Secretary
 George@ocws.org



Carolyn Christian
Director
 Carolyn@ocws.org



Fred Heinecke
Director
 Fred@ocws.org



Leslie Hodowanec
Director
 Les@ocws.org



Linda Mihalik
Director
 Linda@ocws.org



Rich Skoczylas
Director
 Rich@ocws.org

Membership Update



The Orange County Wine Society extends an extremely warm welcome to its newest members! Membership for the following new members was approved by the Board of Directors in January 2021: **Liane Barr and Marty Cook**. As of January 1, the OCWS had 1,130 members.

- Mel Jay, Membership Chair

A Couple of Wine Facts

- ✓ Though likely invented decades earlier, the world's first corkscrew patent was filed in 1795 by English Reverend Samuel Henshall. To make a firmer fit with the cork, he added a flat button of metal to the helix. His corkscrew was so useful that it has been widely utilized for over 100 years.



- ✓ A person who collects corkscrews is a *Helixophile*.

A Few Worthy Wine Movies to Consider

Let's get serious:

- ✓ A Year in Burgundy (2013) - watch on Amazon Prime
- ✓ A Year in Champagne (2014) - watch on Amazon Prime
- ✓ Barolo Boys (2014) - watch on Amazon Prime
- ✓ Decanted (2016) - watch on Amazon Prime

A little romance with wine:

- ✓ A Good Year (2006) - watch on Amazon Prime/Hulu
- ✓ A Walk In the Clouds (1995) - watch on Amazon Prime
- ✓ A Heavenly Vintage (2009) - watch on Amazon Prime

For a little humor or a classic caper:

- ✓ Wine Country (2019) - watch on Netflix
- ✓ Year of the Comet (1992) - watch on Amazon Prime

The Wine Press is the official newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc. The newsletter is published monthly. *The Wine Press* welcomes input from the OCWS membership.

Forward comments, questions, and suggestions to
 WinePress@ocws.org

Editor-in-Chief: Linda Mihalik

Contributing Writers: Board of Directors, Liz Corbett, Courtney, Bill Forsch, Fran Gitsham, Robyn Strom

Contributing Editors: John Goodnight, Ron Nickens, Rochelle Randel, Taren Weber

Contributing Photographer: Wendy Taylor

Copyright © 2021 Orange County Wine Society, Inc. and its licensors.
 All rights reserved.

OCWS Winery Webinar—Mineral Wines Winemaker

Friday, February 12, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar Platform

About the Winemaker—Brett Keller:



Brett met future wife Andrea Henkel in 1993 while working at the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite Valley. Brett was not much of a wine drinker back then, but Andrea cured him of that, introducing him to red wine. Andrea's family had just planted a small vineyard, and after Brett and Andrea were married in 1995, Brett

decided to forgo his college studies for Hospitality Management and changed majors to Enology and Viticulture. As he worked his way through college, Brett continued to work as Sommelier and/or manager at several upscale restaurants while attending Fresno State University, earning his degree in Viticulture and Enology in 2003. Upon moving back home to the small gold rush town of Angels Camp, Brett assumed management of the family's four acre Cherokee Creek Vineyard, which originally grew exclusively Merlot grapes. When a movie with an unmentionable name decimated demand for Merlot grapes, Brett grafted three acres of the vineyard to Roussanne, Viognier, and the specialty of the vineyard, Petite Sirah. These are the grapes that now define the Mineral Wines' brand! For the first three years of business starting in 2012, wine tasting was offered on the patio overlooking the grounds of the estate. In winter, room was made to taste inside the barn among the barrels. It was a very small operation and has grown to now making about 1,800 cases a year.

A Unique Philosophy of Winemaking:

Brett's lovely wife Andrea loved to travel to the Napa Valley to taste the great Cabernets back in the day. She always encouraged Brett to make 3 or 4 wines that were always top quality, in the tradition of Caymus and Silver Oak. Brett's answer to this was to make no less than a dozen different varieties, all small production between 40 and 150 cases of each. You will hear him say "I did not spend six years in college to only master a few wines—I worked to master **every** wine I could make!"

Brett's style of winemaking focuses on two things: First, EVERY wine must taste as the variety should. Therefore each wine has to be made in a way that the varietal character speaks loudly. Barbera should NOT taste like Zinfandel. This means that every wine must be made individually. Yeasts, barrels and different vineyards are selected for each variety according to what it will do for the characters of the wine. Many vintners just do not understand that to give wines their individual identity you cannot make them the same way with the same barrels, yeasts, and cellar treatment.

The second key to the success of Mineral Wines is to make these wines distinctively California in style. California makes arguably the best wines in the world. In Calaveras County, we have a predictably long, dry harvest season which yields fully-ripe grapes with rich fruit flavors that make big, fruit forward wines. The thought is this ... to make a great wine memorable it takes time. Yup, the longer you can taste it the better impressed is the wine lover. Big, rich wines that carry varietal character inherent to the grape are our specialty.



Is it Science or Art?

One other thing, it takes an artist to make great wine. An artist has tools to make something beautiful. Whether a painter with their art palette of colors to mix and different media to make a beautiful painting—or a chef with their spices and different techniques to make great food. Science is the *language of the art* of making wine. Different yeasts, barrels, grapes, clones of grapes, climate change, smoke during harvest, viticulture practices, and too many more tools to mention all contribute to the essence of great wine. These all interact to make something beautiful, to create an experience like no other, when the fruit of the vine is crafted and nurtured to give pleasure in its enjoyment.

Wines:

- 2017 Cabernet Franc \$32
- 2016 Meritage \$32
- 2016 Merlot \$28

Log in to Mineralwines.com and use **Promo Code OCWS20** at checkout for 15% off the tasting package above. Brett is also offering discounts as follows: 20% off for 6-11 bottles of current releases and 25% off for a case or more bottles purchased, including "Library" wines. All shipping is half-price. Remember, members will have to sign up on the OCWS website for the Winery Webinar to watch via Zoom. Buying the wines does not automatically sign you up for the webinar. If you have any questions, contact Les@ocws.org.

We have adjusted the content of this presentation to three bottles. A five-bottle blending webinar viewed at multiple households online present certain challenges in judging the winner. Brett is creating a blending video available for future viewing and will be presenting a blending demonstration at a Courtyard Seminar at the OC Fair in the future.

Cheers! Looking forward to seeing all of you online.

- Liz Corbett, Contributing Writer

The OCWS Varietal Hour



Our OCWS Varietal Hours have been such a great success that we are continuing them! Join us for the OC Wine Society's version of the "Virtual Happy Hour" ... featuring your favorite wine varietals!

What: OCWS Varietal Hour

When: Mondays @ 7 pm

Why: To see your OCWS friends and share wine and conversation

Where: Virtually on a Zoom meeting from the comfort of your own home!

Who: All OCWS members - long-time and new members welcome!

Cost: FREE to all OCWS members

How do I sign up?: Sign up for the event on the OCWS website

What do I bring: A bottle (or two) of wine matching the theme for that week!

Interested in hosting a session for your favorite wine varietal? Contact George@ocws.org or Carolyn@ocws.org to sign up!

A special **"thank you"** to Don Phillips and Dawn Iglesias for helping George and Carolyn host the January Varietal Hours!

- **George Cravens & Carolyn Christian, Directors**

Upcoming OCWS Varietal Hours

- Monday, February 1 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Ken Knapp and Linda Mihalik—Varietal: Rhone Reds (Syrah, Petite Sirah, Grenache, Mourvedre, etc.)
- Monday, February 8 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Rochelle Randel and Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Sauvignon Blanc
- Monday, February 15 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Sara Yeoman and George Cravens—Varietal: Sparkling Wines
- Monday, February 22 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Fred Heinecke and George Cravens—Varietal: Pinot Noir
- Monday, March 1 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Fran Gitsham and Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Viognier
- Monday, March 8 (7-8 pm) Hosts: George Cravens and Rich Skoczylas—Varietal: Dessert Wines
- Monday, March 15 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Jim Burk and Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Cabernet Sauvignon
- Monday, March 22 (7-8 pm) Hosts: George Cravens and Ed Reyes—Varietal: Rhone Whites
- Monday, March 29 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Dawn Iglesias and Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Spanish Wines

Calling on Volunteers for the 2021 Commercial Wine Competition

VOLUNTEER

The Commercial Wine Competition Committee has decided to move forward with the planning of the 2021 Commercial Wine Competition scheduled for June 5-6, 2021. We understand that this has been a challenging time in so many ways, and the coming months will likely bring more challenges our way. Be assured that we prioritize the safety of all of our members, and want you to know that concern for our volunteers is at the forefront. We will adhere to and follow all guidelines, rules and regulations as set forth by the national, state, or local government and health department.

Since we are in the early planning stages for the event, there will be many questions you may have – we only ask that you be flexible, as nothing has been etched in stone at this point in time. Preparation will be key to our success, as there are many logistical and operational aspects of the Competition that cannot wait until the 11th hour.

The Commercial Wine Competition volunteer page on the ocws.org website will be open in March, and you will be able to sign up at that time – your assistance is vital to our success! This event offers many opportunities: meet the winemakers and winery principals, increase your wine knowledge, and en-

joy getting to know your fellow OCWS members. We understand and acknowledge that no one's plans are definite at this time.

There are many areas where volunteer help is needed: stewarding, glass washing and drying, and computer verification. Continuing with the efficiency of the event, computer input will also be assigned. A sign-up form is included on the website that identifies stewarding days, bagging nights, and other work parties with times and dates. As in the past, in order to qualify for stewarding, we need you to sign up for **two** additional work parties. We can offer bagging, and moving of wine to and from the Competition site, including sorting. We will also be assigning a ribbon mailing crew.

We definitely need your support in order to run a successful Competition. The good news is that we will hire help for heavy lifting. No training is necessary, as newer members will be teamed with Competition veterans.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 562.822.3382 or email me at Strompharms@earthlink.net. We look forward to your participation in this very important OCWS event!

- **Robyn Strom, Volunteer Coordinator**
Commercial Wine Competition Committee

Winter Seminar Series—February 2021

EVENTS

The Seminar Committee is excited to be entering into our final month of this year's Winter Seminar Series. We will be wrapping up this session with two seminars in February. We will not be hosting a seminar on Super Bowl Sunday or Valentine's Day, but please make sure to sign up early for the Winery Webinar

on Friday, February 12 to celebrate Valentine's Day with the OCWS! Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the Seminar Committee! We hope you have enjoyed these seminars as much as we have enjoyed presenting them. If you have any feedback or ideas for future seminars, please submit them to Seminars@ocws.org. We look forward to seeing you again in the summer.

- Sara Yeoman, Seminar Committee Chair

Date & Time:	Topic:	Presenters:
February 21 @ 3 pm	Comfort Food & Wine	Sara Yeoman & Ed Reyes
February 28 @ 3 pm	Lesser Known California Varietals	Carolyn Christian

OCWS Winery Webinar—Mineral Wines

Friday, February 12, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar Platform

Our OCWS Winery Webinar for February features Brett Keller from Mineral Wines.

Combining his passion for minerals with that of wine, Mineral Wines was founded in 2009 by the Henkel and Keller families, who grow grapes at the Cherokee Creek Vineyard in Angels Camp. Brett has been making wine in Calaveras County since 2003, and grapes are sourced from their Estate vineyard which was first planted in 1993 and from various other vineyards in Calaveras County.

Brett studied mining engineering and later viticulture and enology at Fresno State. He fell in love with wine and his wife, Andrea, in her hometown of Angels Camp, the Land of Mark Twain. Brett and his daughter started collecting crystals outside their driveway at the famous Carson Hill Mine. They were awarded Best of Show in Tucson in 2012 and again in 2014 for their vivid displays of bentonite.



Each of their wine varietal labels highlights minerals from their collection, captured in watercolor by re-

nowned artist, Frederick Wilda. Besides collecting award winning minerals, Mineral Wines collected 9 Gold medals and 15 Silver medals in our last three OCWS competitions. Mineral Wines was going to be one of our Featured Wineries at the OC Fair (cancelled last summer), so we are pleased to invite them.

Brett is offering the OCWS three Bordeaux wines for tasting at a 15% discount and half price for shipping, which will be reflected in your order at checkout. His discussion includes "Crafting Delicious Meritage Wines" and will also include literature and recipes for finger foods. Log in to Mineralwines.com and use **Promo Code OCWS20** at checkout.

2016 Meritage \$32

2016 Merlot \$28

2017 Cabernet Franc \$32

Members will have to sign up on our website for the Mineral Wines Winery Webinar to watch via Zoom. Buying the wines does NOT automatically sign you up for the webinar. If you have any questions, email Les@ocws.org.

- Leslie Hodowanec, Director

- Rich Skoczylas, Director and Winery Program Chair

The Orange County Wine Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization incorporated under the laws of the State of California with its principal place of business in Costa Mesa, California.

PO Box 11059, Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Phone: 714.708.1636 ■ Fax: 714.546.5002

Website: OCWS.org ■ OCWS Facebook ■ Twitter: @OCWineSociety

OCWS Website Administrator: Wendy Taylor

OCWS Photographer: Jim Burk

“Best of” Recipe & Wine Pairings—February 2021



What started out as an idea to create a monthly culinary column highlighting the best of OCWS Mini-Tastings' award-winning recipes and wine pairings has now become, thanks to great interest in recipes from the Seminar Series' wine and food presentations, a Best of OCWS Recipes and Wine Pairings. I will continue to review Mini-Tastings from the past but will now venture into Seminar pairings, and

anything else from a culinary standpoint, that may appeal to our members. This is an ever-evolving column and suggestions are always welcome, so please don't hesitate to email me at Fran@ocws.org. I would love to hear from those of you who love food and wine as much as I do, and I know there are a lot of kindred spirits out there.

There is one recipe in particular that has recently been requested time and again. It was featured in the holiday Sparkling and Sweets seminar held in December, and since I happen to love Champagne and this treat in particular, I'm publishing the recipe for this yummy dessert before the taste leaves my memory. I am usually the recipient of this dessert when asked by my daughter, Sara Yeoman, what I would like from her, as it is her recipe and is totally amazing in my book. I hope you find it as scrumptious as I do.

I find that too much chocolate paired with a dry sparkling, which is my drink of preference, leaves me with a heavy head, but a cream-based dessert fits the bill and satisfies my urge for sweets perfectly. Extra Dry, Extra Brut and Brut sparklings have a natural acidity that cuts through cheese, butter and cream and pair well with desserts such as Panna Cotta, crepes, shortbread and, my favorite, Lavender Cheesecake. I hope you will be drooling by the time you finish perusing the recipe and consider putting it on your “must try” list.

LAVENDER CHEESECAKE WITH EARL GREY WHIPPED CREAM

CHEESECAKE INGREDIENTS:

1 3/4 cups shortbread cookie crumbs
1/3 cup unsalted butter, melted
Pinch of salt
1 1/2 cups sugar, divided
4 (8-ounce) bricks Neufchatel (low-fat) cream cheese, softened
1 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
1 Tbsp. vanilla extract
2 Tbsp. fresh lavender buds, finely chopped (measure first, then chop the buds)

4 eggs

WHIPPED CREAM TOPPING INGREDIENTS:

2 cups heavy cream
Powdered sugar
1 Earl Grey tea bag

TO MAKE THE CHEESECAKE:

Preheat oven to 350°F and grease a 9-inch springform pan. Crumble the shortbread cookies into crumbs and whisk with butter, salt and 1/4 cup of the sugar together in a medium bowl until combined. Press firmly onto bottom of the pan (or up the sides, if desired). Bake for 10 minutes, remove, and let cool. Reduce oven heat to 325°F.

Once the pan reaches room temperature, carefully wrap the outside of the pan in 2 layers of heavy-duty aluminum foil, being sure that there are NO gaps where water could seep through. Place the pan in a large roasting dish (or any pan larger than the springform) and bring a tea kettle or pot of water to boil in preparation for the water bath. Set aside.

Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese on medium speed for 3 minutes until smooth. Add the remaining 1-1/4 cup sugar and beat for an additional minute until well blended. Add Greek yogurt, vanilla and lavender, and beat for an additional minute, stopping partway to scrape the bottom of the bowl with a spatula. Add eggs, one at a time, beating on low speed after each addition just until blended. Do not overbeat! Pour into crust.

Place the double pans in the oven on a shelf on the bottom third of the oven. Very carefully use a tea kettle (or large measuring cup) to pour the boiling water in the larger pan to form a water bath around the springform, so that it comes up about 1-inch around the springform.

Close the oven door, and bake about 1 hour 40 min, or until center is almost set. (The center of the cake should still jiggle ever so slightly.) Turn oven off, and open oven door slightly. Let cheesecake set in oven 1 hour. Then remove cheesecake from oven, carefully run a knife around the edges of the cake, and then let cool to room temperature. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight. Remove springform rim, and top cheesecake with whipped cream just before serving. Store leftover cheesecake in refrigerator.

TO MAKE THE WHIPPED CREAM TOPPING:

To make earl grey homemade whipped cream, first bring the heavy cream to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Add a tea bag and steep for 4 minutes, then remove the tea bag. Refrigerate cream until cool.

(Continued on page 7)

“Best of” Recipe & Wine Pairings—February 2021

(Continued from page 6)

You can make homemade whipped cream with a:

Stand Mixer: Make sure that your bowl and whisk attachment are nice and chilled, as well as your heavy whipping cream. That’s the main thing to remember — you want everything nice and COLD for making whipped cream. Add in your heavy whipping cream and some powdered sugar to the bowl of the mixer and whisk it together on high speed until soft to stiff peaks form, your choice.

Food Processor: Same steps, just pulse the cream and powdered sugar together until stiff peaks form.

Blender: Same steps, just blend the cream and powdered sugar together until stiff peaks form

Mason Jar: This one takes quite a bit more muscle. Place a mason jar (along with its lid) in the freezer for about 15 minutes. Then remove it, add the whipped cream and powdered sugar (you only want the jar about half full, since the whipped cream volume will expand), and then shake the heck out of it for about 5 minutes until stiff peaks have formed.

Bowl + Whisk: Or of course, you can make whipped cream the truly old-fashioned way. Just grab a mixing bowl (metal, preferably, or glass) and place it in the freezer until it’s nice and chilled. Then remove it, add the whipped cream and powdered sugar, and use a large whisk to whisk the cream by hand until stiff peaks form.

- Fran Gitsham, Contributing Writer

OCWS Winery Webinar Program—Cannonball Wine Company

Friday, March 12, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar Platform

Our March Winery Webinar introduces a relatively new winery to California. This is Cannonball that started in 2006. Although Cannonball is a newer entry, it was started by a dynamic team of wine industry veterans who were determined to rock the wine world. The vision was to make the best California Cabernet under \$20. Armed with a belief that wine should be fun, uninhibited and approachable, they set out to share a splash of Cannonball Cabernet in every glass.

CANNONBALL
HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA



Leading as the Cannonball winemaker is veteran Ondine Chattan. Ondine is a passionate Sonoma County winemaker with experience ranging from cult boutique producers to notable household name brands. Her love of the diversity of Sonoma and California at large fuels her enthusiasm for making a range of varietals from Sauvignon Blanc to Cabernet. Ondine takes a hands-on, multidisciplinary approach to winemaking.

Members have to sign up for this virtual webinar on our website to watch via Zoom. After you sign up to attend, you will receive a confirmation email by Thursday, Noon, March 11 with details to connect. If you cannot find your confirmation, contact Rich@ocws.org.

Ondine will discuss four wines at this webinar. They are:

2020 Angels & Cowboys Rosé
2018 Angels & Cowboys Proprietary Red
2019 Cannonball California Sauvignon Blanc
2018 Cannonball California Cabernet Sauvignon

Our members have the option to purchase these wines at a 20% discount using Promotion Code “OC20.” Log onto the Wine Society website to order these wines; tax and shipping will be added. Members may order these wines now through March 31. **NOTE:** you must sign up separately on the website to attend this webinar. Buying the wines does NOT sign you up for the webinar. **Sign-ups close 5:00 pm on Wednesday, March 10.**

- Leslie Hodowanec, Director

- Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair

OCWS Winery Webinar Program—Russian River Vineyards

Save the Date
Friday, April 9, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar Platform



In April, we will feature one of the favorite Russian River Wine Road wineries—Russian River Vineyards. Our speaker will be winemaker Giovanni “Gio” Balistreri.

A Sonoma County native with a rich family history in farming, Gio is at home in the vineyard, treasuring

each harvest season. His relationship with Mother Earth began on his grandparents’ farm in Bloomfield when he was seven years old.

Gio graduated from Fresno State University and took the helm as RRV’s winemaker in 2012. The result has been a steady stream of remarkable wines which have won numerous awards at our Commercial Wine Competitions.

- Leslie Hodowanec, Director

- Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair

Winemakers Newsroom

Way, Way Ahead of His Time!

I attended a very small school of higher learning in South Dakota – Dakota State College, with just slightly over 1,100 enrollees for a 4-year institution. Although I was a good student, my only real interest was to play basketball. As several of my high school friends were attending, I was able to get some great intel on what classes to take and those that I should avoid.

As history was a required prerequisite and mandatory need, the recommended professor was Herb Blakely. He was friendly to athletes as he was the cross country coach and assisted the distance runners during track season – he was an easy pass and he had low requirements for attendance.

You did, however, need to be wary to not sit in the first or second row, as his excitement in sharing history lessons might get you a little “wet,” as he spewed quite often saliva in his excitement of sharing our country’s history! “Spewing” is probably something today that would not be acceptable or tolerated! Herb was an extraordinary presenter. He made history sound so exciting – with beautiful descriptive vocabulary of the extraordinarily boring events from our history. He was not a particularly handsome man, and he had somewhat of an uneven jaw that probably exacerbated the spewing. He had a terrible

limp (and a built up shoe, I think, if I can remember back almost 50 years ago), something I found a bit ironic, as he was the cross country coach and a pretty good one at that. Very loyal and determined members of his squad ran for him very well and competed with many other schools with bigger budgets, money for travel, and scholarships to lure high school runners into their system.

As I was thinking of this month’s article and thinking of the “*angle*” on why I’m going into this **LOOONG** story about Herb Blakely, I Googled his name, wondering first if he was still alive (I believe he passed in 2013), and I was surprised but not amazed that his legacy lives on in two forms (that I found – could be more). A Herb Blakely multi-state invitational women’s track meet lives on in his name and another, somewhat interesting, but not surprising, very prestigious award – The *Herb Blakely West River Historic Conference Award*. The award is given to one individual annually that is deemed to have done the best at keeping our forefathers’ history alive of the Great Plains and the award is titled: *Outstanding contributions to local and regional history, a sense of American patriotism, and efforts to further the concepts of good citizenship*. Wow, quite a mouthful!

(Continued on page 9)

OCWS Wine Education Seminars

The Orange County Wine Society is thrilled to announce the return of the Wine Education Series this March. During this time of travel restrictions, come join us for travels around the globe to some of the most exciting wine regions.

We are partnering with Certified Sommelier, Spreti Valente, for in-depth classes that cover the history, climate, and general wine information on a variety of regions. Each class will feature wines for purchase ahead of the class, and wines available for purchase after the class, all at a discount to our OCWS members. The cost of the class is \$20 per logon – you can join us alone or make it a fun date night with your significant other! Join us to build your wine knowledge and travel the globe virtually.

- **Wines of Mexico - Wed, March 24 @ 6:00 – 7:30 pm**
 - **Seminar Wines (free shipping – total cost savings on wines \$36):**
 - Magoni - Chardonnay Vermentino White Blend - \$19.00
 - Bruma Rosé - Rosé of Sangiovese - \$25.00
 - Corona del Valle - Tempranillo - \$39.00
 - Solar Fortun - “O Positivo” Red Blend - \$38.00
 - Additional wine discounts to be made available for attendees to purchase after event

- All wines must be purchased no later than March 17, 2021. Details to follow
- **Wines of California Central Coast - Wed, April 21, 2021 6:00 – 7:30 pm**
 - **Wines: TBD**

- Carolyn Christian, Wine Education Chair

Introducing Spreti Valente, CS

Certified Sommelier - Wine Buyer - Professional Wine Judge, Consultant & Educator



Spreti Valente is a Certified Sommelier, professional Wine Judge, wine buyer and consultant. Spreti has 15 years experience as a wine buyer for retail clients, most recently, her 11 years at Anne’s Boutique Wines, resulted in winning the top wine shop in Orange County. There, she oversaw the purchasing of the wines for the wine club, the retail floor and by-the-glass menu.

Spreti’s tasting expertise has been further developed in her work as a professional Wine Judge. Currently she serves on tasting panels for prestigious wine competitions both the U.S.

(Continued on page 9)

Winemakers Newsroom

(Continued from page 8)

I think you will find very interesting who the first recipient was, (if you'll click on the link). He was a South Dakotan, SD College graduate, and nationally known! Herb Blakely Award – West River History Conference, Inc. (Ok, I'll spill the beans – Tom Brokaw).

Well, on to the reason for Herb's lengthy lead in. His very often used phrase – ZOOM – ZOOM – ZOOM. Yes, believe it or not it was this frequent phrase as he would describe the historical events during class, or as I, at times overheard when he was sharing thoughts with his cross country team members. ZOOM – ZOOM – ZOOM.

We would always be sure to keep a distance when the ZOOM, ZOOM, ZOOM started as this was probably the “wettest” time

around Herb.

It looks like we will be ZOOM – ZOOM – ZOOM'ing this year quite a bit, and below is our “tentative” calendar of many of the activities we will attempt to have in 2021. Lots and lots of ZOOM connections!

We need helpers and new people to join in with us. Most of the Zoom sessions will be free of additional fees and will be open to our OCWS members.



Look for more information or sign up on our OCWS website at ocws.org and click on the Winemaker tab. My email contact is: Billforsch@ocws.org. Stay safe, cheers!

- **Bill Forsch, Winemakers' Group Chair**

	Contact Info	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Education													
Kit Class # 8 Edition	TBD					X							
Making Wine ABC & the Basics - Zooms!	TBD					X							
Crush Plan & Equipment Needs	TBD					X							
White & Rosé Wine Making	TBD							X					
Red Wine Making & Different Styles	TBD							X					
Wine Faults and Detection			X		X		X		X		X		X
Blending Seminar - Optimizing for Wines									X				
Testing													
SO2 Testing	Rutledge/Guerrin			X			X			X			X
Buying Opportunities													
Bottles	TBD					X					X		
Corks	TBD					X					X		
Grapes & Juice	TBD								X	X	X	X	
Special Events													
Quarterly Wine Maker (Zoom) Free for ALL!				X			X			X			
Holiday Party???													X

OCWS Wine Education Seminars

(Continued from page 8)

and Europe (San Francisco Chronicle, LA International, Sunset Magazine Wine Competition, International Women's Wine Competition, Sonoma Harvest, Press Democrat Wine Competition, and New Orleans Wine Awards – In Europe: Feminalise Wine Competition (Paris) and International Wine Challenge (London)). In 2017, on recommendation from her mentor, Master Sommelier Fred Dame, Spreti was named Chief Judge for the Pacific Rim Wine Competition, which was founded in 1985.

As a consultant, Spreti assists clients to develop their wine programs and produce widely attended events. Spreti also

works as an educator, teaching wine classes to both public events and university audiences. Spreti's consulting work has been published in both Spanish and English in the US and abroad.

Wine Education:

Certified Sommelier, Guild of Court of Master Sommeliers
 Certified Sake Specialist, Sake School of America
 Wine Authentication training, WineFraud.com

Languages:

English (Fluent), Spanish (Fluent), French (Conversational)
 Professional Associations: The Guild of Court of Master Sommeliers



The Wine Press

Orange County Wine Society, Inc.
PO Box 11059
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

OCWS Save the Date Calendar

Winter Seminar Series:

- February 21 Comfort Food & Wine
- February 28 Lesser Known California Varietals

Winery Webinar Events:

- February 12 Mineral Wines
- March 12 Cannonball Wine Company
- April 9 Russian River Vineyards

OCWS Varietal Hour:

- February 1 Rhone Reds
- February 8 Sauvignon Blanc
- February 15 Sparking Wines
- February 22 Pinot Noir
- March 1 Viognier
- March 8 Dessert Wines
- March 15 Cabernet Sauvignon
- March 22 Rhone Whites
- March 29 Spanish Wines

Wine Education Seminars:

- March 24 Wines of Mexico
- April 21 Wines of California Central Coast



www.ocws.org

