

## NIWG RESEARCH VINEYARD, 2007

January 27, 2007- The Annual Meeting was held at Woodbine Bend country Club, with 47 in attendance, including the two speakers.

The business meeting was held; Greg Junge gave the research vineyard report for 2006, and passed a sign up sheet around for volunteers to work the March 17<sup>th</sup> cuttings program. President Ken Rosmann announced the upcoming events in Missouri, Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota. Chris Lawlor (Galena Cellars) will be a featured speaker at the Cold Climate conference in Bloomington, MN.

Louis Schau gave a talk on his work at setting up a website for NIWG, and expects to have it up and running by March 2, 2007. When operative, the website will be [www.northernillinoiswine.com](http://www.northernillinoiswine.com)

The nominating committee announced the committee's selections: for president, Sue Ertmer, Vice Pres: Kyle Spahn, Treasurer: Karin Strenski and Secretary : Jodi Winslow. Nominations from the floor were opened, there being none, a motion was approved to elect the nominees, motion carried. President Sue then took the gavel.

Her first order of business was to have a drawing for some wine from the research vineyard- approximately six bottles were given away.

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned and Bill Shoemaker, U of IL Research Specialist gave a PowerPoint presentation on the St. Charles, IL Research facility, their 2006 breeding and testing program and their plans for 2007. He emphasized a valuable tip for new growers: intercrop your new vineyard for the first few years, to get an immediate cash flow. He suggested vegetables, and annual fruits in between the new rows.

A nice lunch was served, buffet style, and that was followed by a slide presentation by Bradley Beam, U. of I. Oenology Specialist. Brad spoke to the cold hardy varieties developed by the U. of MN: Frontenac, Frontenac Gris, Marquette, LaCrescent, etc; gave tips on winemaking with these varieties, yeasts to use, etc.

Brad's presentation was followed by a tasting of *eleven wines* produced from the research vineyard, Bob Hall's grapes (wine made by Chris Lawlor), some wines made by Bill Shoemaker from the St. Charles vineyard and some made by Brad Beam. The wines were: **Frontenac** table wine (2), LaCrescent, **Frontenac Gris**(2), **Marquette, Pinard, Norton, 06 Foch, St. Pepin** (sur lies style) and a white blend-50% **Prairie Star**, 30% **Seyval** and several others in the blend.

After the tasting, the meeting ended, and many people went home happy.

The next get together will be harvesting cuttings for grower orders on March 17<sup>th</sup>, to be distributed at our regular meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

**March 17<sup>th</sup>**- A good core of volunteers gathered at Galena Cellars and the research vineyard to make cuttings for members. We had fewer orders this year- 971 cuttings vs 1500 in 2006. The orders were from just 6 varieties: **LaCrescent, Frontenac Gris, Marquette, Pinard, Edelweiss** and **Bluebell**. We were only able to provide 56% (about 543) of the ordered cuttings. This gave the crew a little more time, so they finished

pruning the other varieties in the vineyard, and hoped that a surprise late spring frost doesn't hit us.

**March 24<sup>th</sup>**. Our spring 2007 meeting was held in the barrel room at Galena Cellars with approx. 21 in attendance. Coffee and donuts were on hand.

President Susan Ertmer called the meeting to order; minutes from the last meeting were approved, as was the Treasurer's report from Karin Strenski.

Bob Hall gave his report from the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Assoc. (IGGVA). Bob reported on Brad Beam (state research enologist) and his new projects regarding different trellis systems, root stocks, ground covers for vineyards, etc.

NIWG got a \$2000 grant from IGGVA for materials related to the research vineyard;

Bob also reported on Senate Bill 0123, another bill regarding self distribution for wineries. IGGVA needs more funds to lobby and protect our wineries in the state.

Bob cautioned us that there is a non-approved marketing group that is trying to set up some wine festivals in Illinois. In that IGGVA has not been supplied requested information, such as successful festivals in the past, locations, etc, the group is not now sanctioned by IGGVA.

Bob finished by informing us that this is his last term at IGGVA, as the bylaws don't allow him to run again.

President Ertmer said that it will be very difficult to find someone to represent Northern Illinois Growers and vintners as dedicated as Bob has been. Bob got a hearty round of applause for his dedication.

Greg Junge gave a short report on the research vineyard, including the cuttings program last week. Cuttings are ready for those who ordered, albeit a little short, due to the competition for the same varieties. This year, we filled orders for

- 10 **Bluebell**,
- 9 **Edelweiss**,
- 170 **Frontenac Gris**,
- 106 **LaCrescent**,
- 136 **Marquette** and
- 117 **Pinard**.

(We should realize about \$240 net on the sale of cuttings).

All varieties in the vineyard have been adopted for this year, but we may need a couple winemakers. Brad Beam, state oenologist, is working-up a standardized protocol for winemakers to follow next fall. The protocol will include amounts of sulfites to use, fermentation temperatures, yeasts, maceration times, etc.

We'll be removing the **Bluebell** variety this spring, and replacing it with **Noiret**, a recent Cornell release. Chris Lawlor (Galena Cellars) said she'd try to contact David McGregor to get some **Petite Ami**, another promising variety.

The meeting was then turned over to the Sorensens, who have a nursery business in Preston, Iowa, for the vine propagation presentation. They covered mainly cuttings care, storage of cuttings, rooting, greenhouse or nursery starts, temperatures, etc. They dip cuttings in a dilute (1 part 5% bleach and 95 parts water) solution to disinfect and rinse well before storing in cooler or planting.

Susan announced the next meeting was scheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup> at the Spahn family vineyard, near Hanover, IL. Formal announcements will be sent out by the U of I Extension, as usual.

Finally, a drawing was held for a bottle of **Edelweiss**, from the research vineyard..

The business part of the meeting was then adjourned, and we went on to the tasting of wines from the research vineyard, or from local growers.

#'s 1 & 2: 06 **Ravat** (Ken Rosmann) and 06 **Edelweiss** (Ray Ruthenberg). Both whites  
#3- 06 **MN1188**, white, ~2% r.s., 0.6TA (Ken R). (The U of MN will not be pursuing the marketing of this variety);

#4- 06 **Leon Millot** Rose' (Greg Junge) 2.4% rs, ~11.2% abv, TA 0.7%;

#5- 06 **Frontenac**, dry (Ken R);

#6- 05 **GR7** (Ray)- dry red, 0% rs.;

#7- 06 **Frontenac** from Bob Hall's vineyard (Chris);

#8- 06 **Lacrosse/Catawba** blend (Chris).

No one spit out the wines, so I guess they were all good, or had good potential.

The tasting finished, some went home, some "adjourned" to the Galena Cellars tasting room to sample some of Chris' wines.

#### **April-**

Ed and Greg pulled-out Bluebell and replanted with Noiret, the new Cornell variety.

The vineyard was sprayed;

Ed & Greg finished pruning the vineyard;

#### **May.**

5/16- I (Ray) shoot-thinned **Frontenac**-one of my two adoptees;

5/22-The vineyard was sprayed w/ ? mid-month, and again on May 22;

5/23-Greg and Ed pulled out the **MN Foch**, replaced them with (12) **Petite Amis**, 2 yr old vines.

5/23 (6 PM)- NIWG's officers and committee chairs met at the Welcome Inn, in Elizabeth, to organize the 6/16 meeting. Sue Ertmer, President, Kyle Spahn, Vice President, Jodie Winslow, Sec'y, Karin Strenski, Treasurer, Ed Strenski, Research Vineyard Manager, Jarrod Spahn and I were in attendance. I spoke of the possibility of having the first annual NIWG wine dinner, somewhere local. Wines to be served with each course to be supplied by member wineries and, perhaps, with some of the research vineyard wines. The plan was agreed upon, and I'll start checking into locations, dates, costs, etc.

5/24- I went to the research vineyard and finished shoot thinning **Esprit**. Quite a few spurs were winter-killed, and flower clusters were un-opened and sparse.

**June.**

NIWG had a regular quarterly meeting at Rocky Road Vineyards and Winery, rural Hanover, IL. Jarod and Kyle Spahn gave tours around their 25 acre vineyard.