



## **2025 Annual General Meeting**

**June 21, 2025**

**Held at Mohawk College at the Residence Common Room**

### **Certification of a Quorum**

There were 10 Clubs represented, which easily met the quorum requirement of 8, including Brampton Winemakers, Central Toronto Wine Guild, Georgetown Vintners, Kitchener Waterloo Winemakers Guild, London Wine Pros, Niagara Vine to Wine Circle, Other Hamilton Wine Club, Press Agents Winemakers Club, South Coast Winemakers Guild, The Corkscrew Society, Wentworth West Zymologists

### **Introductory Remarks and Welcome**

President David Sykes welcomed all to the 2025 AGM at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario.. David Sykes chaired the meeting.

### **Minutes from the 2024 AGM Meeting**

A motion to accept the 2024 AGM minutes was proposed by David Sykes and seconded by Ian Griffith and was voted on with 10 Yes and 0 No. The motion was carried.

### **Financial Report**

The Financial report was briefly reviewed by the Treasurer, Ian Griffith. Total Receipts as of May 31, 2025 were \$17,988.78, and Disbursements as of the same date were \$15,208.94. The Closing Bank Balance was \$14,479.91 for a total Equity of \$31,768,14, including 3 GICs totaling \$17,280.13. There were no revisions required. It was proposed by Ian G. and seconded by Jim Casey. 10 Yes and 0 No. Motion carried.

### **Membership Report**

The Membership report was presented by Don Osmond.

There were 21 Clubs in 2024 and 182 members. The number of members in 2024 is down to 182 as compared to 203 in 2023. This is an ongoing trend, and the Board is actively trying to tap new sources through contacting Ferment on Premise stores and personal contacts. The Report was proposed by Don Osmond and seconded by Jim Casey. Voting indicated 10 Yes and 0 No. The Motion Carried unanimously.

### **Club Judging Coordinators Report**

The judging Coordinator's Report was presented by Brian Aziz. Everything ran smoothly this year. A total of 18 clubs and one MAL were judged, requiring 30 judges.

Three of the clubs joined other club judging events. Approximately 1000 wines were judged. Overall numbers were similar to last year. There is still some miscommunication due to email going unread. We suspect it is likely due to spam filters. The report was proposed by Brian Aziz, seconded by Ellen Kareckas. The Vote was 10 yes and 0 no. The motion was carried unanimously.

### **Chief Stewart's Report**

The report was presented by Ellen Kareckas, Chief Steward. The Provincial competition took place May 30-June 1 at Brock University, St Catharines. Participating Clubs 19, Participating Winemakers 92 Total entries 490 (-29).

Gold 67, Silver 346, Bronze 51, Merit 17

A total of 25 judges participated over 3 days.

Ellen proposed the Report be approved and Ian Griffith seconded the motion. The vote was 10 Yes and 0 No. The motion was carried.

### **New Business**

There were 4 motions received by the deadline for the AGM.

**Motion 1: *That the AWO remove two award categories from the Provincial Competition final results: "Best white table wine from concentrate" and "Best red table wine from concentrate"***. This was proposed by John Biondich of the Press Agents Club and It was seconded by Jim Casey.

The open discussion for pro and con on the motion was in general agreement, as these categories were introduced when Vin Bon was an active 10 -12 member "Club", and they wanted concentrates which they all sold to winemakers to get a special award.

**The Motion CARRIED with 9 For and 1 Against.**

**Motion 2: *To ban Flavour and Aroma Extracts in Wine Competition*** was proposed by Jayeson Earl on behalf of the Press Agents Club. It was seconded by John Biondich

The floor was open to For and Against discussion. **For** individuals proposed that the introduction of additives such as chocolate, herbs and spices or flavour concentrates was in a sense cheating. It was also noted by judges present that it would be very difficult to identify and determine if additives were added.

**Against** individuals, indicated there should be flexibility in producing the best wines one could create.

**The Motion was Defeated with 2 For and 8 Against**

**Motion 3: That all printed and online competition results will include grape varieties and percentages for each wine entry. Results will display Medal Category, score, grape varieties with percentages, along with the winemaker's name and the wine style** was proposed by Jayeson Earl, on behalf of the Press Agents Club. It was seconded by John Biondich  
The motion was opened for discussion on the floor.

**The Motion CARRIED with 9 For and 1 Against**

**Motion 4: That the current Pinot Noir/Pinot Meunier/Gamay Class be split into 2 separate categories: a. Pinot Noir/Pinot Meunier Class, and b. Gamay Class** was proposed by Jayeson Earl, on behalf of the Press Agents Club. It was Seconded by John Biondich

There was a lively open discussion **For** and **Against** the motion.

Those **For** argue that Gamay is often made using Carbonic Maceration, as in making Beaujolais Wine with accented fruitiness where whereas the Pinots usually are made using traditional wine-making techniques and are not overly fruity. Therefore, the two processing techniques make completely different wines with unique tasting profiles.

Those **Against** indicated that over the past years, hardly any winemakers do carbonic maceration, and making a class for fewer than 6 entries was not practical.

**The Motion was Defeated with 2 For and 8 Against**

### **Cider Achievement Awards**

Ellen K presented the suggested new point levels for Cider Makers to make the Cider achievements similar to Wine achievements. It basically doubled the number of points to attain any of the Cider levels. The current achievements awards will be grandfathered and not withdrawn. It will simply mean that the various levels will be harder to attain. A decision as to whether to give the current achievement recipients a score based on the new suggested levels or to simply Grandfather the awards already presented will be determined by the Board of Directors and look for Club input on their final decision

### **Provincial Medals**

The cost of medals have escalated to the point that it is \$5 per medal. We do not receive enough income from winemakers entering Provincial competition to cover this.

The Membership was asked if they want to continue issuing medals with the certificates or if there was another way to solve this.

Discussion from the floor indicated the medals were particularly important to new wine makers. They cherish them. However, Senior Winemakers indicated they were not as important. A Bronze could be stopped. Another suggestion was to ask the winners if they wanted a medal when they won. If they wanted the medals, they could pay \$5 for it after the results of the competition are known. Another suggestion was to recycle old medals by sending back unwanted surplus ones and use them as new awards.

Consensus was that Golds were important to everyone. Silvers could be optional and Bronzes could possibly be eliminated by asking the winners if they wanted them.

Adding \$5 to the \$20 entry fee would not be fair to those who did not medal and may increase the decline in entries.

It was decided that Medal award winners will be asked if they want to receive a medal on their submission form in advance of Provincial Judging.

### **Paul Dunseath Award**

The Paul Dunsneath award was awarded this year to Tino Montopoli of the Kawartha Krushers. Tino was recognized for his lifelong contribution to AWO. He was a founding member of the Kawartha Krushers and is currently the President of the KK. He has provided guidance to his club for many years and with his Chemistry background as a Pharmacist, has helped to improve the quality of wines produced by his club. He was instrumental in acquiring donations for the past AWO Festivals and was untiring in his efforts to promote AWO and grow membership.

### **Member Survey on AWO Direction**

Peter Zuzek Director of Promotions provided a detailed review of the Survey he had compiled that was sent out to all AWO members. The presentation was very informative. Having just been compiled into its final format, Peter will be sending this out to all members to review in the following month(s). It gives us a clear indication as to what AWO members want from the organization and will act as an excellent guide to future direction for the Board of Directors.

### **Change of AWO Name**

The BC wine makers are looking to change their name to The British Columbia Artisan Winemakers.

The question was: Do the AWO members want to follow suit?

There was general discussion on this, but no one was strongly opposed. The Board will address this in the next couple of months and likely do a quick survey of clubs.

### **Election of Directors**

At present, Ken Maley, Vice President, Ian Griffith, Treasurer, and Jim Casey, as Secretary, plan to stand. Ellen has resigned as President. Dave Sykes will continue to stand as President. Brian Aziz will continue as Club Judging Coordinator, and Don Osmond will stand as Membership Director for at least another year. Peter Zuzek will stand as Promotions Director. That gives us 7 Directors on the Board. We can have up to 9 Directors, and we would like to bring new people into the Administration as Directors at Large. No one stepped forward at the AGM, so the Board will continue to look for interested candidates.

Reported by Jim Casey, Secretary