



WHAT'S HAPPENING

Our summer was long and hot, leading us to believe that a short and early harvest was imminent. Then it turned off cool in September and things slowed down and cruised in perfectly. Every year, winemakers will tell you how perfect it was. Well, for Bonair it was near perfect. The cooler weather was just what we wanted and the uncharacteristic rains did not damage our fruit. Other vineyards did have considerable rot problems in susceptible varieties. As for it being a short harvest, well, it started on September 13 with Gewurztraminer and ended October 25 with the Estate Cabernet Sauvignon. Pretty much normal.

For those of you who have visited recently, you know that we have grapes all the way to Highland



Puerto Vallarta - No fog here either!

WHAT'S NEW?

We have just released the **2000 Château Puryear Grand Reserve Merlot**. This wine came from the mother block of FairAcre Vineyard. It was then aged in two new French Oak barrels and one new American Oak barrel. This wine received the seal of approval from our French intern Romain Tourdias. Although fairly oaky, it has boatloads of fruit to back it up. Only 792 numbered bottles were produced. \$30. (Silver medal Indy International Wine Competition.

Our **Summer Solstice Cherry Wine** with grape neutral spirits is about half gone. We made 93 cases. We made this wine in 1999 and put it in neutral barrels to age. Five years later I pulled it out and bottled it. The neutral barrels imparted a cedar character which is layered with dried cherries to create a tawny port taste. At 19% alcohol, we like to call it port, but the feds say nein. \$20

2000 Morrison Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon is now released. It got silver at the Indy International. Typical of this vineyard – which we have made since 1987 – it has bold tannins and bright blackberry fruit. \$20

2000 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon is just about gone. Big, plummy and jammy. \$30.

New Distributor

On August 1, Grape Expectations began carrying Bonair Wines. Up to that point we used agents to self-distribute. By using a distributor, our wines should be more readily available in the Puget Sound area. If your favorite store or restaurant doesn't carry Bonair, just tell them they can get it from Grape.



White Pass - above the fog

Drive now. These new vineyards produced their first fruit this year and we are on our way to becoming an estate winery – meaning we grow all of our own fruit and make our own wines.

Some day soon we will wake up and never see the sun for 59 days. The Yakima Valley will be blanketed under 4000 feet of fog. It's time to break out the skis and head for White Pass (elevation 4500 feet – 500 feet in sunshine above the gray.) It's also time to think about going someplace warm. Mexico, the Caribbean, or New Zealand come to mind.

So think snow or think palm trees, but in the meantime it's **Thanksgiving in Wine Country** (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday following turkey day) the first and best wine and food festival in the state. Best of all, it is still free. Each winery in Wine Yakima Valley will be paired with a restaurant to feature a perfect wine/food combo. Bring your own glass, or buy an event glass, since we don't do dishes that weekend. By the way, Classic Events Catering will be serving blue cheese and riesling stuffed mushrooms at Bonair.

If you can't make it over on Thanksgiving, we will be in Bellevue the next weekend for our usual **Bellevue Delivery**, Saturday, December 4 and Sunday December 5. We spend the weekend with our friends Lynn and Judy, eat, drink wine, and hand out your pre-ordered wine. This is your last chance to stock up on those great Bonair wines with no shipping charges before the holidays and those gray rainy winter days when Snoqualmie Pass makes the Nightmare on Elm Street look like a summer parade.

OUR FAMILY

This year has seen a huge up and down swing for our Bonair Family. Both of our mothers passed away. Twenty-two years ago (when they were 68 and 74 years old) these two incredible ladies crawled on their hands and knees and planted the entire mother block of chardonnay in front of the winery.

But then the sun shines. Our daughter and her husband who live in Anchorage have now made us happy grandparents, with the arrival of Preston this summer. Also this summer our son married the love of his life in Alaska. We all flew in to the base of Mt McKinley for an incredible wedding on top of a 1500 ft. thick glacier.

Bung, the Wonder Dog, is still with us, usually lying on the bench or in front of the winery door, waiting for tidbits from picnickers. He is now eleven years old and has two states – comatose and hyperactive.

www.bonairwine.com

email: winemaker@bonairwine.com

Bill Gates, the Sommelier

In my writing as a winemaker at Bonair Winery, I have to use a lot of unusual terms that are not in the MSWord dictionary. So, just for fun, I wanted to see what Bill Gates would bring you if he were a sommelier. Here is the story.

I went to this uppity restaurant in Redmond which, of course, didn't have any Washington wines on its list, but to my surprise, Bill Gates was the wine steward. I ordered *Marsala* while perusing the menu. Immediately a *US Marshall* showed up at my table. After some serious explaining, I decided to have champagne instead, so ordered *Dom Perignon*. Soon a *pregnant* waitress appeared to help me.

Skipping the aperitif, I proceeded to order the dinner wine. I queried about wines from *Walla Walla*. Bill politely informed me they had no wines from *Walla* – his voice correcting me like a squiggly red underline. I asked if they had any *Burgundian* reds they could recommend. They didn't, but they had a nice selection of *Burundian* wines. I wasn't aware they made wine in Burundi, but Bill quickly assured me they did. I then settled on a *Montrachet*. A man with a *mustache* approached my table and asked if there was a problem with the wine service. I queried him if they had any *Medoc* in the house. He immediately returned with a *medic* who asked if I was ill. To make it simple I ordered a California *Nebbiolo*. Bill said the California *Nebula* was probably not visible on a rainy night. By then I was afraid to ask for a *Nuits Saint Georges*.

To accompany dessert, I wanted a German *auslese*, assuming that to be safe. I was served an *austere* dry wine. The thought of ordering *Yquem* made me *squirm*. Sending the austere dry wine back I asked for an *Eiswein*. Rudely, Bill told me *Einstein* doesn't work here. I think I had already figured that out.

As usual with Seattle area restaurants, the service was impeccable, but the wine list sucked. Maybe we can blame Bill.

Rattlesnake Hills AVA

Last January I sent a petition to the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) to establish the Rattlesnake Hills as an American Viticultural Area (AVA.) Now, eleven months later, it has been accepted as complete. Next comes the approval process.

When the Yakima Valley AVA was formed in 1982, little was known about growing wine grapes in the area. The founders envisioned a broad valley, like the Napa Valley, where wine grapes could flourish anywhere and everywhere. We now know that *vitis vinifera* only grows on a small band of land on the south slopes of hills between 800 and 1800 feet.

In doing the research for the petition, I found that the Rattlesnake Hills near Zillah has some unique qualities. The growing season is much warmer than Prosser and Grandview flats and in places is as warm as Red Mountain. This means we can do really big reds that require the heat. We also have some cooler areas that favor whites. Every year for the past ten years we have reached optimum ripening.

We are also protected from Arctic blasts by Yakima and Umptanum Ridges which divert the cold air east to Red Mountain, Pasco, and especially Walla Walla where the it hits the Blue Mountains and sinks in. Last winter the Rattlesnake Hills (-3) was 17 degrees warmer than Walla Walla (-20) during the cold spell that killed vines in the Walla Wall AVA.

The silty loam soils hold water better than the sandy loam soils found east of here so we can go longer between irrigations to improve fruit quality.

With our easy access to Seattle markets, big money is quietly being invested in the Rattlesnake Hills. I think it will become Washington's premiere growing region.

Elite!

Elite! is our exclusive wholesale buyers club. Some of you have already taken advantage and now is a good time to sign up for next year. Elite! Memberships purchased now will be good through the end of next year.

By purchasing a \$75 membership, you can buy your wine for wholesale – just like Costco, only better. Your average savings are about 33%. The good thing about it is there are no minimum purchases. Purchase as little as you need or as much as you want. Your credit card is not charged monthly or quarterly fees like other wine clubs.

What are the restrictions? Well, just like Costco, only you can use your card. You can buy wine for your friends, but you must pay for it. What you do in the parking lot is your business.

Elite! Membership also gives you free reserve tasting which is a \$5 value right now. When we get a full-time tasting room manager next year, we are planning some special events for the Elite!

SPEND SOME TIME AT BONAIR

We love sharing our wonderful wines with you in the tasting room, but remember there are other things to enjoy here as well.

Our ART GALLERY displays rotating exhibits of awesome photography, quilts, paintings featured by local Washington State artists.

Our PICNIC GROUNDS beg you to take a break, bring a picnic and bask in the peacefulness of the wine country!

We invite LARGE GROUPS OR BUS TOURS to schedule your visit with us so we can provide you a sit down private tasting in our art gallery.

PRIVATE CATERING can be arranged for your group, whether it be a sack lunch or a formal sit down dinner.

Our VINEYARDS are a beautiful addition to your wine country experience. We invite you to wander through the vineyards, take some beautiful pictures, and relax by the large pond or the intimate koi pond.

After hours during the summer, our grounds are available for small WEDDINGS (fewer than 75 people) and dinners. Email us for pricing information. We still do PRIVATE LABELING for your special occasions.

Winter Specials

We are closing out the 2001 Late Harvest Pinot Grigio. This has been an extremely popular wine with everyone. The 375 ml bottles are just right for stocking stuffers. As a special bonus to our customers, you can purchase it for wholesale at \$9.00 per bottle. (No additional discounts apply, but the bottles can count toward case discounts on other wines.)

We offered a special discount to our wholesalers on Riesling, but they didn't respond, so we will just pass the savings on directly to you. 2003 Riesling (2% R.S.) for just \$5.00 per bottle. That's cheaper than Château S & M on special in the grocery store. You had probably better buy a case for \$60. It really goes great with Salmon. (No additional discounts apply, but the bottles can count toward case discounts on other wines.)

Copyright Bonair Winery, Inc.
500 S Bonair Rd.
Zillah, WA 98953
All Rights Reserved