

Amateur Winemakers of Nebraska

February 2011



www.newineclub.org

FEBRUARY MEETING

February Meeting Agenda

6-6:30 Meet and greet,
general business discussion

6:30 Tour of James Arthur
Vineyard and Winery
followed by the blending
discussion.

Cheese and crackers/bread
will be supplied. Please
purchase wine from JAV.

President's Note: Our
membership and club interest
continues to grow with each
meeting. Your \$10 membership
fee, renewable in June, goes
towards future meeting costs.

Don't forget to present your
membership card at Kirk's Brew
for a 10% discount.

WHEN: Thursday, February 17, 2010, at 6pm

WHERE: James Arthur Vineyard and Winery
2001 West Raymond Road
Raymond, NE 68428

James Arthur
VINEYARDS

James Arthur Vineyards is now the largest winery in Nebraska, producing wine from its estate vineyard, as well as contracted growers throughout the state, with its focus always on producing the highest quality Nebraska product.

Winemaker, Jim Ballard, will give a tour of the facility and a talk on the whys, how's and principals of wine blending. If you want to try blending with your own wine bring it in and have a go at it and see if you have learned anything. Please join us for this inside look at wine blending.

Secretary Notes

by Anthony Ferrara

With the hard work of crushing season over and our wines racked and set to age over the winter what could be better than to get together and reflect, celebrate, and share some traditional and nontraditional winter wines that are sure to brighten anyone's holiday spirit. We did just that on December 16! Thanks to Rhonda and Chuck Berens for graciously offering their home for the gathering. Traditional



Christmas party fun.

recipes like Glogg, Gluhwein, and various takes on British Mulled Wines were a great way to enjoy the history and culture of wines from around the world without ever leaving Lincoln, Nebraska. At the same time the nontraditional wines like Christmas Port, Reindeer Fuel, and Spiced Apple Wine showed how the boundaries of traditional wine making could be pushed to make unique and enjoyable wines.

This year was a fantastic first step for the Nebraska Amateur Winemaking Club. At year end we have 32 dues paying members and have been averaging 2-3 new members per meeting. As our meeting progressed many people spoke up with many great ideas for next year's activities. The echoing themes were learning through doing, and perfecting the basics of the winemaking processes. A joint winemaking project was suggested where we as a club would create a wine from start to finish, with some of our monthly meetings centered on the current stage of our wine, from initial fermentation all the way to bottling.



Chuck Berens

A Special Thank You to...
Rhonda & Chuck Berens

December 2010 Meeting

These meetings would not only give us a chance to talk about the equipment, additives, and processes involved in winemaking; but it would also give everyone a chance to interact with those tools in an educational environment. Other



Club President,
Marc Shoemaker

great ideas included a fund raising venture, continued trips to talk with winemakers throughout the Midwest, possibly visiting a

cooperage, and a chartered trip to some of the local wineries for tasting and appreciation.

Once again I would like to thank Rhonda & Chuck Berens for hosting December's meeting and to remind everyone that the next Amateur Winemakers Club meeting will be in February 17th at James Arthur Winery.

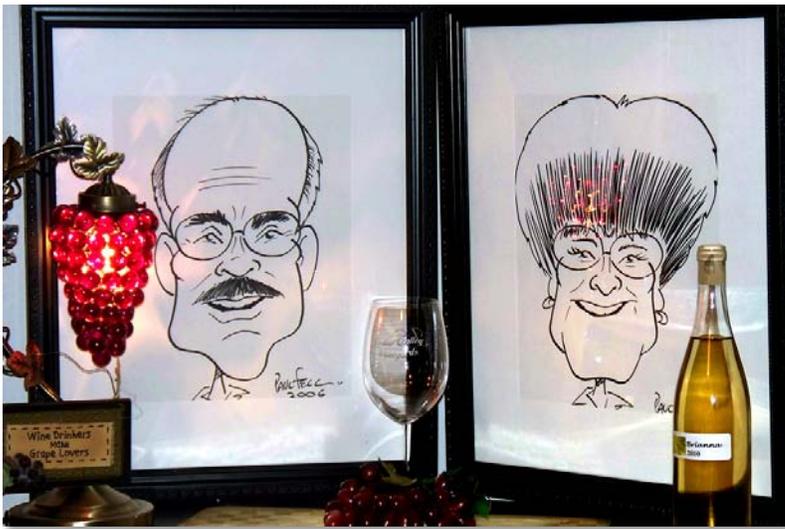
As the weather outside has turned frightful, I hope this entry finds everyone happy, warm, and enjoying a nice glass of their favorite homemade wine.

Cheers!

Anthony Ferrara
Club Secretary

February 2011 Featured Club Members

JIM & KAREN SKINNER



Jim and Karen Skinner... or at least their likenesses.

Jim Skinner grew up in Northeast Lincoln, attended Lincoln Northeast High School and graduated in 1970. Jim has been a Plumber since 1974, working for 3 different plumbing shops and once had a part-time plumbing business. Jim has worked for the City of Lincoln for 21 years as a plumbing inspector. Jim is looking forward to retirement, in about 6 years, so he can devote more time to his grandchildren, fishing, working in the vineyard, and of course, the art of wine making.

Married for 34 years to Karen, the love of his life, Jim and Karen have 3 daughters, Melanie, Jessica, and Sarah and two granddaughters, Hannah and Madison. Oh, and of course there are his son in-laws, Casey and Aaron.

Jim says he has always been a beer drinker until he started trying Nebraska wines, now he would rather have wine than beer. Jim believes that with beer you know what taste to expect, but with wine you get a new experience with each sip. "And I mean sip, the last couple of NWGGA conferences we have gone to I was trying to drink wine like I would drink beer, and boy that's a drunken mistake" says Jim. As far as family being in the wine business, Jim says he was told he has cousins by the name of Halte that have a wine business in Germany; family on his grandmother's mother's side.



Jim and Karen's Vineyard

Jim and Karen have always had a big garden and enjoyed the fresh veggies they grow, but with the girls gone they wanted something more to do with their 11 acres.

The Skinners currently have one acre of Marquette and Brianna grapes and are planning on planting an acre of Delaware this April. With two apple trees, Jim had so many apples that he decided to try his hand at apple wine, which he was quite pleased with.

This year is the most wine the Skinners have ever made and consists of Apple, Brianna, Edelweiss, Traminette, and Norton. In addition, Jim has just pulled his Chambourcin grapes out of the freezer this last weekend to get them fermenting.



Fermentation

Jim's process of winemaking comes from *Mary's Recipes*, an easy to understand book he picked up at Kirk's Brew. Jim stresses the sanitization of anything that the wine touches, and believes it can alleviate problems that winemakers can experience. Jim says, "... my wine has turned out pretty good for the most part. My girls enjoy it, and my son in-laws drink it like beer."

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANTHONY & ERIKKA FERRARA



Emerald Finley Ferrara

born January 6th @ 2:14pm
she weighed 8lbs 5oz.

Be sure to check out Mike White's column about grapes and wine. Get on his mailing list to receive PDFs.

<mailto:mlwhite@iastate.edu>

A Couple of Websites of interest:

<http://www.brsquared.org/wine/Articles/SO2/SO2.htm>

<http://www.midwestsupplies.com/>

REMINDERS:

- 1) Wine contest:** Bart Holmquist and Marc Shoemaker (founders of the club) manage the amateur wine contest at the NWGGA meeting in Kearney, this year on March 3, 4, and 5. All club members are encouraged to enter wines and/or wine labels. The cost will be \$10 for the first entry and \$7 for any others. Limit is 4/winemaker. You can either come to the conference (and learn great things about grapes and wine) or arrange to get the bottles to Bart or Marc to take to the contest. Contest rules will be forthcoming. Here is a link to the UNL viticulture site for info on the conference:
<http://agronomy.unl.edu/viticulture>
 - 2)** Also at <http://viticulture.unl.edu> and <http://www.nebraskawines.com/> find information on all of the NE wine and grape industry.
 - 3)** Our club website <http://newineclub.org> is operational under the guidance of Kerry Krause, providing all club information, and club members discussions on the forum section.
 - 4)** If you have any ideas, information, or resources you would like share in the newsletter please submit them to barth@unlserve.unl.edu or mshoe78@gmail.com
 - 5)** We will be looking for a club member to highlight next month (send in photos and bio) – any volunteers?
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