

RUTHERFORD DUST SOCIETY



"It takes Rutherford Dust to grow Great Cabernet."
—André Tchelistcheff

E - NEWSLETTER — OCTOBER 2008

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8TH ANNUAL "DAY IN THE DUST" ATTRACTS 400 FROM TRADE AND MEDIA TO SAMPLE WINES

Over 400 people attended the Rutherford Dust Society's 8th Annual "Day in the Dust," held once again at the elegant Rubicon Estate. A total of 27 wines were tasted in the morning at a private media tasting, and in the afternoon members of the trade were able to taste over 60 wines from 25 different wineries. This year the tasting focused on 2005 Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet blends, and 2007 Rutherford Sauvignon Blanc.

The Day in the Dust was created as a way to allow media and wine trade to meet the growers and winemakers of the Rutherford Appellation and sample the current releases. For more information on the Rutherford Dust Society visit rutherforddust.org.



21ST ANNUAL "ORIGINAL CHILI BALL" SIZZLES



On a hot evening in August the Rutherford Dust Society held its 21st Annual "Original Chili Ball." This year the neighborhood celebration of food, music and merrymaking was held on the bucolic grounds of Rutherford Grove Winery. While 400 plus adults enjoyed the music and wine, numerous children had a blast in the jump house. Though the party is primarily a celebration for the residents and winery employees of Rutherford, each year profits are donated to the Rutherford Volunteer Fire Department, the local 4-H, and the Rutherford Grange, all of whom help out at the event.

BECKSTOFFER VINEYARDS

HARVEST REPORT

We started picking Sauvignon Blanc in Rutherford during the last week in August, which is normal for our vineyards. In addition to Sauvignon Blanc, we have been picking Chardonnay and Merlot in Carneros over the last week. On average, all three varietals are coming in about 10% to 15% lighter than normal so far. The lower tonnages are mostly due to lighter cluster weights and smaller berries. Although wineries would like to see more tons being delivered, they have been happy with the small berries and good fruit quality.

Other than some shatter in the Merlot, we haven't seen any significant problems this year in the vineyard. Pest and disease pressure have been low and labor availability is at normal levels. The heat that we have experienced over the last two weeks has not damaged the fruit, but we continue to watch the vines closely and monitor moisture levels in the soil so as to avoid dehydration.

Based on current field measurements and weather conditions, we expect that we may see a condensed harvest this year, with a high percentage of the crop reaching maturity within a one or two week window. This could lead to production backups as wineries' tanks fill up and growers have to delay deliveries. However, it is still too early to know for sure, and cooler weather over the next few weeks could slow harvest to a more normal pace.

BECKSTOFFER VINEYARDS' RUTHERFORD FARM CENTER GOES SOLAR

In one of the latest initiatives that Beckstoffer Vineyards is undertaking as part of its commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility, the company is in the final phases of completing a project which will supply solar power to meet 100% of the electrical needs of its Rutherford Farm Center, which includes several buildings.



SPG Solar is constructing the project which, when complete, will consist of 4,600 square feet of solar panels, providing nearly 50 kilowatts of electricity. The biggest challenge in this project was to locate the sizable array of panels in a place where they did not take up valuable vineyard land or production space, and did not interrupt the country farmhouse aesthetic of the property.

After much consideration, it was decided to mount the panels on the banks of the reservoir in the adjoining Vineyard Georges III. Although much trenching was required for the cables to relay the electricity to the Farm Center buildings, the panels do not take up usable space and are inconspicuous within the surrounding vineyard. For more information visit beckstoffervineyards.com.

HISTORICAL RUTHERFORD'S QUICKSILVER MINES BROUGHT EARLY PROSPERITY TO AREA BY REBECCA YERGER

Rutherford was once a thriving center of industry and commerce during the late 1800s and early 1900s. This era of prosperity began in 1865 with the establishment of neighboring quicksilver mines. Four mid-valley mining companies tunneled into the western hills to extract cinnabar. These facilities then refined this raw ore on-site into quicksilver, or mercury, as it is better known.

These businesses were the Summit, New Burlington, Oakville and Bella Union Quicksilver Mining Companies. The latter two merged in 1868 to become the Bella Oak Quicksilver Mining Company. And yes, that is how the nearby lane received its name.

The streets of Rutherford were filled with a constant stream of wagons loaded with cinnabar and mercury-filled flasks en route to the depot. From the Rutherford train station these commodities were shipped to Napa and beyond. The Rutherford depot was also the shipping center for the eastern Napa County quicksilver mines, including Knoxville.

Rutherford grew in response to the increased demand for more services and housing generated by the quicksilver companies and their employees. For example, Joshua Frye and Mr. Nottage opened a general store. Henry Hortop offered wagon- and buggy-making plus blacksmithing services from his building located along the northeast corner of Highway 29 and Rutherford Cross Road. The second floor of his building was known as "Hortop Hall." It was used for community gatherings, dances and political meetings.

While Rutherford flourished as a quicksilver shipping center, it also helped Napa County become California's third largest quicksilver producer.



QUINTESSA INSTALLS CONCRETE FERMENTATION TANKS IN TIME FOR HARVEST

Thursday, September 4, marked the official start of red-grape harvest at Quintessa. "We picked our first block of Merlot from Silverdale South, in front of the winery along the Silverado Trail, today, one day

earlier than the start of harvest last year," stated winemaker Charles Thomas. "The Merlot looks and tastes excellent. Crop level is slightly down from last year and I'm estimating that overall, crop levels at Quintessa will range from on par with last year to 20% below last year. Overall the crop looks very promising; quality is high."

Quintessa has installed seven new closed-top concrete red wine fermenters, just in time for the harvest. The concrete tanks add to the array of both stainless steel and French oak fermenters already installed at the Quintessa Winery. The new tanks provide smaller vessels for sub-blocks and small parcels of grapes harvested from the 170-acre vineyard. Each tank is individually heated and cooled. "What's old is new again. The concrete tanks give us another layer of complexity in our fermentations that add dimension to the Quintessa blend," Thomas remarked.

Thomas has also added three concrete egg fermenters for a new white wine, Illumination Sauvignon Blanc, which the family owners of Quintessa began selling last year. Illumination blends a small block of Sauvignon Blanc from the Quintessa property with fruit from throughout Napa Valley. Illumination is available at Quintessa and in restaurants in limited markets across the U.S. Visit quintessa.com for more info.

FRANK FAMILY VINEYARDS COMPLETES NEW TASTING ROOM

Rich Frank and Connie Frank, owners of Frank Family Vineyards, are thrilled to announce the opening of the winery's new tasting room on Larkmead Lane in Calistoga. The original tasting room, loved by many for its no-frills feel, was demolished last week (shown at right). Headed by Tasting Room Manager Dennis Zablosky, Frank Family's new tasting room is now located in the original Craftsman house on the property, and will keep its welcoming no-charge policy for tasting. The tasting room was fashioned from the original winery owners' former residence, a classic Craftsman bungalow brimming with character. The original brick fireplace was lovingly restored after being found beneath layers of plaster and paint. The use of rich, warm wood and historic paint colors, taken from the era when the original home was constructed, creates a cozy retreat that invites guests to linger and savor the charm of a bygone era.



In addition to the new tasting room, the remodeling of the winery, which includes a new state-of-the-art small-lot production red wine facility, will allow Frank Family to have its first crush at the winery this harvest. Construction also exposed a third side of the original Larkmead Winery at Frank Family Vineyards, which was built in 1884 and refinished in 1906 with native sandstone from the nearby hills. The massive stone edifice is considered one of the finest structures in the Napa Valley, appearing on the National Register of Historical Places and listed as a Point of Historical Interest in the state of California. More information at frankfamilyvineyards.com.

LEGAL AID TEAMS UP WITH WINERIES

Legal Aid of Napa Valley is teaming up this summer with local wineries and vineyard management companies to educate Napa County's vineyard staff about their legal rights. At locations throughout Napa Valley, Legal Aid will hold free, bilingual educational seminars for the people who help power one of Napa's most important industries.

"We see ourselves as pioneers among legal services organizations around the country by proactively reaching out to local employers and their employees at their work sites," said Diana Dorame, Executive Director of Legal Aid. "Many of the people we see at these clinics don't know that Legal Aid exists, and the managers and owners of these companies have been thrilled to learn there is a place that can assist their employees who need legal help."

Legal Aid's Immigrant Legal Services Program serves immigrants and their families, regardless of

immigration status, on a variety of immigration- and non-immigration-related legal issues, including, naturalization, family visa petitions, obtaining legal permanent residence (green cards), housing and landlord/tenant concerns, consumer problems and domestic violence. Legal Aid holds free legal advice clinics regularly at locations throughout Napa County that are convenient to individuals and families needing legal services. Clinic sites include locations hosted by winery and vineyard management companies looking to educate their work force on their legal rights and responsibilities. Employers who are interested in having a clinic at their facility should contact Marlo Cohen, Legal Aid's Development Director, at (707) 259-0579.

STAGLIN FAMILY VINEYARD'S SOLAR ARRAY AND HONEY BEES WORKING AWAY

Staglin Family Vineyard's solar array's onsite electricity generation has, nearing the end of its first year of operation, prevented the release in the atmosphere of almost a quarter million pounds of CO2. This is the equivalent of "turning off" 4,000 homes for a day, or taking 100 cars off the road for the summer.



In other news, the Staglins have successfully relocated their honeybees from their previous meadow near the vineyard to a meadow near the forested area above the underground winery. The bees have settled in well and are happily buzzing, producing delicious honey. Bees are helpful to the biodiversity of the vineyard, allowing cross pollination of many different plant species. "What I didn't know before is that if you are prone to allergies and you take a teaspoon of local honey daily, your immune system will gradually strengthen and your allergies will diminish," said Shari Staglin. "I have done this for the past two years and my allergies are much lighter than before. Something

else to remember: a teaspoon of honey helps the medicine go down." Visit staglinfamily.com for more information.

RAYMOND VINEYARDS CELEBRATES 35 YEARS WITH 2008 HARVEST

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Raymond Vineyards celebrated 35 years of growing and winemaking with the 2008 harvest. On Saturday, September 6th, the winery hosted their annual Harvest Celebration. Guests were invited to sample the latest Lot wines, available exclusively at the winery, new release Cabernets. Raymond featured 2005 Small Lot Red Wine, 2005 St. Helena Cabernet Sauvignon, 2005 Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon and 2005 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon paired with wood-fired pizzas.

Raymond Vineyards was founded in 1971 by Sr., Roy Jr. and Walter Raymond. The Raymond family's roots in the Napa Valley date back to 1876, when Jacob and Frederick Beringer founded Beringer Brothers Winery. Five generations later, Craig and Krisi Raymond have joined the family business to continue the family's winemaking legacy at Raymond Vineyards. To find out more visit raymondvineyards.com.

RIVER PROJECT NEARS FINAL OKAYS

Final planning hurdles for the Napa River project are being cleared after years of technical analysis and landowner participation. Thanks to the team effort of the Napa RCD, Jones & Stokes, and the Rutherford Dust Restoration Team (RDRT), the preliminary design is now final for the entire 4.5 mile reach, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) report required for its approval has hit the streets.



Required permit applications to multiple regulatory agencies are also in process for submission and review. Ground surveys for Phase One implementation (including the Guggenhome, Sutter Home, Frog's Leap, and Quintessa properties) were completed last month. Now project engineers will be working closely with Phase One landowners to finalize design details and construction documents. Phase One construction is on track to commence summer 2009. We welcome Tessera Consulting to the Phase One team to help complete our monitoring requirements.

Meanwhile, fundraising and partnership-building continues to secure funds for additional project phases and export of the RDRT model to other reaches of the Napa River Watershed. For more information contact Lisa Micheli, RDRT Facilitator, micheli@vom.com, 415-264-2018.

RUTHERFORD APPELLATION WINERIES "ROLL OUT THE BARRELS" IN DECEMBER

For the first time ever, the Rutherford Appellation Wineries will open their cellars to the public for the "Roll Out the Barrels" Passport Weekend on Saturday, December 6 and Sunday, December 7 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Guests will have an exclusive opportunity to sample wines from the barrel, including finished blends and components of future wines, while learning about Rutherford varietals, Napa Valley terroir and diverse barrel types and toasts. Many participating Rutherford wineries will offer future sales of their barrel samples, an opportunity to meet the winemaking team and offer tastings of reserve and limited production wines.

Visitors can enjoy the unique barrel weekend experience for \$75 per person for the two-day pass, or \$60 for a SUNDAY ONLY pass. Wine club members of participating Rutherford Wineries will be offered a special price of \$60 per person for the two-day pass, or \$50 for a SUNDAY ONLY pass.

Tickets can be purchased online at rutherford-appellation-wineries.com and will be available for pick up at the designated winery purchase point.



Profits from the event will be donated to a Rutherford community charity.

Rutherford Appellation Wineries was established to educate consumers on the significance of the Rutherford appellation as Napa Valley's preeminent grape-growing area. This consumer-focused organization was created to promote the uniqueness of the area and encourage visitors to experience personally the quality of the wines produced in this special place.