

**A Prince is  
only a Pauper  
without a good  
Pinot**

# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Devoted to Pinotaficionados

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## IPNC: Pinot Noirvana

Noted wine writer, Gerald Asher, attended the 10th International Pinot Noir Festival in 1996 and wrote about his experience in *Gourmet* (Dec., 1996): “Despite all the comparisons between Bordeaux and Burgundy (and thus between Cabernet and Pinot Noir) that have preoccupied us for years, no one seems to have made much of the fact that producers of Cabernet worldwide take themselves seriously, while producers of Pinot Noir like to kick up their heels and frolic.” Nothing much has changed in the last ten years, and over 700 pinotphiles from all over the world still gravitate each summer to a small college campus in Oregon to revel in their indulgence. No homework or written tests, and no dreadful lectures at 8:00 AM. Just an abundance of good Pinot paired with the delicious bounty of Oregon prepared by the Pacific Northwest’s most talented chefs, and plenty of *joie de vivre*.

This year’s International Pinot Noir Celebration (IPNC), held July 26-28, marked the event’s 20th Anniversary. In 1987, a group of Oregon wine pioneers assembled to figure out a way to promote Oregon wine. The IPNC was born and has been held every year since on the campus of McMinnville’s bucolic Linfield College, located in the heart of the Willamette Valley. To commemorate the anniversary, several winemakers were introduced at the opening ceremonies who had been at the original IPNC twenty years ago including Dick Ponzi (pictured). Friday morning’s seminar, “The Course of Two Decades” centered on the impressive advances in Pinot Noir winemaking and viticulture over this twenty year period. Pinot Noirs from the last twenty vintages were featured at Friday’s alfresco lunch.



This Pinot Noir festival is quite unique in several regards. First, it is a celebration, not a competition. 75 wineries were chosen for the event from Oregon, California, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and France. Exact figures are uncertain, but I heard rumor of 300 Oregon and 200 California wineries submitting samples to be included in the IPNC. The emphasis is on quality for those honored, and many new faces appear yearly. There

is no judging of wines at the event. It is a true celebration of Pinot Noir, offering the Pinot lover the chance to discover the many different styles of Pinot Noir.

Second, it is a unique opportunity for the consumer to rub shoulders with many winemakers that they may have only read or heard about. Winemakers actually outnumber consumers here. After a few days with them you quickly realize these people are the “salt of the earth.” They are a hard-working, talented and rough and tumble group with a passion for wine. Still, they love a good cold beer and a barbecue. They like to humbly say things like, “I really don’t do much in the winery, just steward the wine along.” The truth is, and this is especially true with Pinot Noir, you have to have encyclopedic knowledge of wine chemistry, understand the myriad of influences that make up a winery terroir, know how to blend multiple barrels into the final wine, as well as function as an electrician, plumber, carpenter, accountant, and salesman. And that is only in the winery. Today the winemaker must expend considerable energy in the vineyard, sourcing grapes, directing farming, supervising planting, and deciding when to harvest. And women winemakers do all this plus juggle the demands of raising children and managing a household!

Third, the IPNC is a special occasion in which the food rivals the wine. The meals are always astonishingly fresh and delicious. Oregon is blessed with a bounty of gastronomic riches including wild mushrooms, an array of berries and fruits of all types, salmon, shellfish, artisan cheeses and bakeries, home-style sausages and hams, organic dairy farms, hazelnuts, coffee roasters, and a crop of outstanding chefs. Noted chefs at this year’s event included Phillipe Boulot (The Heathman Restaurant & Bar, Portland, Oregon), Jack Czarnecki (The Joel Palmer House, Dayton, Oregon), Jeff Nizlek (Silver Grille, Silverton, Oregon), Vitaly Paley (Paley’s Place, Portland, Oregon), Charles Ramseyer, Ray’s Boathouse, Seattle, Washington), Pascal Sauton (Carafe, Portland, Oregon), and John Sundstrom (Lark, Seattle, Washington). The sustainable food movement that began in Berkeley with chef Alice Waters of Chez Panisse has now become centered in Portland, Oregon. “Sustainable food” refers to a short chain of supply and demand that emphasizes the consumption of local food. I will never forget courses like “Foie gras and chicken terrine with wild plums,” “Chilled pea soup with Dungeness crab and chervil cream,” “Roasted saddle of rabbit, gnocchi a la Parisian, tarragon jus,” and “Charred rare tuna, pancetta, cranberry bean, olive candy.” At one luncheon the dessert was a ripe local peach - simple but perfect. Breads (Grand Central Baking Company), desserts, and coffee (Portland Roasting Company) were superb. The Traditional Northwest Salmon Bake is a much-loved tradition at the IPNC. Wild salmon is cooked native Northwest style on alder stakes over a huge custom-built fire pit (pictured).



Fourth, the wine flows like water at the meals. At Friday's alfresco luncheon, I lost exact count, but our table had at least 16 different Pinot Noirs. Some of the wines included **1985 Amity Reserve Pinot Noir** (Oregon), **1985 Tualatin Reserve Pinot Noir** (Oregon), **1989 Knudson-Erath Reserve Pinot Noir** (Oregon, double magnum), **1999 Bethel Heights NE Block Reserve Pinot Noir** (Oregon), **1996 Domaine Drouhin Pinot Noir** (Oregon), **2002 Bonacorssi Fiddlestix Vineyard Pinot Noir** (California), **1988 Au Bon Climat Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir** (California), and **2004 Le Clos Jordanne Le Grand Clos Pinot Noir** (Niagara, Canada). The goal here is to befriend a sommelier and stroke him/her so they will bring the table many primo bottles (two very accommodating sommeliers are pictured; note the double magnum). One of my favorites was Tom Bean of Carafe Restaurant in Portland.



Fifth, the event is truly international. Since 1987, over 10,700 pinotphiles have made a pilgrimage to this occasion. The IPNC has hosted 134 winemakers from France, 25 winemakers from New Zealand, 14 from Australia, 11 from Italy, 8 from Germany, 7 from Switzerland, 7 from Canada, 3 from South Africa, 3 from Chile, and one each from Austria, England, Israel and Spain for a total of 216 foreign wineries. This year there was a certain French air to the celebration with a record 16 producers from Burgundy participating. Friday night's alfresco Grand Dinner was titled "Three Star French" in honor of the birthplace of Pinot Noir. Dinner was created by three acclaimed Pacific Northwest, but French-born chefs: Phillippe Boulot, Thierry Rautureau, and Pascal Sauton.

Sixth, and last, the celebratory note here sparks lively conversation and a common spirited passion for Pinot Noir leads to multiple new friendships. The photo below shows the five *PinotFile* "groupies" from Kansas City who joined me for some lively eating and drinking. They have been coming to the IPNC for some time and their wives, tired of hearing about all of the fun they have had at previous celebrations, came along with them this time. No more solo trips for them.



In the following pages, I will describe in more detail the IPNC experience as told by a California (OC) Prince. I will march you through each day's activities and try to bring the flavor of the event to you.

The city of Portland is the gateway to Oregon's wine country (the Willamette Valley is only 45 minutes away by car), but oh so much more. It is a hip and vibrant city with a plethora of cafes, wine bars, and restaurants downtown which in the summer come alive with the buzz of locals celebrating the outdoor lifestyle. The summertime is a festive occasion to forget about rain (Oregon has more than its share) and stow away the Pendleton's. The city is known for its roses, parks, steel bridges and eco-friendly attitude. Wine is a big deal here, but Portland's beer culture is without precedent in the United States. Writers for *Celebratory Beer News* anointed Portland the No. 1 beer city in the country. On the same weekend that the IPNC was held in McMinnville, the 19th Annual Oregon Brewers Festival in Portland drew about 55,000 people! According to the *Oregonian* newspaper, Portland has 30 breweries and brewpubs in the city limits, more than any other city in the world.

Leaving Portland and driving south on State 99W to the Willamette Valley, it is easy to be quickly overcome with culture shock. Oregon is basically a rural, farming state with miles and miles of rolling hills and valleys planted with grain, grasses, and hazelnuts. Laid-back old towns dot the landscape - a throwback to the 1950s. I noticed several striking contrasts from California. Oregonians actually observe the speed limits. They drive American cars (hardly a BMW or MBZ in sight). Service station attendants cheerfully and politely pump your gas (gas is cheap here too). There is no noticeable disdain for old, used and weathered items including cars. I never saw a car wash. People actually cheerfully greet you at stores and restaurants - what a novel concept! People here are genuine, friendly and interested in what you have to say. Small, independent business are still king although the chains are making inroads. There is no sales tax. The summer weather can be quite warm, but the oppressive heat wave that was affecting Oregon abated on cue the day before the IPNC started, and we flourished in balmy days usually in the mid to upper 70's. Perfect weather for drinking Pinot.

Thursday evening preceding the IPNC there were 18 different wine dinners offered at wineries throughout the Valley. These sprang up a few years ago and are not officially part of the Celebration. They are, however, wildly popular. Attendees clamor to these dinners, filled with expectation, much like children on Christmas eve. Everyone knows of the many gifts (of Pinot Noir) awaiting them the following day under the trees of Linfield College. Participating wineries included Adelsheim Vineyard, Amity Vineyards, Anne Amie Vineyards, Archery Summit, Belle Pente, Bergstrom, Chehalem and Stoller Vineyards, Cuneo Cellars, Dobbles Family Estate, Domaine Serence, Erath, Lange Estate, Maysara Winery, Penner-Ash Wine Cellars, Ponzi Vineyards, R. Stuart & Co., Scott Paul Wines, and Torii Mor Winery. I attended a dinner at **Belle Pente** ('Bell Pont') which was hosted by owners Brian and Jill O'Donnell on the lawn outside their craftsman-style residence. Located in the hills of Carlton, Belle Pente means "beautiful slope" and was selected as a perfect description for their historic 75-acre farm. Since bottling their first Pinot Noir in 1996, the Belle Pente wines have received numerous accolades. 11 acres of densely planted young estate Pinot Noir are supplemented by vineyard leases and per-acre contracts that include several blocks over 20 years old. The view from the porch of the O'Donnell's residence is breathtaking (below, left). Brian (below, right) kicked off the festivities with an introduction to his wines that he generously shared that evening: **2003 Belle Pente**



**Cuvee Contraire Rose, 2003 Belle Pente Reserve Chardonnay, 2001 Belle Pente Estate Reserve Pinot Noir, 2003 Belle Pente Estate Reserve Pinot Noir** (just released, superb), and **2002 Belle Pente Riesling Vendange Tardive**.

Three other wineries were featured and representatives from each discussed their wines. Le Clos Jordanne is a unique Burgundy-Canada partnership located in Niagara. A joint venture between Boisset from Burgundy and Vincor International of Canada, **Le Clos Jordanne** is a 128-acre certified organic estate winery located on the limestone-rich Jordan Bench. The winery's viticulturist, Thomas Bachelder (right), was born and raised in Quebec, and has been with the project since the first vintage in 2003. He previously worked in Oregon and Burgundy. His assistant was also present, Isabelle Meunier, who hails from Quebec, by way of Burgundy. The wines offered were from young fourth-leaf grapes, but the potential here is eye opening. The wines poured included: **2004 Le Clos Jordanne Le Grand Clos Chardonnay** (French-style, excellent with food), and **2004 Le Clos Jordanne Bowen Vineyard Pinot Noir**. I also sampled the **2004 Le Clos Jordanne Le Grand Clos Pinot Noir** at Saturday's walk-around tasting and it was nicely structured and balanced with great charm.

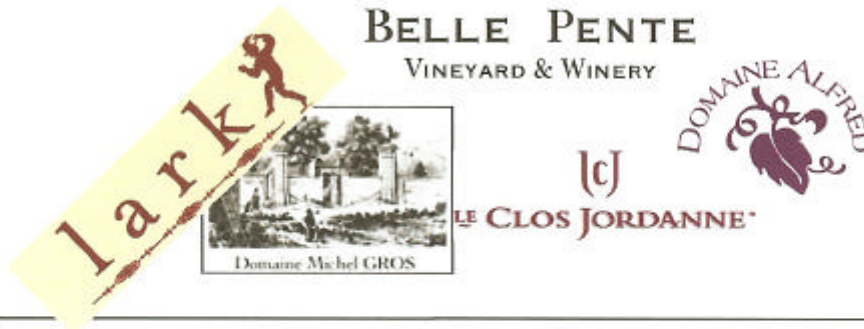


Burgundy was represented by Michel Gros and Georgia Tsouti from **Domaine Michel Gros** in Vosne-Romanee (pictured). Michel Gros started to work for his father on the family estate in 1975. Only a Burgundy scholar can hope to decipher the complicated Gros family tree and the many domains with the Gros name. Fortunately, all branches of the family make excellent wine. Michel made the wines for Domaine Jean Gros and at the same time started his own domaine. Today, he runs a domaine of 46 acres including appellations from Nuits St. Georges, Vosne Romanee, Chambolle Musigny and Clos Vougeot. At the International Wine Challenge, Michel won the very prestigious title of “Best Wine Maker of the Year” two years in a row (2002 and 2003). Michel brought the **1999 Domaine Michel Gros 1er Cru Clos des Reas Vosne Romanee**, which is one of his signature wines. The Clos des Reas vineyard is a monopole with vines that average over 30 years of age. The wine is fermented in enamel-lined cement vats and then aged in highly-toasted barrels (roughly 80% new) for 18 months. The aromatics featured attractive black fruits and the flavors were rich and plush. Hearty oak tannins accompanied a lengthy finish. Just perfect with the pan-roasted squab it was served with.



**Domaine Alfred**, which sounds French, is actually owned by American Terry Speizer and is located in Edna Valley, California. The Pinot Noirs here are made entirely from estate fruit (Chamisal Vineyard). Winemaker Mike Sinor has mastered two styles of Pinot Noir (and Chardonnay) here. The lower-priced regular Chamisal bottlings are very balanced and approachable and perfect food companions. The “Califa” bottlings are ramped-up examples which are bigger, more fruit-forward wines which have garnered high scores in the wine press. Mike has recently left Domaine Alfred to concentrate on his own label, Sinor-Lavalle. The wines poured were the **2005 Domaine Alfred Vin Gris**, **2004 Domaine Alfred Estate Chardonnay**, **2004 Domaine Alfred Estate Pinot Noir**, and the **2004 Domaine Alfred Califa Chamisal Vineyard Pinot Noir**. This is a California label you can hang your hat on.

The winemakers’ dinner was masterfully prepared by chef John Sundstrom of Lark Restaurant in Seattle, Washington. John was a *Food & Wine* “Best New Chef” in 2001 and in 2005 was nominated for a James Beard Award. He opened Lark in 2003 with his wife J.M. Enos and partner Kelly Ronan. Their latest endeavor is Licorous Restaurant. I have included a copy of the menu which includes the logos of the participating wineries (page 7). The preparation of the food was impressive considering Sundstrom did all of the cooking in a home kitchen. The quail egg tartines, the chilled white corn soup, and the rotisserie pork belly were particularly outrageous. What a way to spend Christmas eve.



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## Winemakers' Dinner

THURSDAY, JULY 27, 2006

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### STARTERS

Quail egg tartines

Beef tartare with roquefort vinaigrette

Gougeres

*Belle Pente Cuvée Contraire Rose-style 2003*

*Domaine Alfred Vin Gris 2005*

### FIRST COURSE

Chilled white corn soup with girolles and summer truffle

### SECOND COURSE

Mozzarella burrata with Arbequina olive oil and Murry River salt

*Belle Pente Reserve Chardonnay 2003*

*Domaine Alfred Estate Chardonnay 2004*

*Le Clos Jordanne 'Le Grand Clos' Chardonnay 2003*

### THIRD COURSE

Pan roasted squab with black currants

*Belle Pente Estate Reserve Pinot Noir 2001*

*Domaine Michel Gros Vosne Romanee 1er Cru 'Clos des Reas' 1999*

### FOURTH COURSE

Rotisserie pork belly, stuffed with figs, prosciutto and bread

*Domaine Alfred Estate Pinot Noir 2004*

*Le Clos Jordanne Bowen Vineyard Pinot Noir 2004*

### DESSERT

Vanilla Savarin cake with raspberries, blueberries, mint and  
crème fraiche & Bruco chocolate

*Belle Pente 2002 Riesling Vendange Tardive*

After a fine continental breakfast, the official IPNC kicks off early Friday morning in an outdoor amphitheater under the shadow of a huge oak tree. Seating is on stainless steel bleachers and veterans know that you must bring some napkins to dry off the benches or you will be walking around with a dirty rear-end all day. Noted wine writer, Remington Norman (*The Great Domains of Burgundy*) was the keynote speaker for the Opening Ceremonies. He tendered some humorous, yet cogent advice about wine tasting. First, he advised to forget about descriptives when evaluating the Pinot Noirs to come. "Tasting notes are meaningless because young wine is always in transition. Pay attention more to the structure (the alcohol, fruit, acid and tannins), and the balance and texture of the wine." A second bit of advice concerned the winemakers at the event who "are like rabbits that come out of their cellars. Norman said, "Talk to them and interact. If you take a pour of Pinot and walk away without saying anything, neither you nor the winemaker receives any benefit." The only exception, he noted, would be if the wine is heavily oaked. In that case, "walk away!" Norman feels strong that oak is a "no-no" in Pinot Noir. "I want fruit, not wood. Over oaking Pinot Noir is a sin."



All of the winemakers at the event were then introduced. It was a true parade of all-stars. Richard Sanford, Jim Clendenen, and David Bruce (below) are pictured.





After the Opening Ceremonies, the attendees split into two groups: half boarding buses to travel to various wineries. Each bus was accompanied by a Burgundian vigneron who discussed his work and through questions and answers, opened a portal into the life of a winemaker in Burgundy. The other half (myself included) stayed on the campus of Linfield College for the day.



Linfield College is a small four-year liberal arts undergraduate college established by Baptists in 1849. It is an oasis in the historic town of McMinnville and a perfect setting for this event. The school's President, Dr. Thomas Hellie, is an ardent fan of Pinot Noir and attended this year's event himself. Known as the "wildcats", they have the distinction of holding the nation's longest winning streak of consecutive winning seasons in college football (Division III). The school's dormitories and student apartments are opened for attendees of the IPNC. It sure is convenient to be able to wobble back to your room after a day of imbibing Pinot in this gorgeous campus setting.



I headed over to Dillin Hall for the morning's session entitled, "The Course of Two Decades." Leslie Sbrocco (columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and author of *Wine for Women*) moderated a panel discussion and blind tasting with winemakers David Adelsheim (Adelsheim Vineyard, Oregon), Joseh Bergstrom (Berstrom Wines, Oregon), Merry Edwards (Merry Edwards Wines), Claire Halloran (TarraWarra Estate, Victoria, Australia), Richard Sanford (Alma Rosa Winery and Vineyards, Sta. Rita Hills, California), and Steve Smith (Craggy Range, New Zealand).

Sbrocco reminded us that twenty years ago, in 1987, it was a time of Reaganomics, Miami Vice, Banarama, big hair, shoulder pads, and the beginning of the internet. In Oregon in 1986, there were 1074 acres of Pinot Noir. In 2005, there were 8,000 acres of Pinot Noir, 7,331 acres in the Willamette Valley. In California in 1987, less than 30 tons of Pinot Noir were crushed. In 2005, 70,000 tons of Pinot Noir were processed. Last year there at least 40 new labels from small vineyards in Oregon.

Each of the winemakers present discussed some of the most important advances in growing and crafting wine over the past twenty vintages. For Oregon: vertical shoot positioning of the vines, decrease crop yields, minimizing Brettanomyces and reduction in finished wines, a shift from chemical winemaking to an emphasis on viticulture, the extinction of "gentleman" farming and replacement by professional farmers, and the presence of more young, well-trained people in the wine industry. Richard Sanford and Merry Edwards spoke for California: the importance of maritime influence on Pinot Noir vineyards was recognized, vertical shoot positioning and trellising, leaf pulling to open fruit to the sun, a shift from east-west planting to north-south orientation of the vines to expose them to more sun, the "discovery of place," the planting of better and purer clones (no more Gamay, Valdigue, etc.), finding out where specific clones performed best, pushing the boundaries of vineyard sites with move to cooler and cooler areas, and the realization that wine is largely made in the vineyard. Steve

Smith of New Zealand emphasized two important advances: vineyards have been planted with newer (Dijon) clones and farmers have become “fussy,” that is, farm with more care and attention. Finally, Clare Halloran listed the following for Australia: more concentration on the vineyards, finding out what works best on individual sites, an influx of large company capital to allow more planting, the competition for fruit has intensified, and winemakers have learned to make wine in the vineyard.

There were six wines presented for tasting blind: **2001 Adelsheim Vineyard Bryan Creek Vineyard Yamhill County Pinot Noir, 2004 Alma Rosa La Encantada Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir, 2001 Bergstrom Pinot Noir, 2004 Craggy Range Te Muna Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2002 Merry Edwards Wines Meredith Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, and 2002 TarraWarra Estate Pinot Noir.** Now I don’t like to brag, but sometimes you need to mark your territory. After everyone had tasted the wines, Sbrocco asked for volunteers to tell what they thought the wines were. Four people were brave enough to raise their hands, but none were correct, with one naming four correct and receiving plaudits from the crowd. Two winemakers didn’t even guess their own wine! I missed my chance to be famous, for being a shy and humble prince that I am, I did not raise my hand. Turned out, I correctly identified all six wines!! I had to loosen my baseball cap a bit.

Following this session, there was a tasting of Pinot Noirs on the Memorial Fountain Lawn titled “Pinot Science Fair.” There were wines poured to show several pivotal advances in winemaking over the last twenty years such as clones , recognition of appellation characteristics and the use of whole clusters. Joe Wright of Belle Vallée Cellars in Corvallis, Oregon, was pouring his **2005 Belle Vallée Whole Cluster Pinot Noir.** This is made in a Beaujolais style with 100% whole clusters and is released a couple of months after harvest (more about this wine and the other excellent Belle Vallée wines in the next issue of the *PinotFile*). A perfect summer Pinot with plenty of strawberry and spice, bottled under a screwtop, an ideal companion for a picnic. There was also a nice demonstration of winemaking and winery terroir differences. Each of four Oregon wineries, R. Stuart, Brooks, Chehalem, and Ponzi, received 1 ton of grapes from Domaine Drouhin - same vintage, same vineyard. They then vinified a Pinot Noir for the IPNC Pinot Science Fair. The distinctive style of each winemaker was clearly evident.

By now I had sampled at least 20 Pinot Noirs and I was hungry. It was off to the 20 Vintages of Pinot Alfresco Lunch. Chef John Sundstrom was back at work along with Ethan Stowell (Union, Seattle) and Maria Hines (Earth & Ocean, Seattle). I mentioned the highlights of this luncheon on page 3.

In the afternoon, Rick DeFerrari of Oregon Barrel Works in McMinnville demonstrated over an open fire how he bends and toasts barrels made from oak grown in Hungary, France, and Oregon. He patiently answered the many questions asked. A highly informative and fascinating look at old world traditions now employed in Oregon using new world innovation.



Also in the afternoon, David Lloyd of Eldridge Estate in the Red Hill region of the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia spoke on clones in Australia. Early Pinot Noirs from Australia were made with UC Davis clones that were largely Champagne clones and produced high tonnage, but poor quality. For the past 30 years, the dominate clone has been MV6 which traces its source to Clos Vougeot in Burgundy. This clone produces high-toned fruit on low-yielding vines. Most vines in Australia are planted on their own rootstock. At Eldridge Estate, an extensive grafting program was begun in 1996 to insure that the vineyard had a mix of clonal types best suited to the soil, aspect and location of the vineyard. There are now five clones planted, but MV6 and Dijon 777 seem to be the best at this site. Lloyd is a firm believer that clones are an intimate part of a vineyard's terroir, and if properly chosen, can highlight the best features of an individual terroir. Good clones planted in the wrong location will not improve the quality of the finished wine.

After a short nap, I was longing for more Pinot Noir, so I headed over to the Alfresco Tasting at 6:00 PM. There were 70 wineries featured at the IPNC walk-around tastings. 35 of the wineries poured their 2003 vintages on Friday and 35 offered their 2004 vintage Pinot Noirs on Saturday. All attendees were given a Riedel Vinum Extreme Pinot Noir glass for the tasting. Word is that Riedel is developing an Oregon Pinot Noir glass! The walk-arounds are a great time to meet old friends, chat with winemakers and savor some of the best Pinot Noir in the world. It is not a setting for serious evaluation of wines or extensive tasting notes. What follows are some Pinots that really impressed me based on a brief encounter with many distractions. It a difficult call to make similar to commenting on your children: you love them all but they are all different. I only got to about 50 of the 70 wines offered, saving myself for the evening's dinner to follow. As a generalization, the Burgundies were damn good. The 2003 vintage really showed well because of the fruit-forward vintage.

**2004 Le Clos Jordanne Single Vineyard Le Grand Clos Pinot Noir** Featured at the Belle Pente dinner

**2004 Quails' Gate Estate Winery Family Reserve British Columbia Pinot Noir** A beautifully elegant Pinot Noir with exquisite balance. The family-owned Quails' Gate Estate Winery is located in the heart of the Okanagan Valley. They have been producing wine since 1989. Owner Tony Stewart's family has been involved in the Okanagan wine industry for over 50 years. Quails' Gate Estate was named British Columbia Winery of the Year for 2004 by *Wine Press Northwest*. The winery's tasting room is open year round as well as its restaurant, Old Vines, offering creative cuisine and a fantastic view. Tony says that changes are in the works so that British Columbia wines can be more easily exported to the United States.

**2004 Maison Ambroise Nuits St. Georges Vieilles Vignes** This is an outrageously succulent wine that is hitting on all cylinders., Very highly recommended. The Ambroise family settled in Premeaux-Prissey, near Nuits St. Georges 300 years ago. In 1987, Bertrand Ambroise created the house of Ambroise, a negociant that also draws on the family's 40 acres, which include two Premiers Crus in Nuits St. Georges. 11,000 cases of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are produced yearly.

**2003 Domaine Charles Audoin Marsannay, Les Longeroles** A sensuous Burgundy from an appellation just south of Dijon little known to most Americans. Charles and his wife Marie-Francoise (an enologist) began the domaine in 1972 and now have 34 acres. Their son, Cyril, has joined the domaine since 2000. Their vines average 45 years old. Production is 4,000 cases annually.

**2004 Domaine Pascal Bouley Volnay Premier Cru Clos des Chenes** A lovely wine perfumed with floral and cherry notes. This domaine covers 25 acres, spread among the villages of Volnay, Pommard, Beaune and Saint-Romain. Vinification is traditional. The wines are aged 18 months in 20% new French oak. The family is now proud to feature the sixth generation on the estate, as son Pierrick has joined the domaine with the 2005 vintage.

**2003 Domaine Clerget Chambolle Musigny 1er Cru Les Charmes** Sturdy, hardy and full, with nice earth and black cherry flavors. Christian Clerget and his wife are the eleventh generation of wine-makers located in Vougeot. Seven appellations are produced on the estate, including Chambolle-Musigny, Chambolle-Musigny 1er cru Les Charmes, Vougeot 1er Les Petits Vougeot and Echezeaux Grand Cru.

**2004 Domaine Drouhin-Laroze Gevrey-Chambertain 1er Cru Au Closeau** Smooth, spicy and mouthwatering. In 1850, Jean Babtiste Laroze set up a winery in Gevrey-Chambertain. Jean had a son Felix, whose daughter Suzanne married Alexandre Drouhin, creating the name Drouhin-Laroze. The estate is today run by Phillipe Drouhin. Ancient ancestral farming methods are adapted to modern techniques. The wines are consistently about “elegance, strength, delicacy and aromatic richness respecting the varietal’s and terroir’s own expression.”

**2003 Domaine Dupont-Tisserandot Gevrey-Chambertain 1er Cru Lavaux St. Jacques** This is just plain great. It delivers plenty of Pinot flavor, but remains light on its feet. A lot going on here and a Burgundy to search for. This domaine covers 50 acres over 20 appellations, the majority of the vineyards are in Gevrey-Chambertain. There are three 1er Crus (Lavaux St. Jacques, Cazetiers, and Petite Chapelle) and two Grand Crus (Mazis and Charmes). Since 1995, winemaking has been directed by Didier Chevillon. His wife, Patricia, represents the fourth generation who have worked the family estate.

**2003 Domaine Fougeray De Beauclair Bonnes Mares** Astonishingly approachable for a young Bonnes Mares (they often take over 20 years to come around). Everyone was buzzing about this wine. In 1972, Jean-Louis Fougeray created Domaine Jean -Louis Fougeray. Over the years, the domaine grew to 25 acres with vineyards stretching from Marsannay to Savigny-les-Beaune. In 1986, Jean-Louis partnered with Bernard Clair to form Domaine Fougeray de Beauclair. This estate now owns 54 acres of vines, and bottles the only Bonnes Mares originating from the Morey St. Denis side of this Grand Cru vineyard. Current annual production is 10,000 cases. Patrice Oliver has been the winemaker since 1999. A superstar domaine whose prices are sensible.



**2003 Domaine Michel Gros Vosne Romanee 1er Cru Clos des Reas Monopole** Featured under the discussion of the Belle Pente dinner.

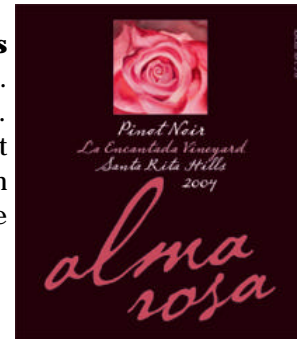
**2003 Domaine Earl Catherine Et Claude Marechal Savigny les Beaune Vieilles Vignes** Now that name is a mouthful. I was really charmed by the complex nose of fruit and spice. A harmonious wine with refined acidity. Very refreshing. A wine to buy. This domaine was created in 1981 and now farms 25 acres of vines in the Cote de Beaune. Farming is organic, winemaking is traditional. Clusters are 100% destemmed and maceration extends a lengthy 20 days. The wines are aged on their lees for 12-18 months.

**2004 Domaine Marc Roy Gevrey-Chambertain Clos Prieur** A stylish effort with a refined mouth feel and bright red cherry fruit. This is the real deal. Domaine Marc Roy has been in the family for three generations. The estate includes 9 acres of Pinot Noir. Owner and winemaker Marc Roy inherited his passion for farming grapes from his father and grandfather. Marc’s wife Regine manages the sales, and daughter Alexandrine, who worked vintage 2004 in Australia and 2005 in New Zealand, has been the winemaker since 2003.

**2003 Ata Rangi Pinot Noir** A distinctive wine with a nice citrus overlay. Ata Rangi translates as “dawn sky, new beginning.” It is located in Martinborough at the southern end of New Zealand’s North Island. Clive Paton founded the winery in 1980. Ata Rangi is one of the first New Zealand Pinot Noirs to be exported to the United States (1980s) and has a consistent record of high quality.

**2004 Te Muna Road Vineyard Craggy Range Pinot Noir** A very hedonistic style of Pinot Noir that offers rich layers of flavor and sweet Pinot fruit. A winery with consistently high standards and one of my favorite New Zealand producers. The estate vineyards are primarily located in Martinborough and Hawkes Bay on the North Island. Previously reviewed in the *PinotFile*.

**2004 Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards La Encantada Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** Richard Sanford’s new project since leaving Sanford Winery. Richard and his wife Thekla have over 100 acres of certified organic vineyards. Projected case production for 2005 will be 17,000 including Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Vin Gris. I have written about this wine in previous issues of the *PinotFile* and I can’t say enough good things about it. The 2004 Santa Rita Hills bottling is also very good.



**2003 Au Bon Climat Knox Alexander Estate Grown Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir** Sometimes we get so caught up in the latest “hot” Pinot, we forget about the old reliable and established garde. Jim Clendenen started Au Bon Climat (“a well-exposed vineryard”) in 1982 when California Pinot Noir was in its infancy. He has grown to over 30,000 cases a year. He was named Winemaker of the Year by *Wine & Spirits* in 2001 and *Wein Gourmet*, Germany’s leading wine magazine, named Jim Winemaker of the World. Jim is a colorful and talented winemaker who has been known to speak out against over-oaked, over-ripe styles of Pinot Noir. This wine is typical of his personal preference for delicacy and balance. Dusty red cherry fruit carries through from the aroma to the finish. Very smooth and sexy.

**2004 Bouchaine Vineyards Carneros Estate Pinot Noir** This winery sits on the site of the oldest continually-operating winery in Los Carneros. Through the years the wines have been spotty, but current vintner Michael Richmond has the Pinot Noir program right on track. The estate vines used in this wine were replanted in 2000 on a rock, gravel, clay and loam slope. The attention to farming clearly shows in this superb Pinot Noir. The wine is soft and plush with a long and stylish finish.

**Domaine Alfred 2004 Califa Chamisal Vineyard Edna Valley Pinot Noir** All of the Pinot Noir here comes from estate fruit. The Califa release is a muscular, dark wine with deep, dark black cherry fruit and plenty of verve. Discussed in this issue’s feature on the Belle Pente dinner.

**2004 Fiddlehead Cuvee Lollapalooza Fiddlestix Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** Kathy Joseph started Fiddlehead 17 years ago and still clearly shows her passion and enthusiasm for Pinot Noir. She is one of few California winemakers who makes Pinot Noir from both her own Fiddlestix Vineyard (pictured right) and contracted fruit from Oregon. She produces 3,000 cases of Pinot Noir annually. This Pinot is flat out wonderful. A real lip smacker that is fat on the palate and enhanced with deft wood and brown spice. It will only get better with some cellaring if you can keep your hands off it.



**2003 Freeman Akiko's Cuvee Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** Ken and Akiko Freeman attended the IPNC as consumers six years ago and now they are one of the featured wineries. They are blessed to have Ed Kurtzman on board as winemaker. Ed is just about the nicest guy you would ever want to meet. He starred in the past at Testarossa Winery in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Now he crafts the Freeman's wines as well as his own label (August West) and consults on Fort Ross Vineyards on the Sonoma Coast. The Freemans have put together a first-class winery with extensive caves (worth a visit) and are committed to super-premium, small-lot Pinot Noirs. The Akiko's Cuvee includes the best barrels in the cellar chosen by Akiko Freeman. This is a complete Pinot Noir in every sense.

**2004 Keller Estate La Cruz Vineyard Pinot Noir** The Keller family planted the La Cruz Vineyard in 1989 to Chardonnay. Later, Pinot Noir was added, and by 2001, another 72 acres of vines were planted. Nine clones of Pinot Noir are planted in this vineyard in the Sonoma Coast appellation. In 2003, a state-of-the-art winery was built. The winemaker is experienced Michael McNeill. The La Cruz Vineyard also supplies other producers including Flowers, W.H. Smith, Landmark, and Testarossa. Production is 8,000 cases of wine annually. This Pinot Noir was very elegant with a razor-like finish. For lovers of delicacy.



**2004 Saintsbury Brown Ranch Vineyard Carneros Pinot Noir** WOWEE! Maybe my favorite wine at the event. A succulent and thrilling effort that satisfied from start to finish. Ripe fruit and rose petal aromas, unctuous red fruits, a velveteen texture, and soft, coating tannins. Not released but stay tuned (retail about \$50). The Saintsbury winery was founded in 1981 by winemakers Richard Ward and David Graves. The winery produces a fresh, lively, quaffing Pinot Noir (Garnet), a classic Carneros Pinot Noir, a Reserve Carneros Pinot Noir, an Anderson Valley Pinot Noir and vineyard-designate bottlings including Toyon Ranch, Stanly Ranch, Lee Vineyard and the Brown Ranch which was planted in 1991. The Brown Ranch Vineyard is the winery's prize. It is planted to Pommard and Dijon clones and has produced some prodigious wines over the years. Another legend that is often overlooked. Get on board.

**2003 Sonoma Coast Vineyards Pinot Noir** John and Barbara Drady produce only one Pinot Noir and they do it well. They source grapes from carefully-chosen cool-climate vineyards located west and slightly south of the Russian River Valley appellation and lie 3-5 miles from the Pacific Ocean. They know the challenges of growing fruit there, but feel the results justify the risk. The inaugural 2002 vintage was winemaker's Anthony Austin's 31st vintage. The 2002 was passed around my table at the Friday night dinner and it was one of the highlights for the table. Both vintages have been previously reviewed in the *PinotFile*. Only 789 cases of the 2003 vintage were produced. This is very serious juice with great people behind it.

**2004 Adelsheim Vineyard Elizabeth's Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** Ripe fruit aromas lead to an assertive fruity style with plenty of charm. The Elizabeth's Reserve is always a wine to count on. David and Ginny Adelsheim founded Adelsheim Vineyard in 1971, beginning with a 15-acre site on the southern slopes of the Chehelam Mountains. After 28 vintages, Adelsheim is mainly an estate-grown winery with 170 acres of vines. Production is 27,000 cases annually. The winemaker is Dave Paige.

**2003 Anne Amie Vineyards Hawk's View Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** Veteran Oregon winemaker and viticulturist Scott Huffman directs the show here. This winery was featured in an issue of the *PinotFile* this year. This Pinot Noir was showing beautifully at the event. A deep cherry nose and palate with just the perfect amount of t'and a.



**2004 Belle Vallée Cellars Grand Cuvee Pinot Noir** This is Corvallis's own hometown winery. The focus here is on the art of the blend rather than single vineyard wines. Talented winemaker Joe Wright sources fruit from multiple vineyards and blends them into three Pinot Noirs of advancing degrees of complexity: Willamette Valley, Reserve, and Grand Cuvee. I had the opportunity to visit the winery and spend some time with Joe and in next week's issue I will feature extensive coverage of this outstanding winery with tasting notes and impressions.



**2004 Elk Cove Vineyards Mount Richmond Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** This was a standout among many excellent Oregon Pinot Noirs. Exuberant aromas of cherry pie led to a juicy and fruity wine with great harmony. Ultraplush and just about perfect. Elk Cove is a family affair, founded in 1974 by Pat and Joe Campbell. Winemaker Adam Godlee Campbell produces sterling Pinot Noirs from select vineyards in the Northern Willamette Valley. Single-vineyard Pinot Noirs have been produced here since 1979. I had an Elk Cove Riesling at one of the dinners and it was startling good. The winery is a must visit with breathtaking views of the surrounding Valley.

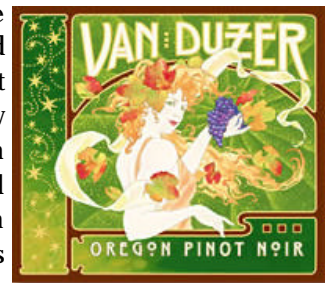
**2003 The Eyrie Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** Oregon Pinot pioneer David Lett was the second to plant commercial quality Pinot Noir in the Willamette Valley in 1965. The Eyrie Vineyard is located in the Red Hills of Dundee close to where Domaine Serene, Domaine Drouhin and White Rose Vineyard now stand. Jason Lett recently took over from his father as winemaker and vineyard manager. The Eyrie wines have exhibited balance and elegance through the years, as well as an ability to age gracefully. Production is close to 10,000 cases including white wines as well. I really liked this Pinot Noir. It was not flashy or flatulent, just beautifully composed with hit-toned Pinot fruits. Priced at about \$27, it also a great value for a wine of such high pedigree.

**2004 Ponzi Vineyards Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** I have been a fan of this wine dating back to the 1992 and 1994 vintages which were among the best Oregon Pinot Noirs I have ever drunk. This beauty follows in the tradition. The style tends to be a little robust but this vintage has plenty of rich, creamy fruit balanced by suede-like tannins.



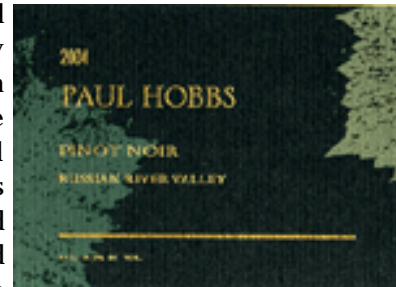
Dick and Nancy Ponzi are among the early Oregon wine pioneers. The second generation now carries on. Burgundy-trained Luisa Ponzi is the winemaker who continues the signature Ponzi style set by her father more than three decades ago. The family owns over 100 acres of certified sustainable vineyards in the Chehalem Mountains and they are launching the construction of a new winery.

**2004 Van Duzer Vineyards Estate Pinot Noir** Carl Thoma purchased the bankrupt Van Duzer Vineyards in 1998, hired winemaker Jim Kakacek and together they have transformed this estate into one of Oregon's top Pinot Noir producers. Vineyards have been replanted and regrafted and a new winery is nearing completion. The 2003 Pinot Noirs first drew my attention to this winery and I am now a fan. Before the IPNC, I visited Van Duzer and spent some time with Jim Kakacek. I will have an extensive feature on Van Duzer vineyards including tasting notes and impressions in next week's *PinotFile*.



**2004 Witness Tree Vineyard Vintage Select Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** All Pinot Noirs from this winery come from their 49 acres of vineyards. Located nine miles northwest of Salem, nestled in the Eola Hills, the vineyard is farmed using sustainable agricultural practices. On Saturday I spent a delightful morning at the vineyard where owners Dennis and Carolyn Devine and winemaker Steven Westby hosted a tour and luncheon (see notes to follow). Westby has been at Witness Tree for 12 vintages where he is also the vineyard manager. The Pinot Noirs here are stellar. This Vintage Select bottling wraps you in silk pajamas and sends you dreaming.

The Grand Dinner on Friday evening was held on the school's intramural field. As noted previously, this was prepared by three accomplished French chefs. It always amazes me how they can prepare such a sumptuous feast with dishes like "Confit of albacore tuna, truffle aoli, summer vegetables and arugula salad" for over 700 people. Some of the evening's wines that were notable included: **1997 Jadot Bonnes Mares**, **2002 Archery Summit Red Hills Estate Pinot Noir**, **2002 Sonoma Coast Vineyards Pinot Noir**, **2003 Domaine Drouhin Louise Pinot Noir** (needs time), **2002 Camille Giroud Latricies Chambertin** (infanticide), **1995 Argyle Reserve Pinot Noir** (5L, wonderful aromatics, still pumping out the flavor), and **2003 Paul Hobbs Russian River Valley Pinot Noir**. David lee (loverofwine.com) generously brought the Paul Hobbs to share. I thought this wine out shown everything else on the table. Some of Paul Hobbs's Pinot Noirs I have had in the past have been too big and oaky for my taste. But this wine was quintessential Russian River Valley with luscious cherry, cola and spice flavors merging harmoniously with fine tannins, a velvety mouth feel, and a lively finish. Hubba, Hubba. Paul Hobbs is a well-known talent who consults on many wine projects. His Russian River Valley blend is sourced from his own vineyard and several other notable plantings. The wine is priced around \$40 and enjoys pretty good retail distribution. The 2004 vintage is now on the market. Go for it.



Fortunately I didn't try to drink everything on the dinner table and I woke up refreshed the next morning. The event planners are very astute, for each day they start the activities an hour later in the morning. The key to any event like this is to learn when to spit inward and when to spit outward. I am sure I tasted over 160 Pinot Noirs over the three day weekend but I rarely drank a full pour of anything although a tear appeared a few times when I poured the rest of some Pinots out on the grass.



Saturday I boarded the bus for the 25 minute ride south to Witness Tree Vineyard in the Eola Hills. The winery is named after an ancient oak which towers over the vineyard from its regal position at the top of the vineyard. This is a small, homey vineyard and winery, so typical of many in the Willamette Valley. Dennis Devine, who own Witness Tree made everyone feel relaxed and welcome and the mornings festivities started with an impressive discussion of Witness Tree Vineyard terroir by winemaker and vineyard manager Steven Westby (photo above with hat). Briefly, Steven explained that 200 million years ago the Willamette Valley was under water. It eventually evolved into an inland sea. 20 million years ago, the Cascade mountains produced lava flows into the Valley and forming chains of hills. 15,000 years ago, during the Ice Age, glaciers in Eastern Montana receded and huge flows of water entered the Willamette Valley periodically (the so-called Mazulla Flows). The water carried with it soil, so most of the soil in the Valley is actually direct from Eastern Montana. Large chunks of granite can still be seen in the fields of Oregon, carried here from Montana. The resulting soils at Witness Tree are sedimentary and basaltic, similar to those in the Dundee Hills.





After the history lesson, we tasted three 2004 Witness Tree Pinot Noirs from three different blocks of the Vineyard to demonstrate differences in terroir among the same vineyard land. The wines included the **2004 Witness Tree Benchmark Pinot Noir** (4 barrel blend of Pommard clone, own rooted, 22-year-old vines, 14.3% alc.) which was soft, plush and elegant; the **2004 Witness Tree Fifty One Pinot Noir** ( 4 barrel blend from upper portion of vineyard, Pommard clones, 14.3% alc.) which was a more intense, complex, and a bigger wine; and the **2004 Witness Tree Hanson Block Pinot Noir** (a newer planting in 1999 with four times the density of older plantings, Pommard and Wa-

densvil clones own rooted, thinner soils at top of the vineyard at 600 ft, first bottling, 85 cases, 14.3% alc.) which was an even richer style with copious earth notes and black fruit flavors. All three from the same vineyard, but distinctly different. The Witness Tree Vineyard is pictured on the next page

The winery produces 6,000 cases of wine year. Yields are small - 1.7 tons per acre in 2004 and 2005. Many of the vines are 25-years-old and require no irrigation. The younger vines need water, however, but there is no drip set up. Recently Steven had his son and a friend out watering each vine by hand with a hose from a 200 gallon tank of water that was hauled up the vineyard hillside. A Pinot Blanc served at lunch has a curious history. The cuttings came from the Abbey Ridge Vineyard and were a vineyard mutation from Pinot Gris. These represent the first clonal selection made in Oregon and put into production.

Winemaking here is minimalistic. The estate grapes are 100% destemmed within 20 minutes of picking. As many whole berries as possible are sent to the fermentors where a cold soak lasts 4-6 days to extract color, flavor and tannins. The grapes are then allowed to warm and ferment with native yeasts for 8-10 days. After pressing, the wine is allowed to settle in tank for a few days and then sent to oak barrels for 11 months. The wines are bottled before the next vintage due to space limitations in the winery. A number of 3-year air-dried oak barrels are used. The air drying leaches out the resin character of the oak and leads to more subtle oak flavors in the finished wines.

The Burgundian guests at Witness Tree Vineyard were Olivier and Florence Leriche from Domaine de l'Arlet in Nuits St. Georges. He spoke at length about his vineyards and winemaking techniques. Although I admire his grasp of English, and thoroughly enjoyed his charming personality, much of his discussion was lost in translation. Marcia Bryce of Bryce Vineyard in Carlton led the discussion. Domaine de l'Arlet is located just south of Nuits St. Georges. It took its name from the "Clos de l'Arlet", a 10-acre vineyard surrounding the house. The French insurance group, AXA, owns the 33-acre vineyard. Manager Jean-Pierre De Smet rents the vineyards and premises along with co-owner and partner, Olivier Leriche. The vineyards are quite prestigious (Clos de l'Arlet and Clos des Forets Saint Georges in Nuits St. Georges and Les Suchots and Romanee Saint Vivant in Vosne-Romanee). There are many old vines (some 50 years or more). Vineyard management is mainly organic with a biodynamic approach. At lunch we were treated to two delight wines: the **2001 Domaine**





WITNESS TREE VINEYARD

**De l'Arlot Nuits St. Georges blanc** - a rarity in that very little Chardonnay is produced in Nuits St. Georges and **1999 Domaine d l'Arlot Nuits St Georges 1er Cru Cuvee Juvenal Vignes de Clos de Forets**. The Witness Tree wines were also delightful at lunch and included the **2005 Witness Tree Viognier**, the **2005 Witness Tree Vineyard Pinot Blanc**, the **2000 Witness Tree Gold Cap Pinot Noir** ( a special bottling for the Oregon Salud auction that was never sold commercially - outrageous!), and the **2004 Witness Tree Vineyard Sweet Signe** ( really nice with brioche filled with lavender poached peaches, vanilla cream and local marionberries and raspberries). The guest chef was Jeff Nizlek of Silver Grille Café in Silverton, Oregon.

Returning to campus, it was time for another extended nap before the walk-around tasting at 6:30. Then it was on to the Traditional Northwest Salmon Bake. A beginning temptation was alder-smoked sea scallop with horseradish cream (yum). From the fire was roasted Chinook salmon, smoked prime rib of Carlton Farms pork and oak-grilled top sirloin of beef. The buffet was very long and included seven salads such as fingerling potato salad with duck confit, panzanella salad with heirloom tomatoes, grilled bread, kalamata olives and asiago curls, and grilled farmer's market vegetables with smoked tomato ancho chile mayonnaise. You don't want to hear about the dessert extravaganza with 11 different concoctions plus 9 different kinds of cookies and a cheese selection with artisan breads and fruit. There was plenty of Pinot too. Highlights included **2001 Skewis Montgomery Vineyard Pinot Noir**, **1988 Pierre Bouree Fils Latricieres Chambertin** (leather, old book, vitamin and plenty of acid), **1988 Faiveley Corton Clos des Cortons** (barnyard, lively acidity, excellent), **2002 Littorai Hirsch Vineyard Pinot Noir** (always a winner and thanks to the Steinmans for sharing), **2000 Marchesi Pancran Pinot Nero** (different), **2003 Bartholomew Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**, **1998 Merriwether Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**, **2002 Hamacher Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**, **2004 Black Cap Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**, **2003 EIEIO Broadley Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** (magnum, thanks to Jay McDonald - a youngster that has copious fruit reflective of the warm Oregon vintage; this is a sipper to contemplate), and **2003 Shaky Bridge**, **2003 Sleeping Dog**, and **2003 Kawarau Estate** ( all Central Otago from Andy and Penny Loving of Station Imports). There was more but you get the idea.

The final meal was the Sparkling finale held on Sunday morning. This is a more casual affair with a buffet of breakfast delights including sushi, crepes, omelettes, croissants, fruit galettes, and gorgeous blueberries and raspberries. The sparkling wines were **Gobillard NV Brut** (a favorite), **Jean Laurent Blanc de Noirs NV**, and **R. Stuart & Co. Rose d'Or NV** (a winner from Oregon. It is too bad that sparkling wine has not proven profitable for Oregon winemakers because the ones from Argyle, Soter, St. Innocent and others have been outstanding in the past).

Sunday afternoon I was wined out. I decided to visit the Evergreen Aviation Museum on Captain Michael King Smith Way in McMinnville ([sprucegoose.org](http://sprucegoose.org)). If you have even the slightest interest in United States history and/or aviation, you must see this museum when in Oregon. I spent three hours here and was awed by the beautifully restored aircraft and the history behind them. The largest building in McMinnville houses the famous Hughes H-4 (HK-1) Flying Boat. It is the world's largest wooden aircraft with the longest wingspan ever constructed. It was flown only one time on November 2, 1947. The single hull prototype was built as a personnel and material carrier designed to fly trans-Atlantic during World War II to avoid the German submarines that were sinking Allied ships. Total cost, \$25,000,000! The press tagged the aircraft, the Spruce Goose, a name Hughes detested. In actual fact, the plane was made of birch, with only small amounts of maple, poplar, balsa, and spruce. Multiple other classic aircraft are on exhibit including the B-25, B-17, Spitfire, Mustang, early passenger aircraft and the world's fastest spy plane. Some of the aircraft, such as the Spruce Goose, can be explored on the inside. Many World War II veterans are on hand to provide colorful information and recollections. The Spruce Goose Vineyard sits adjacent to this magnificent facility. Various photos are posted on the following page.



When Lewis and Clark arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River that divides Oregon and Washington, the foul weather they encountered led them to call this region Point Dismal. I am sure they could have never imagined that Oregon would become a leading producer of fine wine in the United States. In the next issue of the *PinotFile*, I will review the history of Pinot Noir in Oregon. In addition, four Willamette Valley wineries of varying size from tiny (Privé), to small (White Rose Vineyard), to medium (Belle Vallée), to moderately large (Van Duzer) will be featured. I visited all four either before or after the IPNC and I believe they are representative of the best that Oregon currently has to offer.



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without a good Pinot**

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## Salud!

**Salud! is Oregon's other major Pinot Noir event. Over 40 of Oregon's premier Pinot Noir producers unite to provide healthcare and services to Oregon's seasonal vineyard workers and their families. This special auction is held on November 12-13, 2006. On Saturday, November 11, at Domaine Drouhin Oregon, each of the wineries will offer samples of their special Pinot Noirs from the 2005 vintage. Serious bidders can purchase these exclusive wines via the Big Board Auction. On Sunday, November 12, there will be dinner, a silent auction of wine selections from the cellars of participating wineries, and an oral auction held at The Governor Hotel in Portland, Oregon. For more information, call 505-681-1850 or visit the website at [www.saludauction.org](http://www.saludauction.org).**

## Helpful Information for Married Pinot Geeks

It is important for men to remember that, as women grow older, it becomes harder for them to maintain the same quality of housekeeping as when they were younger. When you notice this, try not to yell at them. Some are oversensitive, and there is nothing worse than an oversensitive woman.

Let me relate how the Prince handled the situation with his wife Patty. When I took "early retirement" four years ago, it became necessary for Patty to get a part-time job for extra income and spending money that we needed. Shortly after she started working, I noticed she was beginning to show her age. I usually get home from the Tennis Club about the same time she returns home from work. Although she knows how hungry I am, she almost always says she has to rest for half an hour or so before she starts dinner. I don't yell at her. Instead, I tell her to take her time. I open a good bottle of Pinot and sit outside on the patio until she gets dinner on the table. I generally have lunch out with my buddies so eating out again is not reasonable. I'm ready for some home-cooked grub when I hit the door.

She used to do dishes as soon as we finished eating. But now it's not unusual for them to sit on the table for several hours after dinner. I do what I can by diplomatically reminding her several times each evening that they won't clean themselves. I know she really appreciates this, as it does seem to motivate her to get them done before she goes to bed. Although she is reluctant to wash my Riedel Vinum Burgundy glasses, I have shown her the proper technique and she has done a good job of late with no breakage.

When doing simple jobs, she seems to think she needs more rest periods. Recently, she had to take a break when she was only half finished vacuuming the house. I tried not to make a scene. I'm a fair man. I told her to fix herself a nice, big, cold glass of freshly squeezed lemonade and just sit for a while. And, as long as she is making one for herself, she may as well make one for me too.

I know that I probably look like a saint in the way I support Patty. I'm not saying that showing this much consideration is easy. Many men find it difficult. However, guys, even if you just use a little more tact and less criticism of your aging wife because of this advice, I will consider that writing it was well worthwhile.

Note: Proceed with caution. One of my tennis buddies died recently. He was found with an expensive graphite Wilson tennis racquet rammed up his rear, with only the face of the racquet showing. His wife was arrested, but the all-woman jury accepted her defense that he accidentally sat down on it suddenly after drinking too much Pinot.