



Monthly Tasting
Theme: Willamette Valley wines
April 26, 2015, 3:00 pm

DIRECTOR'S SECTION
(Tim Suttles, Director / Bob Garay, Director Elect)
North Alabama American Wine Society



Spring has officially sprung and our Chapter tastings continue to please. This month we enjoy lots of Merlot thanks to the Luvender's. Next on deck will be the Collier's who will host our 26 Apr tasting which is always a treat to taste amazing wine with good people at a local vineyard. It is also great to see new members offer to host tastings and as the Luvender's will attest, there is no shortage of members willing to help...especially in pre-tasting and theme selection. Every newsletter we talk about the growth of our chapter and it is all due to the fun and inviting atmosphere created by you, our members. As always, please be sure to go to our website at www.naaws-hsv.com and create a user account.

Anniversary Wine Glasses

We still have a few of the 20th Anniversary Wine Glasses remaining for those who wish to buy extras for \$5 per glass. To buy a glass please e-mail Tim Suttles at director@naaws-hsv.com. If you did not attend the wine dinner and have yet to pick up your glass, they will be available for pick up at next few monthly tastings.

Chapter 2015 Board of Directors

Director – **Tim Suttles**, director@naaws-hsv.com
Director Elect – **Bob Garay**, director.elect@naaws-hsv.com
Secretary – **Steve Peirce**, secretary@naaws-hsv.com
Treasurer – **Jodi Stephens**, treasurer@naaws-hsv.com
Programs – **Walter Collier**, programs@naaws-hsv.com
Education – **Edwin Núñez**, education@naaws-hsv.com
Newsletter – **Dave and Kim Russell**, newsletter@naaws-hsv.com
Webmaster – **Chip Boling**, webmaster@naaws-hsv.com

Chapter Web Site
<http://www.naaws-hsv.com>
(Chip Boling, Webmaster)

The membership signup on the website has taken off and have accounts for about 50% of the Chapter membership. If you have not yet signed up for an account, please remember to do so at your earliest convenience. While we have imported the newsletter email list into the website so that everyone should be receiving a newsletter sent by the website, having your own account will allow you to change your email at any time should you need to do so.

If your AWS membership is for two people in your household, feel free to sign up both members under separate accounts if you wish. And as always, after creating your account, you should receive a confirmation email within a few minutes. Please click on the verification link to confirm your account within 3 days. This extra step helps to verify that email sent from the website can reach your inbox and also helps me to automatically delete accounts created by spammers and internet bots.

NOTE: If you do not get a verification email within 2-15 minutes of creating your website account, you may want to check your spam and junk mail folders to see if it was classified improperly.

NAAWS Facebook Page



Our North Alabama Chapter has its own Facebook page: American Wine Society – North Alabama Chapter. This is a “closed” group to keep it for our members only, so click on the “Join Group” button at the top and we’ll add you to the group. This is our page--add info about wine events, photos from your wine trips, comments on a great new wine or winery you’ve discovered, etc. Check out all the pictures from previous tastings, too! Feel free to email me at Kristen@lindelows.com with any suggestions, comments, or questions about the FB page.



EDUCATION SECTION **(Edwin Núñez, Education Chair,** **AWS Certified Wine Judge)**

Willamette Valley and its Wine

I still remember the first time I heard about Willamette Valley and tasted some of its Pinot Noirs. It was at a tasting of our North Alabama Chapter of the AWS hosted by Ron Sikes and Glenda Page. I had recently joined the Chapter after learning about it from Ron Sikes and Karl Starkloff, both of whom worked with me. Much to my surprise, the wines from such an “unknown” region turned out to be quite impressive. I



learned a valuable lesson that day: don't confuse your ignorance with the quality of the wines from regions unknown to you. Now, I approach every wine and region attempting to be as unbiased as possible and expecting a pleasant experience.

A little history

Early settlers found the Willamette Valley after long journeys on the Oregon Trail. From the start it seemed like a great place for crops: its climate was not harsh, it had fertile soil, and plenty of water. Although grapes were planted there from the middle of the nineteenth century, nobody thought seriously about making the valley a great wine-producing region. As with many things in life, it all started by chance. In 1963, a young Utah student, David Lett was accepted to dental school at the University of San Francisco. On his way to Dentistry School with his wife Diana he visited Napa Valley. He suffered a total transformation and decided to go to the University of California at Davis to study viticulture. Two years later they decided to try their luck in Oregon. The first step towards the establishment of the modern wine industry in Willamette Valley was taken in 1966 when they planted 3000 Pinot Noir vines in Dundee Hills.

He was followed by Dick Erath who established Erath Vineyards. After that Amity Vineyards, Elk Cove Vineyards, Sokol Blosser Winery, and others followed. Several of them also planted Riesling and Chardonnay.

Into Stardom

The first important event that called attention to the Willamette Valley wines took place in 1979. The Olympics of Wine was held in Paris under the sponsorship of the French food and wine magazine Gault-Millau. Sixty-two wine experts from ten nationalities performed a blind tasting



of some 330 wines from around the world. The 1975 Eyre Vineyards Reserve Pinot Noir from Yamhill



County placed third among the prestigious Pinot Noirs. Suddenly, Willamette Valley Pinot Noir was in the world stage. But, was this just mere luck?

Robert Drouhin, the famous wine producer from Burgundy, set up another blind tasting in 1980 in Côte de Beaune. He could not believe that a Willamette Valley Pinot Noir could compete against world famous wines. This time the Eyre 1975 South Block Reserve Pinot Noir was judged as second only to the Drouhin 1959 Chambolle-Musigny. Luck? NOT!

That is not the end of the story! In 1983, Willamette Valley had an extraordinary Pinot Noir vintage. In a New York competition the Oregon Pinot Noirs were blind-tasted against the some of the world's top quality Burgundies. The Willamette Valley Pinot Noirs took the day. It was now clear that Oregon, and Willamette Valley in particular, were a force to be reckoned with.

Australian Brian Croser became convinced that Willamette Valley can produce excellent sparkling wines. For that purpose Argyle Winery was established in Dundee in 1987. Their work has produced top quality sparkling wines. Even famed wine critic Robert Parker decided to get part of the action. He founded Beaux Frères Winery on Chehalem in 1987. Its first wines were produced in 1991.

Enjoy Your Experience

This will prove to be a great tasting. Not only is the lineup of wines excellent, but you will enjoy them in the beautiful and romantic environment provided by our hosts Walt and Therise Collier. Just make sure you don't miss it!



Chapter Member Section:



ALABAMA COMMERCIAL
WINE COMPETITION

We are excited to announce the inaugural Alabama Commercial Wine Competition will be held August 8, 2015!

Did you know Alabama is home to 17 licensed wineries boasting more than 230 different wines? Unfortunately that is not common knowledge. This competition has been created to help recognize and promote the wineries in the state and to educate consumers on top quality Alabama wines.

The Alabama Wineries and Grape Growers Association, Big Spring Crush Wine Festival, the Alabama Tourism Department and the American Wine Society have all come together to help make this event happen. But it can't be successful without your support.

You can help make this event successful by:

Volunteering. Support on the day of the competition by helping out behind the scenes making sure all the wines are poured and the scores are recorded properly.

CONTACT - Steve Young, Competition Director: stephenyoung@comcast.net

Be a judge for the event. If you would like to be considered as a judge, please send a CV of your wine experience. CONTACT - Kristen Lindelow, Chief Judge: kristen@lindelowlkoon.com

Financial Contribution. The Alabama Tourism Department has provided a matching grant to get the ACWC established, but we must raise the matching funds. Your generous donation will be tax-deductable and the competition will recognize three levels of donors on the website:

Gold: \$100

Silver: \$60

Bronze: \$25

Please mail checks to:
Alabama Commercial
Wine Competition
Attn: Steve Young
1104 Shades Circle SE
Huntsville, AL, 35803

Payable to:
Alabama Commercial
Wine Competition

*Please provide your return
address. You will receive
a letter recognizing your
tax-deductible donation.

Become a Sponsor. There are many ways to become a sponsor and we are happy to discuss options. CONTACT - Steve Young, Competition Director: stephenyoung@comcast.net

Thank you for your support,

Steve Young, Competition Director

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE INFORMATION:

ALABAMAWINE.ORG

Note: if you have an event or other interesting item that you think would be of interest to our chapter members and would like it included in the newsletter, please send it to me. We will vet it with the directors and, if it is appropriate, we will include it in the member section of the news letter. Ideas – wine events, trips to wine regions, wine educations events, etc.

2015 Programs (Walter Collier, Programs Chair)

You can talk to me during the tasting or contact me at any other time at programs@naaws-hsv.com. Please note that we are always looking for members who have not yet hosted to sign up for the 2016 schedule, which we will fill by the end of this year. There is plenty of assistance available to help select a theme and food pairing, so don't be intimidated. Please contact Walt Collier to select a date. Remember that, at our annual membership dinner is each October; one host is randomly selected for a very nice gift as an added incentive.

Below is the calendar for the remainder of 2015:

2015			Capacity
May 17	Wines of the Iberian Peninsula	Gaineys	40
June 28	TBA	William's	40
July 26	Wine Rep Event (Local Venue)	Programs	40
Aug 23	At the Auction Celebrating our Members	Wilson's	40
Sept 20	National Tasting	Kilbey's	40
Oct 19	Annual Dinner	Programs	60
Nov 15	Sparkling Wines	Garay's	40
2016			Capacity
January			40
February			40
March			40
April			40
May			40
June			40
July	Wine Rep Event (Local Venue)	Programs	40
August	At the Auction Celebrating our Members		40
September	National Tasting		40
October	Annual Dinner	Programs	50
November	Sparkling Wines		40

Tasting Notes from the March 2015 Chapter Tasting

The North Alabama Chapter of the American Wine Society held its 29 Mar tasting hosted by Jake and Liz Luvender. The tasting was well attended by 40 members. In addition to a Champagne aperitif, Jake and Liz provided an outstanding selection of both domestic and Old World Merlots. The favorite of the first flight of three Merlots was the Deerfield 2009 Merlot Cuvee Sonoma Valley; and the favorite for the second flight was the Chateau La Fleur des Ormes 2009 Pomerol. Of those two, the Deerfield 2009 Merlot Cuvee proved to be the favorite. There was also an amazing spread that paired very well with the wines.

Thanks again to Jake and Liz for hosting an amazing tasting!

We hold a raffle at every tasting



We hold a raffle at each monthly tasting to help increase our annual contribution to the AWS Educational Foundation (AWSEF). The purpose of this fund is to assist graduate students in continuing their studies that support the American wine industry. We all enjoy the fruits (well, wines) of their labors! Just bring

your raffle item(s) to the tasting each month and we'll raffle them off. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5!! Remember, all money we raise through the raffle goes towards the AWSEF fund. Thank you!

March 2015 Raffle Results (Stephen R. Peirce, Secretary)

This month's review is of "Merlots from Around the World" at Jake & Liz Luvender's home. This raffle was very good this month with six (6) donations. Special thanks to the following members who donated items for the raffle:

Jim and Cathy Baltar – Shooting Star – Merlot 2011 California, Walter and Therice Collier – Generals Red - Merlot 2012 Virginia, Art and Susan Scott – Barefoot Bubble - Citrus Fusion 2014 California, Jake & Liz Luvender – Willakenze Estate – Pinot 2009 – Oregon, Edwin and Marisol – Impetuositt – Catawba 2013 - Finger Lakes New York, Oregon, Edwin and Marisol – Gray Ghost – 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon – Virginia.

Winners were: Art and Susan Scott, Dan Laurita, Stan and Liz Williams, Walter and Therice Collier, Jaime Zapata, Jim and Cathy Baltar.

We raised \$120 for the AWS Education Fund which is a very good amount for this month's raffle activity. Ten (\$10) in tickets were donated to the hosts and Jake & Liz Luvender. We all had a great time and I want to thank all who participated in this raffle and again special thanks to those members who donated wine and gifts for the raffle.

Chapter AWS Educational Foundation (AWSEF)

<http://www.awsef.org>

For March, the chapter raised \$258 though raffle, donations, and tasting attendance fees for the chapter education fund. The current balance in the chapter's AWSEF fund is \$1154.

Our chapter is committed to supporting the AWSEF. As most of you are aware, \$2 is added to every tasting attendance fee and is designated for the AWSEF. At almost every tasting we hold a raffle of items donated by the members. Additional donations to the AWSEF are accepted and can be added to the tasting fee as designated on the reservation form when you send in your reservation.

The AWSEF scholarship award amount is \$3,500; our chapter's has started raising money for our 7th scholarship.