



HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Introduction

By Ed Dent & Meril Markley

As snow dusts vineyards and thoughts turn to holiday celebrations, we anticipate enjoying wine with loved ones and friends, including members of WST. We hope you are enjoying the reinvigorated Newsletter, including this second edition.

Whether by accident or design, two themes bubbled up in creating this quarter's Newsletter. One is the Wine Society's Scholarship Program, including fundraising efforts by the [Permian Basin Chapter](#) and profiles of both a member of the Scholarship Committee ([Paul Marko](#)) and of a past recipient of two grants ([Brent Pape](#)).

The other theme is Sagrantino, a very old and obscure Italian grape enjoying an award-winning Renaissance in Texas. While [Paul Bonarrigo](#) of Messina Hof is not the only WST member to have traveled to Umbria and been captivated by Sagrantino di Montefalco, he is the one who has put Sagrantino on the map as a Texas wine. We're hoping this recent addition to the pantheon of Texas reds might make the difference and cause Paul Marko finally to embrace red wines!

In last quarter's Newsletter, [Russell Kane](#) focused on some of the grape varieties, from warm climates of southern France, which do well in Texas. This time, he mentions Italy and highlights the success that Aglianico is having from its origins in southern Italy to its new home in the Hill Country.

Turning back to France, we thank Helena Cheng and John Adams for bringing the annual meeting's focus on [T.V. Munson](#) to an event for the Greater Houston Chapter at their home on October 20.

While we may think of France as old, our members have been traveling to other outposts where fine wines have been made for centuries - [Portugal](#) and [Greece](#).

With a nod to a more modern tradition, we have shared information about [Open that Bottle Night](#), started 20 years ago with readers of *The Wall Street Journal* and coming up again on February 29, 2020.

Finally, we thank our contributors and wish them, along with all our readers, a blessed holiday and a healthy, prosperous 2020 filled with interesting new wines to try, tantalizing travels, and many more submissions to this Newsletter!

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WST Update

Preparations are already under way for next year's annual meeting, to be hosted by the Permian Basin Chapter. These include an accelerated schedule for scholarship applications and awards to coincide with the meeting. As plans progress, we will be including a report on the 2019 meeting and details of what to expect in 2020.

Events



*We planned it through
the grapevine...*

Tour of Burgundy

After a successful trip to Portugal (as detailed in her article on page [17](#)) Elizabeth Lutton and the DFW Chapter are planning their next wine adventure! Anyone interested in a wine tour of the Burgundy region of France in late May of 2020 should contact ealutton@hotmail.com.

Current Events

We look forward to receiving information and photos from Chapters' holiday parties.

Recent Events

Besides events covered by articles in this edition, AWI held the annual release party for its Argentine wines on November 2nd at Patagonia Grill & Café in Houston.

New Members

The following individuals have joined since the last Newsletter:

Permian Basin

Eric Olson

Dallas Fort Worth

Lindsay Linharta

Greater Houston

Clifford Richmond

Nicholas & Sharonda Williams

Open that Bottle Night

Long-time readers of *The Wall Street Journal* will recall a feature called *Open that Bottle Night* (“OTBN”). It was originated by wine columnists Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher who wrote the *Tastings* column for the newspaper from 1998 until 2010. They continue to write about wine on a website called grapecollective.com.

OTBN began in 2000, designed to encourage people to drink wine that had been around for a while – whether a *grand cru* purchased for the wedding of a child not yet born or something that grandpa bottled at home. The columnists suggested having a party and serving dinner while opening several wines, but having some reliable favorites on hand in case “that bottle” proved undrinkable!

Held annually on the last Saturday of February, the tradition continues with a website called openthatabbottlenight.com (which notes that it is not affiliated with the originators). It includes tips for hosting OTBN and preparing the wines for their star turn.

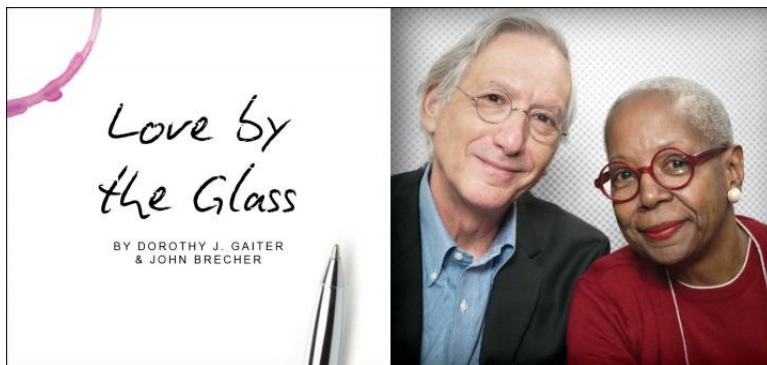
I always enjoyed reading the columns, especially when readers shared their experiences including the wines they had drunk and why they were important. These ran the gamut from poignant to comic, sometimes alluding to the relief of no longer being haunted by “THAT BOTTLE!”

The next OTBN is on Leap Year Day, Saturday, February 29, 2020.

If you plan on participating in or holding an OTBN event, please [email us](mailto:email@grapecollective.com) about it (and include some photos) for the next edition of the Newsletter.

Here’s to the originators of OTBN who famously said —

Wine is more than the liquid in the bottle. It’s about history, geography, relationships and all of the things that are really important in life.



John Brecher and Dorothy J. Gaiter (from grapecollective.com)

Celebrating T.V. Munson and Ties with France

By Helena Cheng

The Denison, Texas location for the 2019 Wine Society of Texas Annual Meeting in September inspired us to share what we learned with other members. This also provided an opportunity to continue the celebration of a legendary wine-inspired friendship between Texas and France!

Denison, the birthplace of Eisenhower and sister city of Cognac, may be more famous in France than in Texas. Why? It was also the home of Thomas V. ("T.V.") Munson, the Texan horticulturist who saved the French wine industry from phylloxera.

There is no better way to salute this friendship from 1887 than sipping some French wines and learning more about Munson through photographs and discussion! So we hosted an event on Sunday, October 20, for the Greater Houston Chapter.



There was a brief slide show and educational lecture by John Adams about the science and history of Munson, phylloxera, and the French wine industry, with some photos from our trip to Munson's house and the historical vineyard in Denison.



You too can be an expert on this topic with ten quick facts:

- 1) Phylloxera vastatrix ("devastating leaf-dryer") is caused by a tiny louse related to aphids that feeds on sap from grapevine roots and leaves.
- 2) Phylloxera was brought to France from America, where the native grapes had developed a resistance.
- 3) The European wine industry developed over thousands of years using the single grape species *Vitis vinifera*.
- 4) By 1880, about two million acres of French vines were destroyed by phylloxera, prompting the offer of FF 600,000 in awards for a cure.
- 5) In just Texas, there are 80 different *species* (not just varieties) of grapes that are suited to local soils and conditions.
- 6) T.V. Munson worked in Denison, Texas to cross-pollinate and hybridize American grape species to improve their wine quality, so he was very familiar with their origins and conditions.
- 7) The solution to phylloxera was to graft *Vitis vinifera* onto American rootstocks.
- 8) The scion (top part) determines the grape variety produced, while the rootstock gathers nutrients.
- 9) The rootstocks that Munson recommended to the French were Texas native *V. Berlandieri*, *Cinerea* and *Cordifolia* (*vulpina*) grapes that were found in the Central Texas Hill Country at Dog Ridge in Bell

Celebrating T.V. Munson (cont'd)

County near Temple, Texas. These wild grapes can still be found there.

10) In 1888 the French government named Munson *Chevalier du Mérite Agricole* of the French Legion of Honor, their highest order of merit, and many town squares in wine-producing areas of France have a statue or plaque honoring Munson.



The grapes that Munson recommended for rootstocks for phylloxera resistance in both Europe and California are still widely used worldwide along with American *V. riparia* and *V. rupestris*.

Please use this [link](#) to download the presentation.

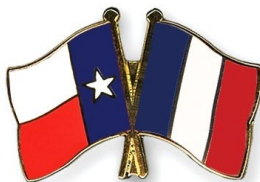
Once “school” was out everyone enjoyed a relaxing afternoon of French pot-luck. Each guest brought a French-inspired dish and a bottle of French varietal wine. Chapter members impressed everyone with their efforts and creativity.

At the appetizer station, we had pork rillettes and salmon rillettes, roasted cheese with cranberry sourdough bread, and a wide variety of French cheeses. For main dishes, we had coq au vin, ratatouille, and chicken with white sauce. Last but not the least, we finished up with seven great desserts!



The wine lineup was amazing: from Champagne, Burgundy, Loire, Alsace, Bordeaux, Sauterne, Cahors, and a few good Tannats from Texas, with a total of 30 bottles consumed.

We were honored to have Dennis Petito - a Board Member from the [French American Chamber of Commerce of Houston](#) - join us for the event. While the French Consul General in Houston, Alexis Andres, was unable to attend he was enthusiastic about our theme. He too has made the pilgrimage to Denison in honor of T.V. Munson's importance to France.



Past Scholarship Winner—Brent Pape

Brent Pape was awarded the following scholarships from the Wine Society of Texas: in 2015 the James F. Whitley Founders Grant of \$3000 and in 2014 the Russell D. Kane grant of \$1250. He is Co-Winemaker and Viticulturist at [Perissos Vineyard and Winery](#) in Burnet, Texas.

WST: Are you a Texas native?

BP: I was born in Lubbock and raised in San Angelo, Texas, where I attended Central High School. The majority of my immediate family, along with my wife Lisa's family, reside in San Angelo and other portions of West Texas.

WST: What got you interested in viticulture and wine making?

BP: I've always enjoyed learning about and tending to plant life. My mother and father have green thumbs, and I'd like to think that they passed that passion on to me. My love for growing wine grapes and making wine dates back to my time working at Texas A&M AgriLife in Lubbock. It started out as "just a job," and a means to pursue a graduate degree, but it ended up exposing me to this incredible industry that I now call home.

A lot of people in this industry talk about "catching the wine bug," and that's exactly what happened to me. Once I experienced cultivating wine grapes, made wine from the fruit of my labors, and was able to enjoy that wine with the folks who meant the most to me, there was no turning back. I knew I was going to be a Texas wine "lifer."

WST: You mentioned, Texas A&M AgriLife, tell us more about your education.

BP: After graduating from high school, I attended Texas Tech University in Lubbock where I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Agricultural Communications, with a minor in Natural Resources Management. I then earned a Master's Degree in Agricultural Education, with a focus in Viticulture. Simultaneous to graduate school, I earned a Professional Certificate in Viticulture, a Professional Certificate in Texas Winemaking, and a Graduate Certificate in Agricultural Leadership (all from Texas Tech). Shortly after, I earned a Level 1 Award in Wines from the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET).

Previous to making the move to the Texas Hill Country, I worked for Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension in Lubbock for a little more than six years, with the last three years of my tenure working under Dr. Ed Hellman as a Research Technician in the Viticulture and Enology Program. Being given the opportunity to learn something in the classroom one day, and actually put it to practical use in the vineyard or winery at work the next, was incredible.



Scholarship Winner—Brent Pape (cont'd)

WST: Who are some of the people who have been instrumental in helping you to achieve your goals?

BP: Ed Hellman at Texas A&M AgriLife was a great mentor and an incredible teacher. He took a chance hiring me, which allowed me to discover my passion. For this, I am forever grateful.

Seth Martin, proprietor of Perissos Vineyard and Winery, has been instrumental in my growth as a wine-



maker in Texas. He took me under his wing and became a mentor to me from the moment I started at Perissos; he taught me how to make world-class, 100% Texas-grown wines. Also, Kirk Williams, a viticulture instructor with Texas Tech, has been an exceptional guide to me. He has always come through and helped me diagnose and treat any kind of issues I find in the vineyard (whether nutrient or pest-related).

WST: Let's focus on your role as Co-Winemaker at Perissos, including both successes and challenges.

BP: Every year is such a wild ride. It's a lot of hard work; lots of early mornings, long days, sleepless nights, and aching bones, but it is definitely the coolest job on the planet.

We have been very blessed at Perissos Vineyards; we've received quite a few high awards for our wines. These include Best of Class awards from the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, Grand Star Awards, Double Gold, Gold, Best in Varietal, and Class Champion medals from the Houston International and Lone Star International Wine Competitions.

Weather is by far our greatest challenge each season. Sometimes that takes the form of a late spring freeze or frost event, other times it's hail, flooding, drought or extreme heat. Our unpredictable weather patterns in Texas,



whether it be here in the Hill Country or up in the High Plains, can make growing wine grapes incredibly challenging at times. Each season's crop is a unique product that is the result of our management practices, combined with the effects of our soils, topography and climate. Though some years the tough weather

Scholarship Winner—Brent Pape (cont'd)

can take its toll on us (and our vineyards), every so often we are blessed with a textbook perfect season (like 2017), which makes it all worth it.

WST: As a young winemaker, what do you see for the future of the Texas wine industry?

BP: The future is looking incredibly bright. We've really only just begun; I think we are just now seeing the tip of the iceberg in terms of the potential the wine industry has here in Texas. I fully expect this industry to continue to grow rapidly and exponentially, which will be an amazing thing for the people of Texas and its economy, and the people of the world for that matter. I truly believe that our best wines haven't even been made yet!

My favorite wine-growing region is the Texas Hill Country. The diversity of soil types that formed over billions of years as a consequence of the igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rocks in the area are unbelievable. In Burnet County, specifically, we have outcroppings of granite, gneiss and schist that are absolutely beautiful while appearing mysterious, and very much unique to our little patch of the Hill Country. The resulting wines made from cultivars such as Aglianico and Tempranillo are my favorites.

WST: How did you become aware of the Wine Society of Texas Scholarship Program?

BP: I learned of it through the Viticulture and Enology program at Texas Tech University.

WST: How beneficial was a Wine Society of Texas Scholarship in your educational pursuit?

BP: The Scholarship was immensely helpful in my educational pursuits. I'm incredibly grateful for the awards and support that I received from the organization. Scholarships from this organization allowed me, and others like me, to live my dreams, accomplish educational goals, and learn about this amazing thing we call wine.

WST: It's clear that winemaking is more than a full-time job, but what do you enjoy doing on your time off?

BP: I'm an avid outdoorsman. I love spending my free time bass fishing, dove/duck/deer hunting. My wife and I also enjoy hiking through the various state parks across Texas.

WST: Where do you see wine taking you?

BP: I truly believe that this will be a lifelong passion for me. There's something incredibly amazing about tending to vines year in and year out, and having a product to show for it at the end of each season. Having the ability to bottle something unique that you've hand-crafted each year, and being able to share that with friends and family is truly special.



Sagrantino Triumphs in Texas and Beyond

By Paul Vincent Bonarrigo

Sagrantino, “the Sacred Wine” is indigenous to Montefalco in the central Italian region of Umbria.

For centuries it was produced as a *passito*, which is harvested and placed on straw mats until the grapes dehydrate. Then the grapes are crushed and fermented as a sweet dessert wine. The wine was used during communion in the Catholic Church.

In the mid 1970s, Sagrantino was fermented and made as a dry red full-bodied wine. It was unique to a small wine growing region around Montefalco, a small hillside village.

Only Sagrantino grown near Montefalco can be called *Sagrantino di Montefalco*. They also make a *Montefalco Rosso* which is majority 60-70% Sangiovese, 15% Merlot or other red ,and 15-25% Sagrantino.

Merrill and I taught Wine Marketing In Perugia, the capital city of Umbria, in 2012. That is when we fell in love with Sagrantino. We tasted many Sagrantinos and I was hooked.



When I returned to America I contacted every California and Washington State nursery. They explained that UC Davis had just released the varietal. We bought every Sagrantino vine in California and Washington State.

Messina Hof is the first Texas winery to produce a Sagrantino, a varietal not widely known outside of Italy, but that thrives in Texas conditions giving it a rich pigment and intense tannins. We are now the largest producer of Sagrantino in the U.S. If we were in Italy we would be one of the largest producers in Umbria!

Messina Hof's Paulo Sagrantino 2015 became one of the first Texas wines to achieve a Gold Medal at AWC Vienna in 2017, the largest officially recognized wine competition in the world. We also beat out every Umbrian Sagrantino.

Our Sagrantino Reserva won the Star of Texas Award at the Lone Star International Wine Competition. With the results just in, the Paulo Sagrantino took the Gold Medal in the classification “New World Red Italian Varietals and Blends (\$30 & Above)” at the 2020 Houston Rodeo Uncorked! International Wine Competition.

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Sagrantino Triumphs (cont'd)

We now have three acres of Sagrantino planted in our front yard estate vineyard.

So, our love of Sagrantino has resulted in three varietals added to our [Messina Hof Winery](#) portfolio.



Scholarship Benefit Dinner October 5 in Odessa

By Shirley Choate

On Saturday, October 5, a beautiful fall evening full of stars in Odessa, Texas, the Wine Society of Texas and the Texas Wine Foundation hosted a wine dinner to benefit the Scholarship Grant Programs of both organizations. It was a great start for Texas Wine Appreciation Month.



Dexter Harmon (WST BOD) and Dacota Haselwood, Executive Director, TWGGA - Practicing the art of French *Sabrage*



There were representatives from the wine industry from across Texas, including winemakers Martha Dotson of [Dotson & Cervantes](#), Todd Webster of [Brennan Vineyards](#), Jim Evans of [Lost Oak Winery](#), and Julie Kuhlken, Co-Owner of [Pedernales Cellars](#). Dacota Haselwood, Executive Director of [TWGGA](#), Shirley Choate, State President of [Wine Society of Texas](#), Dexter Harmon, Paul Marko and Kent Oberle, all on the State Board of Directors for the Wine Society of Texas, and members of the DFW Chapter and Permian Basin Chapter of the Wine Society of Texas also attended. For details about the food and wine pairings, see the [Fall Issue](#) of the Newsletter.



Dakota Haselwood & Jim Evans,
Winemaker, Lost Oak Winery



Julie Kuhlken,
Co-Owner, Pedernales
Cellars

Scholarship Dinner in Odessa (cont'd)

They all came to help raise the \$11,000 which was split between the two Scholarship Grant Programs. Sarah Timmons, winner of the WST 2019 Les Constable Memorial Grant, spoke about the scholarship she had received while enrolled in the viticulture Program at Texas Tech University and why it had made such a difference in her life.



**Jim Choate, Permian Basin Chapter and
Paul Williams, Auctioneer**



**Todd Webster, Winemaker,
Brennan Vineyards**

The students enrolled in the State of Texas institutions studying viticulture and oenology are the future of our Texas wine industry and the money raised in these events contribute to their success.



**Sarah Timmons (2019 WST Scholarship Winner) with her
husband, Nathan, and Julie Kuhlken**

The Bunkleys in Greece

The Bunkley's trip to Greece, one of many journeys comprising their "bucket list," took them to the birthplace of western literature, whose modern exponents include award-winning novelist, Anita Bunkley. In addition to Athens, home to great dramatists of ancient Greece such as Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, they visited the islands of Mykonos and Santorini.

While on Santorini, Anita and her husband, Crawford, visited the [Koutsoyannopoulos Wine Museum](#), site of the oldest winery on the island, which provides the history of winemaking in a unique museum that is nestled in a cave eight meters below ground. The underground museum exhibit portrays life as it was for vine-growers and winemakers dating all the way back to the 1600s. The tour also provided an opportunity for the Bunkleys to taste four of the best wines made in the winery.

Now that Crawford has retired after a 35-year career in Government and Public Affairs at ExxonMobil, Anita and Crawford can travel to Greece and the many other places that Anita discovered as an avid reader growing up in Columbus, Ohio.

The local public school system offered foreign languages and she took the opportunity to learn French and Spanish, later majoring in both languages while earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio. Her love of Spanish took her to Mexico where she spent her junior year of college at the renowned *Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey* or *TEC*. She went on to teach English, French, and Spanish to middle school students in Texas where she has lived for the last 40 years.

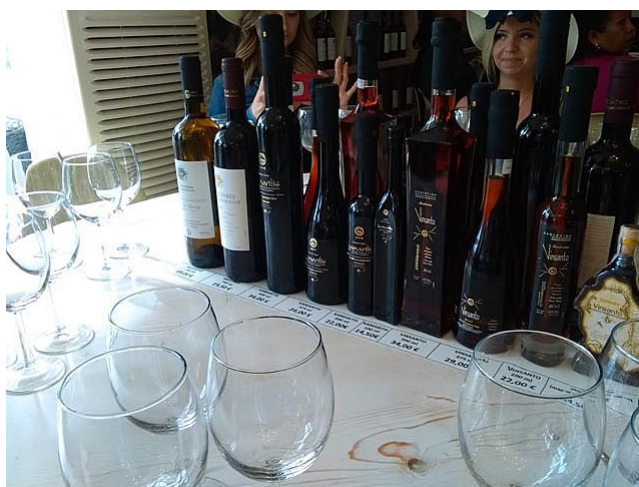


Around 25 years ago, Anita's passion for the written word inspired her to join a group of other "wannabe" authors. She went on to write numerous books, including 15 novels, as showcased in her author page on [Amazon](#). Reviewers and fans have praised them as sweeping sagas that are extremely entertaining--embraced for their historical accuracy, strong romantic themes, and vivid characterizations of people of color in periods of history not widely showcased in literary works. An NAACP Image Award nominee and a member of the Texas Institute of Letters, Anita has been voted one of the 50 favorite African American

The Bunkleys in Greece (cont'd)

authors of the twentieth century by the online African American Literature Book Club. In addition to writing books, Anita has never forgotten what it's like to be a "wannabe," mentoring aspiring authors and working as an editor who has been voted #3 in the list of the top 50 editors in Texas compiled by Writing Tips Oasis.

There are more destinations remaining on the Bunkleys' bucket list, and more opportunities to share wine-related adventures with readers of this Newsletter.



WST Member Profile — Paul Marko

WST: Paul Marko, you're one of the longest-serving members of WST's Permian Basin Chapter, you're a member of the Board of WST and you serve on the Scholarship Committee. What motivated you to join?

PJM: My wife, Margie, noticed a wine shop bulletin board announcement of a tasting event, that steered us to the society. The Permian Basin Chapter was just one year old then. We both attended and joined in 2004. Looking back on the last fifteen years, it was Jim Choate who told me that I would eventually acquire a taste for red wine. One of the reasons I decided to stick around as long as I have was to prove Jim wrong! Honestly, I don't have a problem with reds. Where I grew up in Ohio, my grandfather made red wine from Catawba grapes, and I used to drink it with little reserve when visiting. I still have his grape press, but the taste never really caught on.



WST: It sounds like you weren't born in Texas, so what brought you here?

PJM: Following graduate school at Southern Illinois University, Humble Oil & Refining Co. hired me as a petroleum geologist working out of Wichita Falls. I was only there one year when the office closed and I was transferred to Midland, which was probably fortunate for me. I had been playing guitar in a band booked by an orchestra service that sent us out-of-town on weekends to officers' clubs at U.S. air bases in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Louisiana. I had to try to get out of the office early on Fridays, and then worry about getting back by Monday in time for office hours. I'm pretty sure it would have caught up with me eventually and gotten me canned. Wichita Falls however, facilitated my meeting Margie who was employed by a log service that personally delivered well logs to geologists. We kept in touch and got hitched one year later in Tucumcari, New Mexico, where I was doing field work for the Roswell office.

WST: Not being a big fan of red wine, which wines do you like?

PJM: We were transferred from Midland to Kingsville during the interval when Humble was renamed Exxon. But I resigned when they moved us to Carlinville, Illinois to work for their subsidiary, Monterey Coal. I hated coal, quit Exxon, and moved to Dallas with TerraMar Consultants, an international company with offices in London and Tehran. During client work in Germany, I had my first bottle of *Bernkasteler Doctor* and had a good time back in Dallas trying various Mosel River *kabinet*, *spätlese*, and *auslese* wines. Margie completed her master's in literature at SMU and started teaching high school English in Richardson. During that time, we both were content concentrating on Riesling.

WST: What brought you back to Midland?

PJM: We moved back to Midland when a client approached me to open an office screening drilling

WST Member Profile—Paul Marko (cont'd)

deals for a fund company he founded called American Public Energy. They were able to raise money for a while, until the Tax Code changed and Congress made up nonsense categories termed *new oil*, and *old oil*. They rolled up, but I found employment with Bonray Drilling, and then with the Anschutz Corporation until they also closed their office. That was enough to convince me to go independent. I organized as Headland Corporation, named after an area off Lake Erie where I used to duck hunt. That's also when I began cooking. Margie was employed at Region 18 Education Center located at the airport. I was on my own time, working initially out of the house. She'd arrive home and we'd both wonder, "what's for dinner?" We compromised. She would look for recipes and I attempted to prepare them. The results could best be described as functional, but I still do all the cooking and on occasion Margie fills the dishwasher.

WST: With all those changes in companies and geography, did you keep playing guitar?

PJM: If there's anything I like better than a good wine it's playing guitar. I began playing at sixteen and played in bands wherever I lived. There are only three of us left in Midland from our old group, Bad Brakes, a '70s and '80s vintage band that did mostly rock, plus some country. We were active in the '90s, and we still get together every Wednesday in the drummer's band room and play the oldies plus anything current that can be called "music." All the equipment is set up: microphones, speakers, and amps. We just bring our instruments and plug in. What I lament is trading off some of my early guitars. I still have a '64 Gretsch Tennessean, the model George Harrison played at Shea Stadium, and a black '72 Fender Strat like Clapton played for years. Alas, one of my early Gibson 335s is gone. On a side note, Jim Choate gave me his cherry red Ibanez SG and amp he wanted to see "put to use." If Jim had learned just a few Christmas songs, he would be a sensation when he plays Santa every year.

WST: And what about your tenure in the Wine Society of Texas all these years?

PJM: The Wine Society gets credit for introducing me to Texas wines. I used to use our subscription to *The Wine Spectator* as a guide to find reasonably priced wines with good ratings. It was rare to find any of them locally; and none of them were Texan. I recall Paul Bonarrigo's presentation at one of our state meetings where he noted that there were only three wineries in Texas in 1977 when he started [Messina Hof](#). Now there are over 500. We previously were members of three wine clubs, but now shop locally and occasionally order through the internet. That's not to say we're buying mostly Texas wines. But there are some good white varietals being produced in the state. [Perrisos](#), [Ron Yates](#), and [Torr Na Lochs](#) vineyards produce some very nice Viognier and Albariño. And we recently found a nice [Duchman](#) Vermentino that H.E.B. carries. We also like what [Haak Vineyards](#) is doing with their Blanc du Bois varietal. We're fairly content with the wine that is available from local merchants, but restaurants, not so much. Only one restaurant in Midland we're aware of, Cancun Grill, lists an Albariño.

Being a smaller town, we have good turnouts at our monthly Wine Society meetings, and have been fortunate to be able to bring in winemakers from both Texas and California for our tasting events. We've made some very good friends and learned a great deal about wine varietals and wine regions worldwide. Margie and I are looking forward to a fun and lasting association with the society. Red wine — not so much.

Wine around the World: Fall for Portugal

By Elizabeth Lutton, DFW Chapter Chair, the Wine Society of Texas

In late September through early October, 2019, several members of the Wine Society of Texas DFW Chapter had the good fortune to “fall for Portugal” on a two-week trip to Lisbon, Porto, and other locations along the Douro Valley. The trip was sponsored by the Texas Ski Council and the Lone Star Ski and Adventure Club. Although the trip was primarily a river cruise and not a wine trip, DFW chapter members were able to turn the cruise into a wine trip by exploring many opportunities to try different wines and visit tasting rooms and local wine bars.



Tasting Room at Graham's Port House

There are over 200 varietals of wine grapes grown in Portugal and used to make wine but many of the wines are not exported to the United States. Of course, most wine lovers are familiar with port, a famous fortified sweet wine. As we discovered on our trip, Portugal is so much more than port. Portugal also has many excellent dry red wines made with blends of port grapes. The *vinho verde* white wines surprised us with their quality.

The best discovery of the trip was the quality of the sparkling wines. Most people have never tasted a Portuguese sparkling wine. However, they are on every bar menu in Portugal as *espumante*. This has nothing to do with *spumante*, which is an Italian sparkling wine usually done in a sweet style. The *espumante* wines are made in

a *brut* (dry) style using *méthode champenoise*, which makes them very similar to French champagne. We enjoyed many glasses and a few bottles of these treasures. Now, we are attempting to talk our local wine bars into requesting *espumante* from their importers. Don't be surprised if a Portuguese sparkling wine shows up at your local wine shop in a few years!

For those considering a trip to Portugal, here are a few tips:

Lisbon is a great city in which to start your tour. It has great museums, a historic castle, lots of churches, great local restaurants and wine bars. I recommend that you stay at least 3 days there. It is very hilly, so people with mobility problems will want to use local transportation extensively. If you are in good shape for walking, the old neighborhoods are very atmospheric. We took a

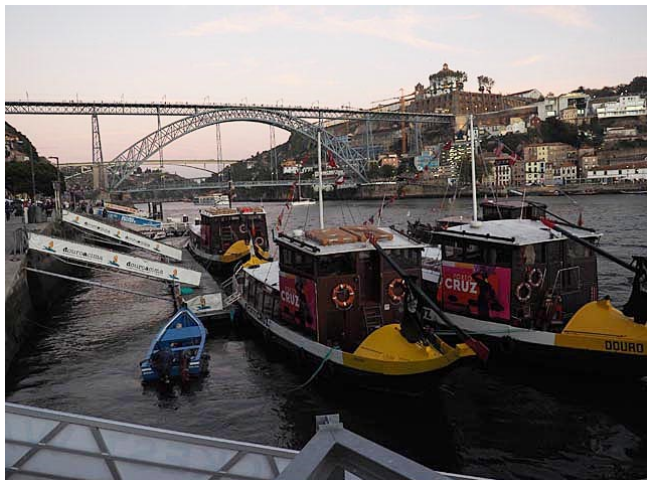


View from Quinta do Tedo

Fall for Portugal (cont'd)

local food tour, which was fascinating and gave us a close look at local culture and traditions.

Uber drivers are everywhere and it is cheap and easy to use the Uber app. We had some language barriers with the local taxi drivers, so Uber worked better with its direct GPS communication. However, Uber drivers pick up passengers near the limousine drivers at the airport and not with the taxis. As a result, we had diffi-



Porto, Portugal on the Douro River

culties in finding our driver and should have asked someone for help.

Lisbon is in a completely different wine region than Porto, so take the opportunity to try some local wines. I generally did not order the "house wine," but upgraded slightly to the 15 to 20 Euro range for a better experience. Portuguese *Gran Reserva* red wines were generally available at this price point, which is amazing. You will have wines that you will never see in the United States, so don't be afraid to try a wine that is new and unfamiliar.

We visited historic sites at Fátima and Coimbra on the bus ride to Porto and then boarded our river cruise boat, the Emerald Radiance, right before sunset. Don't miss sunset in Porto on the water with a glass of port in your hand!

The advantage to cruising the Douro is that you can see almost the entire river for an extended period of time during the days of the cruise. From the river, you get a 360 degree view of impossibly steep vineyards, some of which are very famous.

There are fewer wine towns and tasting rooms there than in U.S. wine regions. We visited two medium-sized wine estates on the cruise and had dinner in the barrel room of one of them.

We had different Portuguese wines every night with dinner on the boat. However, this cruise was clearly not a wine trip, but a sightseeing trip, which may turn off some persons who like to visit 4 or 5 tasting rooms per day.

If you do decide to go on a wine tour, hire a guide or tour operator because Portugal is developing as a wine region and does not have the wine tourist infrastructure of other regions. Also, I do not recommend driving yourself to the tasting rooms along the Douro because the roads are very steep and narrow with one lane in some areas. I recom-



Dinner at Quinta da Pacheca

Fall for Portugal (cont'd)

mend staying in one of the larger Douro towns such as Lamego or Peso da Regua.

Porto is over 1 hour away from the main Douro wine towns, so staying in Porto could create a very tiring commute every day. However, do add on at least three days to your trip by staying in Porto to tour the sights there.



In Porto, we stayed on the boat one more night and then did a city tour. Of course, no trip to Porto is complete without a visit to the Vila Nova de Gaia side of the river, where some of the most famous port houses are located. All of them have a typical tourist tasting, which usually includes a taste of ruby and tawny port. Many of the port houses have a VIP or upgraded tasting experience. This tasting is more expensive, but is much better than the tourist tasting and avoids the tourist mobs. The Port Wine Institute wine bar in the Port Wine Museum (*Museu do Vinho do Porto*) on the Porto (city) side of

the river is a great resource for guides, tours, and other wine experiences in the region. The staff in the wine bar are very knowledgeable about local wines and will offer a custom tasting with their own recommendations.

The city itself is also fascinating with many interesting and historic places. Again, the city is very hilly, so be in good shape if you plan to walk. Uber works well in Porto, too. It is very expensive to stay in a hotel along the river, but just a few blocks away from the main tourist areas are small local hotels that cost much less. Also, we found several good restaurants away from the main tourist areas.

Always try the local seafood because Porto is right along the ocean and the seafood is very fresh. Get a seafood platter and a nice glass of *espumante* to finish off a great trip! *A Sua Saude!* (Cheers!)



2020 Rodeo Winners

By Ed Dent

The results are in for the [2020 Houston Rodeo Uncorked! International Wine Competition](#). They were posted on November 21st. The top honors of Grand Champion Best of Show went to France's Piper-Heidsieck Brut, Champagne, NV. This was the first time Champagne has been awarded this honor at this event.

The 2020 competition, held Nov. 16-17 at NRG Center, included 3,528 entries from 19 countries, including France, Spain, Bulgaria, Italy, Israel, Argentina, and South Africa. Texas wineries represented 489 entries, and 232 entries came from this year's featured region, Mendoza, Argentina.



The 2020 Rodeo Uncorked! International Wine Competition champions included:

Grand Champion Best of Show – Piper-Heidsieck Brut, Champagne, NV

Reserve Grand Champion Best of Show – Cavaliere d'Oro Bellezza, Chianti Classico Gran Selezione DOCG, 2015

Top Texas Wine – Bingham Family Vineyards Dugout Red, Texas High Plains, 2017

Top Sparkling Wine – Freixenet Cordon Negro Brut, Spain, NV

Top White Wine – Chateau Ste. Michelle Dry Riesling, Columbia Valley, 2018

Top Red Wine – Revelry Vinters D11 Cabernet Sauvignon, Dionysus Vineyard, Columbia Valley, 2015

Top Region Wine – Mi Terruño Mayacaba Malbec, Mendoza, 2015

Top Dessert Wine – Inniskillin Gold Vidal Ice wine, Niagara Peninsula VQA, 2017

Top Value Wine – Raywood Merlot, Central Coast, 2017

Top All-Around Winery – Wilson Family Winery

Top Region Wine Company – MundoVino

Top Wine Company – E&J Gallo Winery

Top Texas Winery – Becker Vineyards

Listed below are the results from Wine Society of Texas winery members. Congratulations to our winery members who continue to produce world class wines.

2020 Rodeo Winners (cont'd)

Messina Hof Winery – 11 Medals

Messina Hof Winery Gewürztraminer, Texas High Plains, 2018 Gewurztraminer (Dry and SemiDry/ 0-4% RS) (\$11+) Silver Reserve Texas Class Champion

Messina Hof Winery Mama Rosa Rosé, Texas, NV Rosé - Off Dry - (\$27 & Under) Bronze Messina Hof Winery Merlot, Texas High Plains, 2017 Merlot and Merlot based Blends (\$15 & Below) Silver Reserve Texas Class Champion

Messina Hof Winery Paulo Sagrantino, Texas, 2017 New World Red Italian Varietals and Blends (\$30 & Above) Gold

Messina Hof Winery Paulo Tempranillo, Texas, 2017 New World Tempranillo and Blends (\$32+) Double Gold Class Champion Texas Class Champion

Messina Hof Winery Private Reserve Petite Sirah, Texas High Plains, 2017 Petite Sirah (\$11-\$30) Silver Reserve Texas Class Champion

Messina Hof Winery Sauvignon Blanc, Texas High Plains, 2018 Sauvignon Blanc and SBDominant Blends; Unoaked (\$14 & Under) Bronze

Messina Hof Winery Sophia Marie Rosé, Texas, 2018 Rose - Dry - Domestic; including Non-Vitis (\$13 & Under) Silver Texas Class Champion Wine Name Class Class Name Medal Class Awards Texas Class Awards Region Class Awards Top Awards

Messina Hof Winery Texas Hold'em Red, Texas High Plains, NV New-World Red Bordeaux Blend and Meritage (\$33 & Under) Silver Reserve Texas Class Champion

Messina Hof Winery Viognier, Texas High Plains, 2018 Viognier (\$20 & Under) Gold

Messina Hof Winery Merlot, Texas High Plains, 2017 Merlot and Merlot based Blends (\$15 & Below) Silver Reserve Texas Class Champion

Haak Vineyards & Winery – 9 Medals

Haak Vineyards & Winery Amorcito Sweet Red, Texas, 2018 Sweet Reds (\$16 - \$30) Silver

Haak Vineyards & Winery Blanc du Bois Madeira, Texas, 2012 Non Vitis Vinifera Fortified (\$19- \$40) Double Gold Reserve Class Champion Reserve Texas Class Champion

Haak Vineyards & Winery Dry Blanc du Bois, Texas, 2018 Non Vitis Vinifera Whites; Dry & Semi-Dry (\$18 - \$30) Silver

Haak Vineyards & Winery Ensaio Blanc du Bois, Texas, 2018 Non Vitis Vinifera Whites; Dry & Semi-Dry (\$18- \$30) Silver

Haak Vineyards & Winery Jaquez Madeira, Texas, 2015 Non Vitis Vinifera Fortified (\$19- \$40) Silver

2020 Rodeo Winners (cont'd)

Haak Vineyards & Winery Merlot, Texas High Plains, 2017 Merlot and Merlot based Blends (\$21-\$34)
Gold

Haak Vineyards & Winery Reserve Blanc du Bois, Texas, 2018 Non Vitis Vinifera Whites; Dry & Semi-Dry (\$18- \$30) Silver

Haak Vineyards & Winery Touriga Nacional, Texas High Plains, 2017 Iberian Red Varietals and Blends (\$28 & Below) Silver Texas Class Champion

Haak Vineyards & Winery Tres Tintos Red, Texas High Plains, 2017 Other Red Wine Blends (\$21- \$35)
Gold

AWI Wines – 6 Medals

AWI Gran Corte, Valle de Uco, 2016 New World Red Bordeaux Blend and Meritage (\$35-\$55) Silver

AWI Pinot Noir Rosé, Valle de Uco, 2018 Rose - Dry - Import (\$16+) Silver

AWI Reserve Cabernet Franc, Valle de Uco, 2016 Cabernet Franc (\$32+) Silver Reserve Regional Class Champion

AWI Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Valle de Uco, 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$40-\$50) Bronze

AWI Reserve Malbec, Valle de Uco, 2016 Malbec (\$50+) Silver

AWI White, Valle de Uco, 2018 213 Rhone-Style White Varietals and Blends (\$26 & Under) Silver Regional Class Champion



Russell Kane's Recommendations

Since 2008, Russell D. Kane, PhD has chronicled his wine country travels and experiences on his [Vintage Texas Blog](#) and in 2012 he authored the best-selling book, *The Wineslinger Chronicles: Texas on the Vine*.

The following are his recommendations of “four Texas wines you should be drinking now,” that were included in an article in the [Houston Chronicle](#) on October 22, 2019 by Dale Robertson.

2018 William Chris Vineyards Pétillant Naturel Sparkling Rosé

“This multivarietal, pink Pet-Nat cuvee of High Plains- and Hill Country-grown grapes gets its sparkle using méthode ancestral, a process much older than that utilized in Champagne. With it, the original fermentation finishes with yeast in the bottle without dosage to produce an effervescent wine. This one’s soft-hazy sparkle builds with its temperature after pouring and harbors notes of ripe raspberry and wet mineral earth. Store upright to a deep chill, then gently open. Serve with charcuterie, flavorful cheeses, baked oysters, lobster rolls and Thai cuisine.”

Price: \$29.99 at Houston Wine Merchant

2017 Southold Farm and Cellar “Don’t Forget to Soar” White Blend

“This white blend of Texas High Plains roussanne with a touch of albariño is made by New York-turned-Texas Hill Country winemaker Regan Meador. It comes with a thumbs-up rating from Brennan’s of Houston’s sommelier Marcus Gausepohl, who is excited to have it on his extensive wine list. Made without filtering or fining but with complete malolactic fermentation, it gives a weighty yet silky feel on the palate punctuated with a yeasty, lemony-melon notes. Perfect with Brennan’s jumbo lump crab cakes or Gulf fish Pontchartrain.”

Price: \$24 at southoldfarmandcellar.com

2015 Duchman Family Winery Aglianico, Oswald Vineyard

“Featured on the Pappas Bros. Steakhouse wine lists downtown and near the Galleria, it comes highly recommended by resident Master Sommelier Jack Mason. Aglianico (pronounced ah-lee-an-nee-ko) is a popular grape in central-southern Italy that has found a welcoming home in Texas. This version, from winemaker Dave Reilly, offers dark berry essence, medium-full body and nicely structured tannins with generous acidity. Serve with braised or grilled meats and game.”

Price: \$30 at duchmanwinery.com

2017 C.L. Butaud Tempranillo

“A limited-production Texas High Plains tempranillo from Randy Hester that’s featured on Matthew Pridgen’s wine list at Georgia James, it shows a deep, nearly black color and offers both a rich mouthfeel and an aromatic character gained from hand-harvested/sorted grapes, soaking and initial fermentation with indigenous yeast and sur-lie aging that’s punctuated with time in new French oak barrels. This wine balances ripe fruit and savory influences of ripe black cherry and plum, mocha and pipe tobacco. Serve with well-marbled dry-aged beef, leg of lamb or pork belly.”

Price: \$48 at Central Market

Enchanted by Umbria — Perugia & Beyond

By Meril Markley

The following article first appeared in the Greater Houston Chapter's newsletter in the spring of 2012 but is reprinted here in honor of Sagrantino's arrival in Texas.

A chance to speak at a law conference in Rome afforded my husband, Michael, and me, five days to explore another part of Italy. Why not Umbria, we thought? The green heart of Italy, between Rome and Florence, the region is home to the forests, lakes, and farmlands whose yields, especially truffles (both the noble mushroom and the chocolate-coated ice cream *bombe* known as a *tartufo*) wild boar, olive oil, and wine, are treasured throughout the country and beyond. Artistically, it is renowned for the great ceramics-works of the 15th and 16th centuries along with some of the most magnificent Renaissance frescoes still on the walls of the buildings where they were painted. Five days turned out to be scant time to discover the natural beauty and cultural riches on offer, in between memorable meals accompanied by some of the most interesting wines we have ever tasted.



In for a treat, we had come to Perugia not for Perugina, the world famous chocolatier based there, but for Perugino, as the great Renaissance painter Pietro Vannucci was known. Hearing this, our taxi driver from the Perugia train station was filled with enthusiasm for Perugino and other Renaissance masters whose names he rattled off as if they were all old friends. By the time we alighted at the [Hotel Brufani Palace](#), our base of operations, he had generously bestowed on us a

pile of guidebooks and was pointing out maps of the nearby towns where we could see works by his favorites. It seemed that everyone we met in Umbria was as enthusiastic as he was about the local must-sees.

Everyone included Antonio, *maître d'* at the Brufani's [Collins Restaurant](#), whom we encountered a few minutes later. His lectern, positioned strategically between lobby and elevator to the guestrooms, allowed for maximum interaction with folks who might be in need of a dinner reservation. Tired and a bit cranky, in no time we were invited by Antonio to inaugurate our stay in Perugia with dinner and a sampling of local wines. One look at the menu and our plan for a quick snack was ditched in favor of guinea fowl stuffed with *foie gras*, truffles, and pecorino cheese for me, and sea bass in orange sauce with cauliflower flan for Michael, all cooked to perfection.

Antonio made sure we had a proper introduction to his beloved Umbrian wines, both red and white, but especially the Sagrantino di Montefalco based on a grape grown in the region for at least four hundred years but “rediscovered” by [Arnoldo Caprai](#) in the 1970s. Full-bodied, rich, balanced, with hints of berry and vanilla, the “dry” version of the wine could be our ideal red to accompany meals or just to sip. The *passito* version is an intense, sweet and fruity dessert wine, the perfect accompani-

Enchanted by Umbria (cont'd)

ment to the Collins' warm and creamy chocolate *tortino* and the chestnut concoction capping our meal that first evening.

Thanks to Antonio's tutelage, we enjoyed repeatedly both versions of Sagrantino, along with Caprai's blend of Sagrantino with other grapes (Sangiovese and Merlot) and known as *Rosso di Montefalco*. As we soon learned, it is essential to enjoy these remarkable wines in Umbria because it is such a memorable place, but also because they are difficult to find, even as nearby as Rome.

The Hotel Brufani Palace proved to be a marvel and the ideal headquarters for our visit. Eschewing the trend to sterile soullessness of other places we have stayed in Italy, this Sina Group property evokes classic elegance and luxury at an affordable price, with attentive and gracious service. Our room featured a sweeping vista to the northwest while just down the corridor was a large covered patio offering a panoramic view of the region and nearby towns. It proved the perfect spot to relax in the evening with a glass of Sagrantino and reflect on the day's adventures.

Everywhere we gazed in Umbria there were free-standing bell towers rising above the churches for which they were built. Centuries before Italy became a nation, the towns or communes were self-governing cities in a seemingly constant state of war with one another from the 11th century until taken over by the Papacy in the mid-14th century. A bell tower was always built before its church because the locals needed a vantage point from which to determine if the neighboring town was about to attack and, if so, to use the bell and sound the alarm. Anne Robichaud, expert on Umbria and friend of a client of mine in Houston, explained all this as she guided us on a tour through Assisi.

Among the works by Perugino that we had come to see were the frescoes in the [Collegio del Cambio](#) in Perugia, commissioned by the money changer's guild in 1496. The guild's members were responsible for exchanging local coinage for that of tradesmen visiting from other towns, each of which issued its own currency. Unlike today's currency exchanges, the money changer's responsibilities included assaying and weighing the coins to ensure they were not counterfeit and that they contained the requisite amounts of gold or silver.

Perugino's frescoes, still present in the small rooms adorned with magnificently carved cabinetry, gave us a sense of what it meant to be an Umbrian artist. While depicting stories from the Bible these painters included, in the background, the countryside they saw around them. Even when painting in the Sistine Chapel and Papal Apartments in the Vatican, they brought the natural beauty of their region with them for all the world to see. Valleys, lakes, hillsides sprinkled with castles and towns, all recede into a deep



Enchanted by Umbria (cont'd)

distance dotted with trees and bathed in pastel shades of blue and gray under the canopy of a pale yellow sky. No matter the narrative, the tranquil landscape beckons and draws the viewer into the drama being acted out in the foreground.

Needing a restorative pastry and coffee after visiting the Collegio del Cambio and the National Gallery of Umbria next door, we crossed the street and headed for [Sandri](#), the pastry and chocolate emporium dating back to 1860 and still owned by the founding family. Echoing the theme of the Collegio del Cambio, the ceiling is beautifully painted, the walls lined with ornate walnut cabinets. And if you offer a 20 euro (or greater) note in payment, it will be run through an electronic device to verify that it is genuine. The spirit of the Collegio del Cambio lives on in Perugia!

A rival and occasional collaborator with Perugino was responsible for the most interesting discovery of the trip, as part of our tour of Assisi and Spello with Anne. Standing at the opening of the U-shaped Cappella Baglioni in the [Church of Santa Maria Maggiore](#) in Spello, we had the sense of shifting back in time some 500 years to when Bernardino di Betto, known as *Pinturicchio* (the short painter) glimpsed three blank walls and a vaulted ceiling for the first time. Within a few months, he had transformed the space

into one of the most breathtaking and magnificent sets of frescoes produced in the Italian Renaissance, which is saying a lot considering the masterpieces of his contemporaries and successors such as Perugino, Raphael, Leonardo, etc.

Depicting the scenes from the life of Jesus including the Annunciation, the Nativity, and the Disputation at the Temple, these works incorporate magnificent architecture full of *trompe l'œil* elements as well as charming touches such as the rustic, half-finished manger from which the ox and ass peer over their pens at the simple shepherds and elaborately garbed magi come to visit the Baby Jesus. We found ourselves bowled over by Pinturicchio's talents and accomplishments, but not before we ran out of the one euro coins needed to feed the meter so the lights would stay on in the chapel.

Worn out from sensory overload, we were whisked next door by Anne to [Enoteca Properzio](#), the leading wine merchant in

Umbria and one of the top purveyors of Italian wines worldwide. We were welcomed by Roberto Angelini and his daughter, Irene, who were our hosts for an evening of wine and foods from the region. Roberto was enthusiastic about having Texans visit since he had done several private tastings in Houston last year, including one in the Woodlands. We hope he comes back soon and brings his wonderful wines for a Wine Society tasting!



Enchanted by Umbria (cont'd)

My favorite wine of the evening was the limited production Rosso Assisi 1997 Reserve Sangiovese. The nose full of earth was at first startling but then engaging when sipping this remarkable, full-bodied red wine. Michael's favorite was the Sagrantino 25 Anni from Arnaldo Caprai, the culmination of the vintner's art using this native Umbrian grape. The wines were accompanied by slices of bread drizzled with superb local olive oils, *bruschetta*, bean soup, and assorted artisanal meats and cheeses.

Other memorable repasts included the following (pasta always fresh and home-made):

Taverna del Gusto in Deruta -- spelt salad (based on an ancient Roman grain still grown in the area), noodles wrapped with ham and cheese in a *béchamel* sauce with black truffles, pork fillets in black truffle sauce with oven-roasted potatoes

Ristorante del Sole in Perugia (with a magnificent view of the city) -- *gnocchi* in a duck sauce with duck bacon, noodles in a porcini mushroom sauce, wild boar ragout, *tortino* of chocolate and pear (Michael's all-time favorite dessert from this trip)

Trattoria degli Umbri in Assisi -- wild boar steak with potatoes seasoned with "antique" fennel and the inevitable but scrumptious chocolate *tartufo* dessert

Thanks to the natural beauty of the countryside, the ancient towns, the friendly and enthusiastic inhabitants, and all the fabulous foods and wines, our visit to Umbria can be summed up in two words – joyous and harmonious. It all works wonderfully well together and, despite the stresses of travel, left us feeling relaxed and contented, eager to return.



Irene & Roberto Angelini with Michael Markley



About the Wine Society of Texas

The Society was founded in Arlington Texas in 1996, and was established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It soon grew to become a statewide organization as new chapters were chartered in Houston and the Permian Basin. All three chapters (DFW, Houston and Permian Basin) hold regular events such as wine tastings, wine and food pairing dinners and seminars, and travel to grape-growing areas of the world. Wine Society members are not “wine snobs,” but are people who enjoy learning about wine in a relaxed social setting. Persons with all levels of knowledge are welcome.

The WST mission is to: enhance the appreciation of wine, especially Texas wines; educate the experienced as well as the beginning wine taster; promote the winemakers and grape growers; foster the knowledge of oenology and viticulture; help in charitable activities throughout Texas; and promote the responsible consumption of wine.

Chapter Presidents are: Jim Choate (Permian Basin) - rrcontracting.jim@gmail.com; Elizabeth Lutton (Dallas-Fort Worth) - elalutton@hotmail.com; and Ed Dent (Greater Houston) - edent24@aol.com.

For a list of new chapter members, see page [2](#). To join or renew, see the [last page](#).

The Wine Society of Texas

<http://www.winesocietyoftexas.org>

Wine appreciation through education.

Shirley Choate, President

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Midland, TX 79706

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By Shirley Choate

These are exciting times for the Texas Wine Industry. Our wineries are winning gold and double gold medals in prestigious competitions like the San Francisco International Wine Competition and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo International Wine Competition. Our Texas vineyards and winemakers have discovered the Mediterranean varietals that thrive in Texas weather and it's starting to pay dividends.

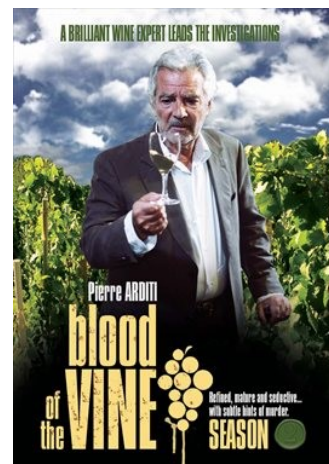
The Wine Society of Texas, as a consumer group, helps play a large part in this. Our mission statement says it all, “Wine Appreciation Through Education.” Our chapter events feature and educate attendees on varietals like Albariño, Roussanne, Viognier, Vermentino, Tannat, and Tempranillo. Most people in Texas are not familiar with these varietals which are the future of the Texas Wine Industry.

Not only do we feature Texas wines but also Old and New World wines from all of the grape growing regions around the world.

Wine TV

By Meril Markley

[Hoopla Digital](#) offers a number of European TV series for free streaming and downloading, including *Blood of the Vine (Le Sang de la Vigne)* which ran on French television from 2011 to 2017. The sleuthing adventures of Bordelaise enologist and wine critic, Benjamin Lebel, show that murder can be provoked by centuries-old rivalries, frayed family ties, and wine insecurities. Available in French with English subtitles and based on a series of novels, the shows are enjoyable for the wines, the complicated stories, a peek into the complexities involved in growing the grapes and blending the wines, as well as unbeatable scenery. This is “must see TV” for lovers of France, of French wine, and of a good whodunit.



Editor's Wrap-Up

By Meril Markley

Learning how Paul Bonarrigo encountered Sagrantino di Montefalco in 2012 and made it his mission to grow the Sagrantino grape in Texas reminded me of the trip my husband, Michael, and I also made to Umbria in 2012 when we were enthralled by Sagrantino and its homeland. I decided to include in this edition of the Newsletter the article I wrote for it in 2012 about our trip. Rereading it brought back memories of traipsing around Perugia armed with copies of handwritten notes made by art historian and friend, [Eugene Carroll](#), who had stayed at our hotel on his first visit to Umbria some 50 years earlier. Eugene passed away in 2016 but continues to inspire us on jaunts around Italy and beyond as great art, food, and wine combine in fashioning treasured memories while generating [articles](#) for this publication. After our trip, I met Riccardo Guerrieri, an Umbrian who had married a Houstonian and relocated here. Passionate about Sagrantino di Montefalco, he and his wife Lynn started Grifo Imports (featured in a 2015 edition of this Newsletter) to import wines from his homeland. A sommelier at [Vinology Bottle Shop and Wine Bar](#), Riccardo features several wines from Umbria, including Raína's Montefalco Rosso. Another favorite is Scacciadiavoli whose intriguing story he'll share with us in a future edition. Sagrantino was also a topic of conversation at the [T.V. Munson Event](#) in October, where I learned that it is a favorite of our host, John Adams. “As by far the most tannic wine in Italy, Sagrantino requires long cellaring before becoming approachable for most consumers. It is very intriguing how it develops softer tannin and requires less cellaring time after immigrating to Texas.” Here's hoping that more members will try both the Italian and Texas versions!

If you have an idea for a story you'd like to write, please let me know. If you'd prefer to do it as a Q&A or by phone, these work too. Please reach me at mbmarkley@mmarkley.com.

Submissions for next quarter's edition are due February 24.

Last, but not least, Ed Dent and I thank Tenley Fukui for her invaluable assistance on this edition.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal Membership

PLEASE CHECK THE CHAPTER YOU WISH TO JOIN/RENEW:

☐ DFW ☐ Greater Houston ☐ Permian Basin (Midland – Odessa)

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel. # _____ Cell _____

Email _____

How did you hear about The Wine Society of Texas? _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- ☐ Young Adult \$25 (Age 21-30) – Includes membership; discount on events.
Year of Birth: _____
- ☐ Individuals \$40 – Includes membership; discount on events
- ☐ Dual \$75 – Two people at the same address; Includes membership & discount on events
- ☐ Supporting Member \$200 – Membership for two people, recognition online and link to corporate website
- ☐ Corporate Member \$400 – Membership for up to four employees, recognition online, banner advertisement with link to corporate website.

Make checks payable to: The Wine Society of Texas. Send payment or credit card information and completed application to:

The Wine Society of Texas
Shirley Choate
1009 South CR 1110
Midland, TX 79706

Visit the Wine Society of Texas website at: <http://www.winesocietyoftexas.org> To pay online, create a user account and pay through Paypal on the website.

AGE CERTIFICATION:

I certify that I/we are 21 years of age or older. _____ Date _____

_____ Date _____

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

☐ VISA

☐ MASTERCARD

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Cardholder Name: _____ Signature _____

Credit Card Billing Address: _____