



The Wine Press



Newsletter of the Orange County Wine Society, Inc.

Volume 45, Issue 5, May 2021

President's Message

May has arrived, and the OC Wine Society is moving closer to both the Commercial Wine Competition and the Home Wine Competition. Because of the cancellation of last year's Competitions and the pandemic delays which extended into this year, we were late in starting our marketing and as a result, we are not sure how many entries we will receive for both events.

Several of our members have put forth a fabulous effort to contact 1,400 wineries by phone to remind them that our entry deadlines are approaching and to please submit their wines. Thank you to everyone involved in this great effort!

This month we will be looking to get our members to volunteer to help with the receiving, sorting, and bagging of wines in preparation for the Commercial Wine Competition to be held at the Hilton Hotel June 5 through the 6, and the Home Wine Competition at The Courtyard on June 12. Our two

Competitions and the upcoming Courtyard at the OC Fair are critical to our core mission of supporting wine education and the financial success of the organization.

And some fabulous news, Governor Newsom has announced that if we continue with our decreasing COVID numbers, California will "open up" on June 15 for full activities!

Since this date is after our two Competitions, it will not affect our social distancing and mask restrictions. But it will be in time for the OC Fair, and hopefully the OCWS can start resuming our social activities after the Fair this coming fall.

This will be welcome news for all of us, for the state, and soon for the country.

Stay healthy everyone, and I hope to actually see you over the coming months!

Social time is coming, cheers!

- Kevin Donnelly, President

OCWS Winemakers' Group Presents

Learning to Dance with Nature, with Respect to our Environment Webinar
by Lynn Hess, Owner/Winemaker, Peppertree Canyon

Saturday, May 22 @ 3 pm
Sign-up online at ocws.org

100% Orange County Estate Grown Sangiovese and Olive Oil
Available Now for Purchase

info@peppertreecanyon.com or by phoning 949.205.9608

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	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

The OCWS Varietal Hour



Thank you to everyone who has made the OCWS Varietal Hour such a great success! Our weekly OCWS Varietal Hour continues every Monday at 7 pm. Come join your OCWS friends and make new friends as you share a wine from the weekly theme.

This free event is in a Zoom meeting format, with all participants visible on the screen. Sign-up today on the OCWS website.

A special thank you to the OCWS members who have volunteered their time to serve as hosts for the events: Don Phillips, Linda Mihalik, Ken Knapp, Dawn Iglesias, Rochelle Randel, Sara Yeoman, Fred and Cheryl Heinecke, Kim and Sam Clark, Jim Burk, Rich Skoczylas, and Ed Reyes.

If you are interested in hosting one of the future Varietal Hours, please contact Carolyn at Carolyn@ocws.org or George at George@ocws.org.

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

Below is a listing of **upcoming Varietal Hour themes**:

- Monday, May 3 (7-8 pm) Host: Ken Knapp—Varietal: Italian White Varietals (Moscato, Pinot Grigio, Vermentino, Greco, Arneis, Trebbiano, Cortese, etc.)
- Monday, May 10 (7-8 pm) Hosts: Sam & Kim Clark—Varietal: Fortified Wines (Port, Sherry, Madeira, Marsala, Vermouth, Fortified Dessert Wines, etc.)
- Monday, May 17 (7-8 pm) Host: Jim Burk & Carolyn Christian—Varietal: Syrah / Petite Sirah
- Monday, May 24 (7-8 pm) Host: Fran Gitsham—Varietal: Riesling

Wine Education Class

Wines of the California Central Coast
May 4, 2021—6:30-8 pm

The OCWS is proud to welcome Pedro Rusk and Ben Fine, Wine Educators from *Jackson Family Wines*, for our next wine education class. The class will feature educational information on the California Central Coast wine industry and a comparison of wines from the Santa Barbara and Monterey areas. All wines are from wineries that are part of the Jackson Family Wines portfolio. **Cost: \$20 per logon (only one logon per location required).**

Wines To Be Featured:

- 2019 Cambria Katherine's Vineyard Chardonnay (\$22)
- 2019 Diatom Bar-M Chardonnay (\$30)
- 2017 Brewer-Clifton Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir (\$40)
- 2019 Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve Riesling (\$15)
- 2017 Carmel Road Pinot Noir (\$25)
- 2018 Ex Post Facto Santa Barbara County Syrah (\$36)

Jackson Family Wines is offering a 15% discount + \$10 flat rate shipping on these 6 wines. The **wine order link** can be accessed by logging into the OCWS website. Wine order deadline is no later than noon on April 29.

-**Carolyn Christian, Wine Education Chair**

Peppertree Canyon—Orange County’s Well-Hidden Gem



I recently had the distinct honor of visiting Peppertree Canyon Farm to interview Owner/Winemaker, Lynn Hess, and found not just a winemaker, but a person with great passion for our environment, both globally and locally. And someone who, along with her husband, Mike, has created a small oasis in the midst of

the Tustin hills of Orange County that they lovingly refer to as “Tustiny.”

Lynn started winemaking from kits with the OCWS and initially, never intended to be a winemaker but, after not finding what she felt was a suitable winemaker for their venture, she took enology and viticulture classes everywhere she possibly could, from Davis to Mira Costa and San Marcos to Temecula. She was mentored by winemakers at a number of wineries in San Diego and Temecula and eventually interned at Hart. Her passion was then up and running at what could only be described as full stride.



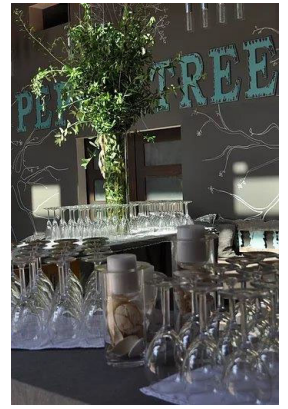
Lynn and Mike purchased four acres in the Tustin hills in 2013, with Mike’s vision of planting a Tuscan farm and making olive oils and Brunellos. They planted over 100 olive trees (Frantoios, Pendolinos and Leccinos) and over 1,400 vines, mostly Sangiovese. The property was fill dirt before they began creating their spectacular home and surrounding property. They have formed a wonderful partnership of love and respect, as Lynn is the wine-maker, while Mike makes the olive oils, which are milled within a few hours of the olives being hand-harvested.

Their determination to help the environment has led Peppertree Canyon to be a one-of-a-kind, fully sustainable property that boasts over 50 fruit trees, including fig, pomegranate, persimmon, plum, pluot, apricot, nectarine, cherry, apple, mango,

kiwi, and avocado, along with over 20 citrus trees of every varietal one can imagine.

They also have a seasonal herb and vegetable garden, as well as an assortment of berries. Lynn and I spoke of the bees that

inhabit the property and their honey making endeavors which currently produces only enough annually for their family and friends. She and Mike are so environmentally conscientious that when the beehives infringe on an area of the property unacceptable to them, they relocate the hives to other areas of the property. Lynn has also designed and built their own reservoir that collects rainwater and run off from neighboring properties, which irrigates their property and keeps the use of public water to a minimum and used only when absolutely necessary.



Lynn is most proud of their authenticity, with their wine being 100% OC grown onsite. They only make one wine, a predominantly Sangiovese blend (90% Sangiovese, 5% Petite Syrah, 5% Cabernet Sauvignon) from biodynamically farmed grapes they planted and nurture.

If I wrote everything I learned from Lynn and every aspect of Peppertree Canyon that impressed me, this article would take up this entire edition of *The Wine Press*. Suffice it to say, I highly recommend attending the OCWS Winemakers’ Group webinar featuring Lynn on Saturday, May 22 at 3 pm and experiencing Lynn’s passion and commitment for yourself. In the meantime, check out their website at www.peppertreecanyon.com. It’s fabulous and will give you an idea of the incredibly informative and fun webinar to come.

Their wine club is private, as Peppertree Canyon is not open to the public. I, personally, consider their club worth the price of admission to enjoy Lynn’s annual production, their olive oil, and their welcoming hospitality at pick up parties at Peppertree Canyon (when allowed again in a non-COVID environment, which they can’t wait to happen).

Webinar sign ups are open to OCWS members on our website at www.ocws.org. The wine that will be featured during the webinar and their olive oil can be purchased from Peppertree Canyon directly at info@peppertreecanyon.com or by calling 949.205-9608.

- Fran Gitsham, Contributing Writer

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 April 2021: **Amy & Ray Gerace; Mary & Tim Oliver; Sperti Valente**. As of March 1, the OCWS had 1,138 members.

- Mel Jay, Membership Chair

OCWS Winery Webinar Program—Jeff Runquist Wines

Friday, May 14, 2021 @ 6:30 pm
Via Zoom Webinar Platform



Jeff Runquist has a passion for red wines. His goal in winemaking is: “work very hard to produce balanced wines...wines that will age and become more complex with time, but wines that can

also be enjoyed in their youth.”

Jeff’s wines are characterized by a fruit forward nature in both the aroma and flavor that provides a good representation of the grape used to make the wine. This is followed by a depth, richness, and complexity that is enhanced by aging in small oak barrels. The wines finish with a smooth aftertaste where the tannins are soft and mature. As a winemaker, Jeff works to pack as much flavor and character into a wine as possible without stepping over the line and making a wine so tannic that aging is required to balance and round out the wine.



Instead of growing his own grapes, Jeff finds the finest growers growing the right varieties in the best locations and partners with them to provide him with fruit. This enables him the ability to produce wines with a wide variety of flavors and textures from throughout California.

of rooms for OCWS members at a discounted rate, and this rate is guaranteed only until that date. The special rate does not require advance payment and is \$145 per night plus \$16 per night parking.

Last Call: Hotel Reservations for the 2021 Commercial Wine Competition



If you plan on staying at the Hilton Hotel located at 3050 Bristol Street, Costa Mesa, for the weekend of the Commercial Wine Competition, please make reservations no later than May 15, 2021. The OCWS has booked a block

of rooms for OCWS members at a discounted rate, and this rate is guaranteed only until that date. The special rate does not require advance payment and is \$145 per night plus \$16 per night parking.

If you want to stay on the 7th floor Executive Level, the rate is \$180. Members who book their rooms using the OCWS block

Jeff does not make wine with the expectation that the consumer is going to age it to maximize its enjoyment. Over the past three decades, he has developed and refined winemaking techniques and protocols to provide a rich, full flavor without the burden of chalky, astringent tannins. One of the advantages of managing the tannins in the wine is that they can carry a bit more fruit acid, and it is this additional acid that helps the wine hold its fruit flavors as it ages.

Wine Ordering Offer: You have the option to order the wines. Proceed to the Jeff Runquist website at www.jeffrunquistwines.com. Click on “Wines” and select the three wines for this webinar. These wines will cost \$89, tax and shipping will be added. The wines to order include:

2019 Barbera, Dick Cooper Vineyards, Amador
2019 Tempranillo, Liberty Oaks Vineyard, Lodi
2019 Petite Sirah, Salman Vineyards, Clarksburg

Members have to sign-up for this virtual webinar on our website to watch via Zoom. **Sign ups close Wednesday, May 12 at 5 pm.** After you sign-up to attend, you will receive a confirmation email by Thursday noon, May 13, with details to connect. If you cannot find your confirmation, contact Rich@ocws.org. NOTE: You must sign-up separately on the website to attend this webinar. Buying the wines does NOT sign you up for the webinar.

- **Leslie Hodowanec, Director**
- **Rich Skoczylas, Director & Winery Program Chair**

will receive a bottle of wine in thanks for their help in meeting our room commitments. Breakfast will also be provided to those members who have booked their rooms using the OCWS block.

Reservations can be made by phoning the hotel directly at 714.540.7000 or if you prefer to book online, please go to the OCWS website for the OCWS direct booking link after logging into your account.

When making reservations by phone at 1-800-Hiltons (1.800.445.8667), be sure to mention the discount code “OCWS Wine Competition 2021” to receive the above rates.

- **Bill Redding, Facilities Coordinator**
Commercial Wine Competition Committee

Winemakers Newsroom

The Home Wine Competition is Back. We are accepting entries for the Competition to be held on Saturday, June 12.



The Orange County Wine Society, in conjunction with the OC Fair, has sponsored the OC Fair Home Wine Competition since 1976. This competition is open to all amateur home wine-makers in California. It is one of the largest amateur home wine

competitions in the United States. The judging is double blind, and the scoring is based on a modified UC Davis 20 point scale. Awards are presented for Best of Show along with Gold, Silver, and Bronze in each label category.

Labels are also judged during this Competition. The OCWS Winemakers' Group provides the management for the Competition. This continues to be one of the largest annual activities for the Winemakers' Group.

It is extremely important that we have volunteers! Sign-up is required! We need stewards, tasting judges, clean-up helpers, administrators, and more. Please volunteer!

The volunteer sign up link is: [Volunteers Needed - OCWS Home Wine Competition](#). We need your entries and your label entries! The wine entry link is: [OC Fair/OCWS Home Wine-maker Competition System](#).

The Competition will be held and utilize COVID-19 guideline recommendations.



If you have any questions, I can be reached by email at BillForsch@ocws.org or by phone at 949.981.5087. Best to all, cheers!

- Bill Forsch, Winemakers' Group Chair

2021 Courtyard at the OC Fair—July 16 through August 15, 2021



It's time to bring live fun back to the OCWS, while helping the organization rebound from this past COVID dominated year by vol-

unteering at The Courtyard at this year's OC Fair.

Volunteer opportunities will be here before you know it! So plan accordingly, as all willing hands and wonderful hearts will be needed and greatly appreciated.

- Servers—Sign ups open May 1 on the OCWS website—sign up **now** to secure your shifts
- Managers, Stewards & Cashiers—check your inbox (and spam folder) for invitations to sign up for these positions
- Dates for set-up, decorating and tear-down work parties will be announced June 1
- Dates for refresher training sessions will be announced June 1

We are sure you are all wondering what this year will look

like. It will be a different year, to say the least: COVID, no congregating, a restricted year in that we are only being allowed to do a “wine by the glass” fundraiser which means no award tasting, no seminars, and no Featured Winery Program. Congregating will be allowed only in specifically designated areas throughout the fairgrounds. Food and drinks will be allowed in The Courtyard at tables around the perimeter thereby allowing whatever social distancing is required at the time for sales lines within The Courtyard.

More details will follow as we get closer to Fair time and OC FEC confirmations. In the meantime, if you have ANY questions at all, please do not hesitate to ask. Just send an email to Rich Skoczylas, Courtyard Scheduling Coordinator, at courtyardsignup@ocws.org or reach out to me at Fran@ocws.org.

We look forward to seeing you at the Fair and getting back to sharing live fun, great laughs, and glasses of wine together in person!

- Fran Gitsham, 2021 Courtyard at the OC Fair 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](https://twitter.com/OCWineSociety)

OCWS Website Administrator: Wendy Taylor

OCWS Photographer: Jim Burk

Best of Fair Food & Wine Pairings



After a non-existent OC Fair last year, we are all ready to get back to some live fun and, if prior years are any indication, back to having a reason to eat some incredible, fun foods that, I imagine, most of

us don't normally eat during the rest of the year. Coupled with camaraderie coming back to The Courtyard and wine from the OCWS cellar, 2021 is finally giving us something great to look forward to. With this in mind, I've chosen to share some past Courtyard seminar favorite pairings with you to help temp your taste buds and fuel your enthusiasm for the fare to come. Created and presented by Ed Reyes and Sara Yeoman, the Fair Food and Wine Pairing seminars presented at The Courtyard have become a fan favorite of OCWS members and Fair goers alike.

I have had the pleasure of attending several of these seminars and encourage all of you, if you want to have a fun gathering, to create these pairings at home over lots of laughs with friends.

- Fran Gitsham, Contributing Writer

Food	Fair Vendor	Wine Varietal
Tasty Chips	Tasty Chips	Pinot Grigio
Battered Potatoes	Australian Battered Potatoes	Pinto Grigio
Corn	Country Fair Corn Stars	Sauvignon Blanc
Chicken with Tzatziki Sauce	Apollo's Greek	Sauvignon Blanc
Corn Dog	Hot Dog on a Stick	Riesling
Pork Chop	C&C's The Ranch	Pinot Noir
Meatballs	Pignotti's	Sangiovese
BBQ Beef Brisket	Chuck Wagon	Rhone Red/GSM
Smoked Turkey Leg	Juicy's	Rhone Red/GSM
Churros	Fabe's Churros & Gelato	Zinfandel
Chocolate Covered Berries	Terri's Berries	Sparkling Wine
Chocolate Chip Cookies	Gigi's Cookies	Sparkling Wine
Popcorn		Chardonnay

Space Wine Uncorked



Several months ago we published an article regarding a case of wine being taken to space in November 2019 on a SpaceX capsule in an attempt to explore new ways of growing plants.

The wine returned in January of 2021, and the results were analyzed two months after its landing. A 2000 bottle of Chateau Petrus Merlot was uncorked, and the contents were analyzed by a group of French connoisseurs. So, what does "space wine" taste like, you ask? Was a sprinkling of stardust detected?

Wine writer, Jane Anson, "found there was a difference in both color and aromatics and also in taste." "It felt a bit older, a bit more evolved than the wine that had remained on Earth . . . the cosmic wine's tannins were more evolved and it had a more floral character," she added. Ms. Anson concluded "that its adventure above the stratosphere added about two to three years maturity to the drink."

In case you are wondering, an earth bottle of this vintage costs somewhere around \$6,000!

- Linda Mihalik, Editor

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, Bill Forsch, Fran Gitsham, Bill Redding

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

Contributing Photographer: Wendy Taylor

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Costa Mesa, CA 92627

OCWS Save the Date Calendar

Wine Education Class:

May 4 **Wines of the California Central Coast**

Winery Webinar Events:

May 14 **Jeff Runquist Wine Company**

OCWS Varietal Hour:

May 3 **Italian White Varietals**

May 10 **Fortified Wines**

May 17 **Syrah / Petite Sirah**

May 24 **Riesling**

May 31 **Rosé**

May 22 **Winemakers' Group Presents Peppertree Canyon**

June 5 and 6 **2021 Commercial Wine Competition**

June 12 **2021 Home Wine Competition**

**July 16 through
August 15** **2021 OC Fair**



www.ocws.org

