



# AWOnews

A forum for the exchange of news and opinions  
on homewinemaking in Ontario

Produced by the Amateur Winemakers of Ontario  
Winter 2009 - Volume 50

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## In This Issue

- The AWO is looking for members to help with keeping the content on the AWO website up to date and co-ordinating the shipment of AWO entries to the AWC competition. Check out the want ad in this issue to see if either of these would be of interest to you.
- One of the pioneers of the Ontario wine industry, John Marynissen, passed away recently. We remember him for his contributions to the AWO and winemaking in Ontario.
- Carole Frankow has provided information on club judging for 2009. Deadline to reserve judges is fast approaching.
- The 2009 Festival committee has provided another update on what is being planned for the 2009 Festival. It sounds like it is going to be a great time down in Niagara this summer.
- The Cellarmasters extend an invitation to other AWO members to join them in London for their post Christmas celebration.
- I review *Techniques in Home Winemaking* by Daniel Pambianchi.
- With the Super Bowl coming up, I scour the web for suggestions for wines to pair with your favourite junk foods.

## ***President's Corner***

Officially, even though each of our four seasons is 3 months long, somehow the winter season seems to be at least twice as long. I can't think of any better way of making it go away a bit faster than sitting down with a bottle of excellent wine made by ourselves. Of course, every bottle you've ever made is the best! Even better is drinking wine that has been judged to be of medal quality. Now is the time to get those wines ready for competition. If you search some of our past issues you'll find some excellent articles on preparing your wines for competition so have a look and make your wines show as best as they can.

You'll also find information in this newsletter about our upcoming Convention in June. If you have never been to one of these you are really missing a great weekend. Make this the year to join your fellow winemakers; you will be glad you did!

Best of luck in the upcoming competitions!  
Bob Gibbon

## ***Editor's Notes***

You'll notice there is a little bit of a gap in this issue of the AWONews, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say a lack of the Gap. Yes, we had our last Gap's Corner in the last issue. Hard as it is to believe, Don felt that he was running out of words of wisdom to share with his fellow winemakers. On behalf of all the readers of the AWONews, I'd really like to thank Don for taking the time to put pen to paper, or probably more accurately fingers to keyboard, to write Gap's Corner. Even more than that, I think we'd all like to thank him for sharing the wealth of winemaking knowledge that he and other members of the K-W club have amassed over the years. One only has to look at the record that Don and the rest of the K-W club has amassed in AWO competitions to see the value of the knowledge he so generously shared.

On another note, as we come closer to the AWO Festival and the Annual General Meeting, I'd really like AWO members to think about how they can contribute to the health of the organization. There are a number of AWO Executive members that have served their time, and then some, and would like to move on. Now that we have started to teleconference executive meetings, executive members don't have to worry about travelling to meetings. The time commitment is not great and we really need a strong executive to keep the organization going. If you don't want to serve on the executive, there are a number of volunteer positions that we also need to fill including the Web Editor and someone to co-ordinate AWO entries to the AWC competition. Please contact Bob Gibbon or any of the other executive members noted in the masthead if you are willing to help out.

## ***Help Wanted***

The AWO executive is looking for a creative, enthusiastic member to serve as the AWO Web Editor. The Web Editor will be responsible for updating content on makewine.com, the AWO website. Although basic web skills would be useful, they are not absolutely essential. The Web Editor is not a member of the AWO executive, although they are invited to attend the meetings if they are interested.

We have spent a lot of time and effort in the past couple of years having the AWO website redesigned and having new content added. It will start losing its value as a communications tool for the organization if we don't keep the content current and up-to-date. You can provide a valuable service to your organization by helping to keep the website current. The AWO executive will work with member clubs to help obtain new content for posting.

We are also looking for someone to co-ordinate the collection and shipment of AWO wines to the AWC competition. If we want to ensure that AWO members continue to be successful at the AWC competition we need to have someone willing to collect all the bottles from medal winners at the AWO competition, pack them and ship them to wherever the AWC competition is being held that year. This can be hectic, but it only lasts for a short time each year.

If you are interested in either of these opportunities please contact Bob Gibbon ([bgibbon@mountaincable.net](mailto:bgibbon@mountaincable.net)) or any other AWO executive member.

## ***Farewell To A Pioneer***

The AWO has lost another great friend and a true innovator with the passing of John Marynissen recently. He was proud to be known as a farmer and was never afraid to try something new or different, especially if someone told him that it couldn't be done.

John moved to Canada from Holland in the 1950s. His first job here was picking fruit in the Niagara area. Eventually he earned enough money to be able to purchase his own farm. He was one of the first growers in the Niagara area to plant vinifera grapes. His Cabernet Sauvignon vines, first planted in 1978, are probably the oldest in Canada.

John first started making a name for himself as a winemaker as a member of the AWO. He won many medals and awards, especially for his red wines. Cabernet Sauvignon was his favourite. He grew grapes for a number of wineries over the years and was named the Grape King in 1978. He finally moved from the amateur to professional ranks as a winemaker when he opened his own winery in 1990. He was even more successful as a commercial winemaker than he had been as an amateur. His wines garnered the award for best red wines in Cuvee in both 1996 and 1997.

John will be fondly remembered by many AWO friends. I think Larry Paterson sums it up best with these words:

“It is with great sadness, yet in celebration of a wonderful life, that I relate to everyone the passing of John Marynissen of Niagara on January 2nd.

John was a rugged individual, friendly, hardworking, a no-nonsense type of winemaker, a grape grower for more than 50 years. More than one person here has asked John for advice about starting their winery, or help with many things related to wine. He was always willing to talk. He liked tasting his wine as much as you did, and would taste yours - no matter how bad it might have been - and found something nice to say - and then turn around and get you with a first rate zinger on some other topic that would leave you laughing for an hour. He didn't really mind you hugging his wife Nanny either. He had more friends than he had vines.

John was a pioneer in many ways. He is probably most famous for planting the first Cabernet

Sauvignon in Canada, and continuing to be one of the very best producers of reds from the time he opened Marynissen Winery in the early 90's. He was always a fighter for things he saw as just and honourable. He was the salt of the earth.

I remember asking John what kind of yeast I should use for Cabernet Sauvignon, and in his gruff manner he told me "Yeast is Yeast and West is West". He will be remembered fondly by all who know him. I wish his heirs all the best as they carry the winery forward.

Maybe it is time to call some friends, open my last bottles of 1991 Lot 31F and Lot 31A Cabernet Sauvignon, and remember John."

## ***2009 Club Competition Judging***

Now that the fall harvest is over & Christmas is right around the corner, it's time to start planning your 2009 Club Competition! The official 2009 AWO Judging Announcement & Judging Request Form have already been emailed to all Club Reps & Alternates. Judges are assigned on a **FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED** basis so don't delay - your deadline for booking is **JANUARY 15!**

Because of the time needed by the Chief Steward to process over 700 entries for the Provincial Competition at the beginning of May, judging dates for 2009 start Saturday January 31 and end Sunday March 29! There will be **NO** extensions so we strongly urge you to hold yours well before mid-March as some dates are already full!

A number of clubs have already informally requested proposed judging dates & preferred judges - however, until I receive the proper documentation, these requests are only temporarily reserved, so I recommend you respond promptly.

**Note:** due to escalating costs, an increase in the per bottle judging fee & the mileage paid for judges are currently under consideration by the Wine Judges of Canada. I will advise you as soon as a decision is reached.

Any WJC judges who have not returned their list of "unavailable" judging dates are urged to do so now.

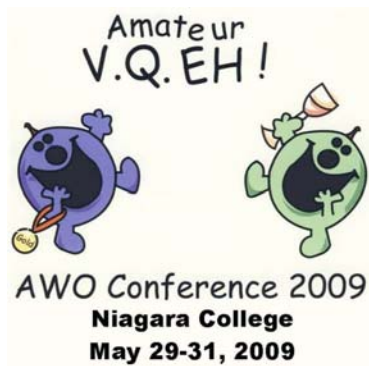
Thank you all for your cooperation. Have a blessed Christmas & a prosperous New Year!

Cheers!

Carole Frankow

Judging Service Coordinator

[gcf Frankow@rogers.com](mailto:gcf Frankow@rogers.com)



## ***Festival 2009 Update!***

We have had several meetings in the fall and we feel that it is really coming together. We will have the Registration information to you a.s.a.p. in the New Year.

Dates: Friday, May 29 to Sunday, May 31, 2009

Place: Niagara College, Niagara

Here are some highlights to whet your appetite:

- A Cabernet Franc seminar with John Tummon, Kacaba Winery,
- An Ice Wine seminar with Jamie McFarland, The Ice House Winery,
- Making Champagne with past grand champion winemaker, Herb Jacobson,
- Blending Finishing Your Wines with Natalie Spykowski,
- Making Amarone Style Wines at Home with someone from Vineland Station
- A bus tour in the morning to wineries in the Niagara-on-the-Lake area
- A bus tour in the afternoon to Beamsville Bench wineries
- Luncheon speaker will be Chris Watters, editor of Vines Magazine and a wine writer for The St. Catharines Standard

We will be using the Wine Tasting Room of the college for some special tastings

The food committee is already making sure that you will be well-fed all weekend,

The two clubs are preparing a record number of wines for you to enjoy with the meals. Would you believe at least 8! Remember – Niagara Vine to Wine was the 2008 Champion Club, EH!

### Accommodations

It is not too soon to book your accommodations. You are reminded of the particulars:

Each suite features: Air conditioning, two bedrooms, each with a double bed; kitchenette with fridge and microwave; three piece bathroom, cable television; free local phone calls, electronic card locks and a complimentary 24 hour coffee service. There is a small continental breakfast in the lobby.

Rates - Based on Double Occupancy - \$79.95 per suite per night.

Add \$5.00 for each additional person per suite. Maximum 4 persons.

Subject to 5% GST and 5% Room Tax.

That means 2 couples or 4 guys for about \$100.00 per night!!

**\*ONLY 80 2-bedroom suites have been reserved for our conference. DO NOT HESITATE!!**

Your AWO Niagara organizing committee does not book rooms. You need to do it yourself as follows:

Call the Niagara College directly. 1-877-225-8664 or 905-641-4435

Tell them that you are booking for the AWO 2009 conference.

They will take it from there.

This is a special rate. Don't wait too long. The rate may go up! You can cancel up to May 1<sup>st</sup> without penalty.

See you in Niagara, EH!!

Al Johnson, Chair

[ajohnson44@cogeco.ca](mailto:ajohnson44@cogeco.ca)

## ***Cellarmasters Post-Christmas Dinner Party***

Hello All,

We wish everyone a safe and joyous holiday season.

The AWO Cellarmasters invite all AWO members to our annual post Christmas dinner party. All AWO members near and far are welcome to attend!

This year we again feature a special choice of one of 3 entres for dinner at one of London's gourmet dining establishments, The Main Street Manor, in Lambeth. The cost is all inclusive and a bargain considering that you will have the pleasure of experiencing fine dining along with the best wines that our members and guests have to offer.

The details are as follows:

Place: Main Street Manor - 2466 Main Street Lambeth

Directions: Wharncliffe Road South to Lambeth

Restaurant is on the South side in a strip plaza located between the two stop lights on Main Street in Lambeth.

Date: Sunday January 25, 2009

Social Hour: 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM

Dinner: 6:30 PM

Cost is \$45 per person. Includes everything - meal, tip, tax & gratuity

Gift Exchange: Bring a bottle - get a bottle

Please bring your select wines for the gift exchange.  
Put your name on your gift bottles so that we can make sure that you receive a wine from another wine maker and that you receive comments back.

Wines: Please bring wines for our social hour and the table for during dinner and aperitifs for after our meal. Unopened (& empty)bottles can be taken home

LCBO special permit will be obtained.  
Our club's breathalyzer will be available.

London Wine Pros, The Happy Wine Makers and The Grape Busters along with any other AWO members and Executive are invited to share in our camaraderie!

## ***Book Review - Techniques in Home Winemaking by Daniel Pambianchi***

Many of you have probably met Daniel Pambianchi, the winemaker at Maleta Winery and Technical Editor for WineMaker magazine, either at his winery or one of the many AWO Festivals that he has attended. He first wrote *Techniques in Home Winemaking* a number of years ago. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition has just been released and has been updated and considerably expanded.

*Techniques in Home Winemaking* provides a comprehensive guide for home winemakers, from beginners to advanced amateurs. However, some of the chapters, such as the one on Analysis and Control, may look a little intimidating to someone just starting out. Realizing that, the author has provided a simple table at the beginning of the book, recommending which sections should be read by beginner, intermediate and advanced home winemakers.

The book is clearly written and well organized, with sections on:

- Introduction - providing definitions of some winemaking terminology as well as talking about wine styles and ingredients;
- Winemaking Equipment and Sanitation - describes the range of equipment used in home winemaking and talks about the importance of maintaining good sanitation practices;
- Analysis and Control of Musts and Wines - discusses the analysis and adjustments for sugar, acid, pH, SO<sub>2</sub> and phenolics;
- Making Wine - the emphasis in this section is on winemaking from fresh grapes or juice, with information about crushing, pressing, fermentation and malo-lactic fermentation;
- Finishing - including chapters on clarification, by racking, fining and filtration, stabilization and blending;
- Aging and Bottling - this section talks about barrel aging and oak alternatives, as well as bottling devices and closures;
- Specialty wines - a number of chapters on the techniques for making various wines, including Pinot Noir, Sparkling, Port-style and Ice Wines;
- Troubleshooting - information on identifying and addressing many of the common winemaking problems encountered by home winemakers;
- Constructing a Wine Cellar - advice on planning and building a cool cellar.

I found that this book oriented more towards the intermediate or advanced amateur but it could serve as a very useful addition in any home winemaker's reference library. It retails for \$21.95 and can probably be found in most larger book stores or ordered from the publisher, Vehicule Press of Montreal.

# ***Super Bowl Wines***

As the Super Bowl is coming up shortly, I thought I would scour the web for suggestions to answer that age-old question: "What wines go best with my favourite junk food?" The following were suggestions that I found to cover the range of junk food groups (salt, sugar, fat):

**Plain Potato Chips:** The classic pairing with plain, salted potato chips is dry sparkling wine, although any dry white wine with decent acid should do. Apparently full-bodied dry red wines also work well with the tannins matching well with the salt in the chips.

**Butter-Flavoured Popcorn:** The natural match for buttered popcorn is a big, oaked Chardonnay that has gone through malolactic fermentation. The rich, buttery notes and full oaky body are a great match for the butter and salt on the popcorn.

**Nacho Cheese Doritos:** The artificial cheese flavour makes this a tough match, but a Pinot Gris or Pinot Grigio seems to work best here.

**Classic Cheetos:** Another tough match because of the cheese flavours but something like a dry Riesling with a lot of acid could be a good match.

**Chocolate Chip Cookies:** As with any chocolate, port will be a good match for your favourite chocolate chip cookies. I think that you don't have to spring for anything more expensive than a decent Late Bottled Vintage port.

**Cracker Jacks:** This is a really tough match because you have the caramel coating on both peanuts and popcorn. Perhaps an oaked Chardonnay that hasn't fully gone through malo so you have the caramel notes from the oak but still retain crisp acidity. Another potential is an aged off-dry Riesling. The sweetness and crisp acidity might do the trick here.

**Skittles:** Matching with Skittles is complicated by the fact that there are a number of different flavours mixed in the same bag. The darker colour Skittles, red and purple, have strawberry and grape flavours. A nice dry or sparkling rose will work well with these. On the other hand the lighter colours, green, yellow and orange are citrus flavours (lime, lemon and orange) and work best with a wine with citrus on the nose and palate, such as a dry Muscat. My advice is to share the bag with a friend - one of you take the dark colours and the other the light.

**Pepperoni Pizza** - the cheese and spicy pepperoni flavours work well with a number of dry red wines. Barbera is often a good choice as it has the acidity to cut through the richness of the cheese and match the spice of the pepperoni.

**Original Recipe KFC Chicken** - I'm not sure what the Colonel's original recipe 11 different herbs and spices are, but they require a wine with a bit of spice in the nose and palate. A good red might be a Rhone-style Syrah-Grenache blend, while a spicy Gewurztraminer might be a good white match.

These recommendations are of course good for more than just the Super Bowl - they'd work for anytime you feel the need for junk food, perhaps the Stanley Cup playoffs or just any Saturday night the Leafs are losing, that should provide lots of opportunities.