

**BCAWA Executive 2009-2010**

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## BCAWA Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 1

December 29, 2009

### BCAWA Members:

Here's the first issue of your BCAWA electronic newsletter. Naturally, we would like to receive feedback from you. Please let us know what you would like to see in the Newsletter. Initially, we'll try to send it to you every 2 months.

It has been suggested that the Newsletter include club reports, announcements of upcoming competitions, of symposia and other events, a wine-friendly recipe or two, a restaurant review, commercial wine recommendations and a few links to interesting articles on the web.

We will also be sending out a brief BCAWA Bulletin on an "as needed" basis. Its content will be topical and will include items like deadlines for club competition entries, last minute changes in competition information, order forms for winemaking supplies, and other "stop press" news.

The Newsletter will also appear on the BCAWA website but it will be essential that the Bulletins reach all our on-line club members as quickly as possible. Initially, the Newsletters will be emailed to your club contact for distribution.

Since the content of the Newsletters will be exposed to public scrutiny on the BCAWA site, we will need to take

pains not to infringe on copyright. So, when you contribute material to the Newsletter, please keep that in mind.

John Schreiner has graciously encouraged us to make use of any of his blogspot material. (For more see <http://johnschreiner.blogspot.com/>). As well, Burton McClelland, President of the Amateur Winemakers of Ontario and editor of the AWO News has made a couple of his articles available.

Good Winemaking!

George Gibson



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## *President's Message*

As we approach the end of another busy year we can take a break from winemaking to spend some time with family and friends to celebrate the holiday season. John Matkovich has sent our payment out to Winemaker Magazine so we should all be receiving our first issue some time in the New Year.

I don't have any new information to pass on at this time, so I have enclosed a Christmas poem that I wrote for your enjoyment:

Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the cellar,  
Not a creature was stirring, 'Cept me, the winemaking fellar.  
The bottles were all corked with loving care  
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The glasses were lined, with cheese on a plate  
While I was quite busy checking my slate  
The Zins and the Cabs had just reached their prime  
Perhaps the Merlot and the Port may need more time

When out on the lawn there arose such a din  
I coughed and I sputtered, wine rolled down my chin  
Outside somewhere I could hear someone curse  
I knew in a moment this could only get worse

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each tiny hoof.  
As I lifted my head, and was turning around,  
Into the cellar St Nicholas came with a bound.

He smiled and grinned and said with a flash  
C'mon winemaker fill up my glass  
I poured him some Cab which brought a big grin  
His eyes were a twinkling as his head began to spin



He drank it all down and said he must go  
Outside he staggered, falling into the snow  
As I helped St Nicholas up and into his sleigh  
The reindeer looked on with shock and dismay

He picked up the reins, and to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight,  
Your Private Reserve was simply a delight!

*On behalf of myself and the BC&WA Executive, I hope you and your families enjoyed a Merry Christmas  
and that you'll have a New Year filled with good health and happiness!*

*Cheers*

*Rick Homer*

*BC&WA President*

*John Schreiner's Blogspot*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2009

**Howard Soon's Sandhill is winery of the year**

**To those who know Howard Soon's wines at Sandhill, it is no surprise that Sandhill is this year's winery of the year at the Canadian Wine Awards.**

Sandhill walked away from that competition with 21 medals, including White Wine of the Year (Small Lots 2008 Viognier) and Red Wine of the Year (Small Lots 2007 Syrah). Howard's title is winemaker and obviously that is no exaggeration.

One can have a chicken-and-egg debate: did Howard's great talent turn Sandhill into a legend or did the superbly-grown Sandhill grapes make a legend of Howard? In this instance, evolution doesn't help up. I think God created both on the sixth day so that He would have something good to drink when He rested.

All 12 vintages of Sandhill have been made in the sprawling Calona winery in downtown Kelowna. While a spot has long been reserved on Sandhill's Black Sage vineyard for a winery, Andrew Peller Ltd., which owns Sandhill, has had that project on hold while investing in Okanagan and Similkameen vineyards instead.

Over the years, however, the Calona winery has been upgraded significantly. Howard now has a new red wine cellar, including new fermentation tanks and a vast array of barrels. In one previous vintage he was able to buy a modern press and that resulted in immediate and dramatic improvements in the quality of the white wines. Howard no longer has to improvise to make good wines, as he did in the early years when Sandhill was undercapitalized.

Howard's winemaking career began at Calona in 1980. He has been there ever since, first raising the quality of Calona's wines and then taking on Sandhill when that wine project began in 1997.

Sandhill and Calona are sister wineries. Both have been owned by Andrew Peller Ltd. since 2005. As Peller's senior winemaker in British Columbia, Howard has a supervisory role in the winemaking for Peller, Calona and Red Rooster. He is the full-time winemaker for Sandhill.

Sandhill grows roughly 200 acres of its own grapes on Black Sage Road, adjacent to the Burrowing Owl Vineyard. The wineries were viticultural partners for several years early this decade and, for most of that period, have used the same superb vineyard managers. That is one reason why Sandhill's wines have shown many of the positive qualities of the Burrowing Owl wines, even though different winemakers ran the respective cellars. Both vineyards were planted at the same time, beginning in 1993 and 1994.

Sandhill also buys grapes from select vineyards whose operators are tightly aligned with Howard's objectives. Sandhill makes single vineyard wines exclusively – wines that reflect the specific terroir of where they are grown. It assures wines of unique quality. The Phantom Creek Vineyard is owned by veteran grower Richard Cleave while nearby Osprey Ridge is owned by Robert Goltz who, with son Nathan, has managed the Sandhill Vineyard. King Family is a Naramata Bench vineyard operated by Don and Rod King.

Sandhill's reserve tier wines are released as Small Lots and include, among other offerings, the only varietals of Sangiovese and Barbera currently available from an Okanagan winery. By definition, Small Lot wines are produced in quantities ranging, generally, between 100 cases and 600 cases.

The wines sell quickly but some are held back for later release. Recently, several older vintages of Small Lots wines were released at the Wineshop (in the Calona winery in downtown Kelowna). These are worth looking for; Sandhill reds benefit from a few years in the bottle before being opened.

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*John Schreiner - conclusion***Sandhill 2008 Sauvignon Blanc** /Sandhill Estate Vineyard (\$18).

Crisp and tangy with refreshing citrus and gooseberry aromas and flavours. 1,300 cases were released. 88

**Sandhill 2008 Pinot Gris** /King Family Vineyard (\$18). Crisp and clean, with pear and citrus flavours and a lingering finish. 6,300 cases were released. 88

**Sandhill 2008 Viognier Small Lots** /Osprey Ridge Vineyard (\$24.99). A stunning wine with a peachy, tropical aroma, flavours of peach and apricot, a rich texture and yet so exquisitely balanced and refreshing. 514 cases were released. 92

**Sandhill 2008 Chardonnay Small Lots** /Sandhill Estate Block B11 (\$29.99). Elegant and focussed, this 132-case release was fermented in new French oak which is very nicely integrated with the fruit. The wine has notes of apple, pineapple, citrus with a hint of richness from the oak. The finish is crisp (Howard does not do malolactic fermentation). 93

**Sandhill 2008 Rosé**/Sandhill Estate Vineyard (\$18). The winery released only 372 cases of this seriously dry rosé. With an attractive pink hue, the wine has fruity aromas and flavours of strawberry and pomegranate. The wine is made with Gamay and Cabernet Franc grapes. 86

**Sandhill 2006 Malbec Small Lots** /Phantom Creek Vineyard (\$29.99 – but the 107 cases are sold out). Here is a big satisfying wine to take on the Argentines. It begins with an appealing floral aroma; it delivers flavours of cherry, blueberry and blackberry. The long ripe tannins give it a full texture. 89

**Sandhill 2006 Petit Verdot Small Lots** /Phantom Creek Vineyard (\$29.99). This Bordeaux varietal is seldom released on its own but usually is reserved for making elegant blends. This lovely wine is a bit of the blend as well: 87% Petit Verdot, 8% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Malbec. This is a firm, age-worthy red with spicy aromas and flavours of plums and black currants. 223 cases were released. 90

**Sandhill one 2006 Small Lots** / Phantom Creek Vineyard (\$34.99). This superb wine is 86% Cabernet Sauvignon (three clones) and 7% each of Malbec and Petit Verdot. Deep and rich, the wine begins with aromas of berries and vanilla. The fruit is concentrated, with a lovely core of sweet fruit and hints of cherry and mocha. The finish is very long. 356 cases were released. 92-94

**Sandhill two 2006 Small Lots** /Sandhill Estate Vineyard (\$34.99). This equally superb 428-case release is a blend of 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot and 5% Syrah. Dark in colour, the wine invites with aromas of black currants, plums, mocha and delivers flavours of mocha, currants and figs, with a core of sweet berries. Generous in texture, the wine has a long finish. 92-94

**Sandhill 2007 Syrah Small Lots** /Phantom Creek Vineyard (\$34.99). This is a great Syrah, period. It is almost aromatic with an array of aromas from pepper and delicatessen meats to iodine. On the palate, the long ripe tannins support layers of red fruit with complex notes of pepper and minerals. 92

**Sandhill 2006 Sangiovese Small Lots** /Sandhill Estate Vineyard (\$29.99). This 644-case releases remains, so far, the Okanagan's only Sangiovese. It is almost a classic Chianti, with aromas of violets, flavours of cherries and a backbone of dry tannins. 88

**Sandhill 2006 Barbera Small Lots** /Sandhill Estate Vineyard (\$29.99). This deliciously rustic red is also the Okanagan's only Barbera. Blood red in hue, it has a brambly aroma with hints of tobacco and oak. The flavours deliver a medley of bright fruit – cherry, rose hip, blackberry – against ripe earthy tannins. In the glass, the wine keeps delivering surprises as it opens up. 90

There are additional Sandhill wines, all worth looking for based on previous vintages. In particular, **Sandhill three 2006 Small Lots** (\$34.99) is an excellent Okanagan answer to super-Tuscan wines. This is a blend of 53% Sangiovese, 18.6% Barbera, 15% Merlot, 13.4% Cabernet Sauvignon and it is a very complex wine.



## Topical Links

1) Here is a URL gleaned from the Google Alerts that clutter my Inbox every day. If you have encountered informative sites and would like to share, please email them to me.

George ([georgegibson@shaw.ca](mailto:georgegibson@shaw.ca))

This is an excellent TIME series on the impact and predicted progression of global warming on viticulture (Item 2) and much more. Hours of interesting (depressing) reading. Highly recommended.

[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1929071\\_1929070\\_1946242,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1929071_1929070_1946242,00.html)

2) Jack Ziebart suggests that the following site is worth consulting.

<http://www.iwinemaker.com/index.html> . For winemakers who have moved beyond kits and recipes, iWinemaker calculators provide quick and accurate measurements for key winemaking additions like yeast, sulphite, acid, and finings as well as a tool for modeling various blends.

## From the AWO News

Thanks to Burton McClelland, President of the Amateur Winemakers of Ontario and editor of AWO News (<http://makewine.com/awonews/>) here are abbreviated versions of a couple of articles that appeared in the Summer 2009 Issue. We appreciate Burton's letting us use them.

### *Yikes, What if it spreads West!?*

Ross Harrington, a Wine Kitz franchise holder in Halifax, was charged with manufacture and sale of alcohol without a licence and keeping/storage of alcohol without a licence. These charges stem from Mr. Harrington's attempt to add a u-vint service to his store in 2006.

Mr. Harrington's case finally came to court in November 2008. He was found not guilty on the charge of keeping/storage of alcohol without a licence because he had obtained a licence from the federal government under the Federal Excise Act and the judge deemed that this was sufficient for Mr. Harrington to legally store alcohol on his premises.

However, Mr. Harrington was found guilty of the manufacture and sale of alcohol in his store. **The judge's decision was not based on the fact that he offered the in-store winery service, but rather that under the very broad definition of liquor provided in the Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act, wine kits could be considered alcohol.**

Here is the definition of liquor as provided in the Act:

*"liquor" means and includes any alcohol, alcoholic, spirituous, vinous, fermented malt or other intoxicating liquor or combination of liquors and mixed liquor a part of which is spirituous, vinous, fermented or otherwise intoxicating and all drinks or drinkable liquids and all preparations or mixtures, whether liquid or solid, capable of human consumption which are intoxicating, and any compound, mixture or preparation whether in solid or liquid form to which the addition of water or any other liquid or any substance will produce intoxicating liquor.*

The judge used the last sentence in this definition as the basis for her judgment.

This judgment is too recent to know what the impact will be on other home winemaking supply stores in Nova Scotia, but if you follow the logic in this decision, anyone selling wine kits in Nova Scotia could be guilty of selling alcohol without a licence. It almost makes Ontario's antediluvian Liquor Control Act look enlightened.

### *The Red Wine Lover's Diet*

There's a new (2007) diet book out of England, ***The Wine Diet*** (also entitled ***The Red Wine Diet***), *A Complete Nutrition and Lifestyle Plan*, by Dr. Roger Corder, a well-respected scientist, cardiovascular expert and professor of experimental therapeutics at the William Harvey Research Institute at the London School of Medicine. Professor Corder was skeptical of some of the theories explaining the role of red wine in the French Paradox. One of the compounds found in red wine that was touted as the miracle ingredient was resveratrol. Corder felt that the amount of resveratrol found in wine was much too small to have any clinical benefit. Subsequent research has shown that an average person would have to drink about 1,500 litres of wine a day to get a clinically effective dose of resveratrol. As a scientist and a long-time wine drinker, he was frustrated that there wasn't a better understanding of what it was about wine that seemed to be providing cardiovascular and other health benefits.

Corder decided to look for other explanations for the French Paradox. He assembled a team at the institute to look at the chemical properties of red wine and how they might provide the health benefits that seemed to be observed in the French Paradox. The advice in the book is based on that research.

In 2001 Corder and his team announced that they had discovered that red wine reduces the synthesis of a key molecule connected with coronary heart disease, called endothelin-1 (ET-1). The overproduction of ET-1 is a key factor in the development of atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries. Powerful anti-oxidants called procyanidins found in young, tannic red wines, inhibit the production of ET-1, helping to protect the lining of blood vessels and reducing the danger of heart disease and strokes.

Corder found that in Sardinia, which has the highest proportion of centenarians in Europe, the prevailing diet was heavily weighted to high fat, unhealthy foods such as foie gras and cassoulet. He found that the local, traditionally produced and very tannic red wines, made primarily from the Tannat grape, contain the highest procyanidin levels of any wine tested. He realizes that traditional Sardinian wine is in fairly short supply and recommends other high procyanidin varieties such as Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese, and Nebbiolo. Grapes grown at higher altitudes or cooler temperature also seem to have higher procyanidin levels but the real key seems to be that red wines from long macerations tend to have much higher procyanidin levels than those from short skin contact fermentations. Corder feels that he has very strong circumstantial evidence to back his assertion of the cardiovascular benefits of high procyanidin red wines. (Procyanidins are also abundant in dark chocolate, cranberries, apples - particularly Red Delicious - hawthorn fruit, and blueberries.)

Although his theory still needs to be tested in clinical trials, Corder was convinced enough to use it as the underlying basis for ***The Red Wine Diet***. With a scientist's natural caution, Dr. Corder doesn't want people to drink more, but rather more wisely and selectively. The advice provided there can probably be summed up in two guiding principles: less food, but better quality; and moderate amounts of wine, carefully selected. His nutrition plan leans heavily to fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and berries and fresh fish.

One of his cardinal rules is that wine should be accompanied by food. He suggests about three glasses a day for men and two for women as a good compromise between the health benefits gained from red wine and the potential dangers of over-consumption.

(You should be able to find a used copy on line for \$7 or \$8.)

## Club Competitions

### Saanich Sommeliers Wine & Beer Competition

**DATE: Saturday, January 30, 2010**

**PLACE: St. Dunstan's Church Annex 1806 San Juan Ave. , Victoria, BC**

**Competition Coordinator:**

Larry Cole 975 Kenneth Street, Victoria, BC V8X 4V4 (250) 479-0312 [lsc@telus.net](mailto:lsc@telus.net)

**CLASSES**

A	Aperitif Sherry	I	Social
B	Aperitif	J	Country
C1	Bordeaux	K	VI Dry Red Grape
C2	Pinot Noir	L	VI Dry White Grape
C3	Zinfandel	M	Light Beer
C4	Other Dry Red	N	Hop-Focused Beer
C5	Cabernet Sauvignon	O	Malt-Focused Beer
D1	Chardonnay	P	Roasted and Smoked Beer
D2	Pinot white	Q	Belgian Wheat Beer
D3	Other Dry White	R	Sparkling Cider
E	Rose Table	S1	Red Grape Kit
F	Dessert	S2	White Grape Kit
G	After Dinner		
H	Sparkling		

**Entry Fee \$2.50** per entry – Cheques must accompany entry and be made payable to “Saanich Sommeliers”.

**COMPETITION RULES**

1. Entrants must be members in good standing of a bona fide wine club.
2. There is no limit on the number of entries per person; however, each entry in a class must be from a different variety of grape or fruit or a different vintage or blend.
3. All entries must be properly labeled (**2" x 3" minimum size**) with the following information:  
Class Name, Entrant's Info: Name, Address, E-mail address, Club Name, Principal Variety, Number of entry in a particular class (e.g. 1 of 2, 1 of 3, etc.), Any other information that the entrant feels is important (pH, SG, TA, etc.). The more information the judges have the better they are able to accurately judge your wine.  
Each label must be **securely** attached to the bottle with an elastic band (**not tape**) for easy removal.
4. Entries in Class F should specify the specific gravity so wines can be subdivided into dry and sweet.
5. All entries become the property of Saanich Sommeliers.
6. All entries will be judged in accordance with BCAWA rules and BCAWA official class descriptors.
7. Vancouver Island reds and whites (class K and L) will be judged in accordance with classes C and D.
8. Gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded in all classes.
9. Trophies will be presented for first place in some classes.

**Entry Deadline is January 17. Drop sites include George Gibson, 1289 Lucking Place, North Van. Others will be announced shortly.**

