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Spring Newsletter 2007



Vine Guy

- Spring has sprung into Southern Illinois leaving most of us with cold expectations. A few weeks ago, in late March, as our senses beheld an early berth of Spring, our hearts were heavy with hopes of a very prosperous bounty as we couldn't imagine a better prelude to a happily ever after harvest. And then came the cold, it has been some weeks since surviving colder than normal, even record low temperatures, and our vines weep as we watch Jack Frost dance through our vineyard celebrating one last hurrah as we say goodbye to old man winter. As the cold snap passed, we incurred 80% to 90% loss of our primary buds leaving us to depend on our only lifeline, the secondary and tertiary shoots on the vine. We watch as the days become warmer and sun begins to heal the wounds of our bounty, the expectations of this year's harvest will not be as well received as previous year's as we expect 40% yields and shortages throughout Illinois and the Midwest. We look forward to the healing and we hope to make the best of a cold start to sunny days in our vineyard.



Vintners Vibe

- As we take note of the unusual spring weather and the adverse effects on the grapes it has taken we acknowledge that our customers are concerned too. We have received many calls and questions from concerned residents and case club members asking, "What should we expect with the wine?" Our winemaker Paul hasn't had much sleep lately as these cold days have not only affected our grape vines, but our wines as well. It has become necessary for our winemaker to prepare for the yield shortage on grapes before our harvest season begins. It has become critical for us to order fruit from the east coast in order to keep up with the supply and demand as we are not the only ones making the call for alternative measures. When there is little supply prices go up and we are expecting a price increase across the Midwest on wine to compensate for the limited amount of grapes for wineries.



Spring Festival Schedule:

May 5th and 6th

Spring Wine Festival, 12:00 to 6:00

Admission: \$3.00 per person

**Featuring: Sat. - St. Stephen's Blues
Sun. - Woodbox Gang**

**Food Vendors: Broussard's Cajun Cuisine
17th Street Bar and Grill**

May 19th

Gumbo & BB-Q Festival *New*, 12:00 to 6:00

Admission: \$3.00 per person

Featuring: Sat. - The Blues Bandits

**Food Vendors: Broussard's Cajun Cuisine
17th Street Bar and Grill**

June 2nd

Crawfish and BB-Q Festival, 3:00 to 8:00

Admission: \$3.00 per person

Featuring: Dennis Stroughmatt & Creole Stomp

**Food Vendors: Broussard's Cajun Cuisine
17th Street Bar and Grill**

June 16th

Shrimp and BB-Q Festival, 3:00 to 8:00

Admission: \$3.00 per person

Featuring: Pennsylvania Slim Blues Band

**Food Vendors: Broussard's Cajun Cuisine
17th Street Bar and Grill**

*All designated drivers and people under the age of 16 years may enter our events at no charge.

*Case Club members that have reached 20% discount on case purchases bring your case club card for free admission into Alto Vineyards festivals.

ALTO PASS FESTIVAL REMINDERS

We always want you to enjoy our festivals but please remember:

By Alto Pass ordinance no other alcoholic beverages Permitted.

By Alto Pass ordinance no open bottles allowed on day of festivals.

Please bring lawn chairs and blankets, as there is not enough seating for everyone.

Designated drivers are greatly encouraged – free sodas/water for those who sacrifice for the safety of others.

Enjoy! Be Happy! Be Safe!

If you would rather receive an electronic version of this newsletter, please submit your **name** and **email address** to altovineyards@henryprinting.com. This is a database email only so please send any inquiries to altovin@midwest.net.

(cont'd on next pg.)

Vintner's Vibe Cont'd-

We hope to make the increase as painless as we can for our customers and we hope to celebrate this year's vintage with the loyal people that make Alto Vineyards the successful business it has become today, so don't count on any price changes before this year's harvest season. There is good news in the mix, our winemaker, Paul, has made a limited amount of late harvest Vidal Blanc. Most of you might remember it best as our Late Harvest Reserve Gold, back by popular demand this wine will be added to our wine list within the next couple months, so stay tuned.

In Champaign- As most of you know we like to remind our customers about what's happening at our Champaign outlet. It has become tradition to celebrate live music each and every weekend throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons at **Alto Vineyards Vineyards-Champaign** and the trend has become contagious while customers celebrate the mood relaxing in our vine covered shade house with their favorite glass of Alto Vineyard's wine enjoying the sound of fine jazz and blues music. If your not in the mood to relax, but would like to get your feet moving to the beat, the dance floor might suite you just right. Please come and shop for unique gift items as our retail store has much to offer in the way of unique local crafts and wine accessories. Please, come and stay a while with us as Jim and the rest of the Dubnicek family would love to see you! If you have any questions about our upcoming events please give us a call at (217) 356-4784 or look us up on the web at www.altovineyards.net.

What the heck is is an A.V.A?

- As the news continues to trickle down the grapevine, Alto Vineyards is proud to announce that the Shawnee Hills wine region has been granted its first ever American Viticultural Area. What does this mean, you might ask? It simply means that the Shawnee Hills wine country has been nationally and internationally recognized as a distinct and premiere region for growing good quality wine grapes, therefore our region is becoming recognized on a similar platform with well known regions such as the Napa and Sonoma Valley's in California. Kudos to Dr. Ted Wichman and Ms. Karen Hand in their efforts writing, editing, and completing the application of which this world renowned title has been granted to our beautiful growing region in the Shawnee National Forrest. Throughout the course of our harvest seasons here at Alto Vineyards, you might begin to notice a few of our labels changing by the addition of the Shawnee Hills A.V.A. below the varietal name of the wine. We hope you enjoy our product and take pride in knowing that Alto Vineyards has been growing grapes for almost 25 years in Illinois' first ever A.V.A



southern illinois music festival

- Alto and the SHWT is proud to announce our participation as a major sponsor in the Southern Illinois Summer Music Program. We, along with our wine trail counterparts, will be featured at a one of six Shryock Auditorium concerts. Here are the dates and descriptions of each concert, all beginning at 7:30pm:

Friday, June 15: NEW ARTS JAZZTET, featuring all new selections.

Saturday, June 16: GREAT FIRSTS: Symphonies by Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Prokofiev.

Friday, June 22: TCHAIKOVSKY'S SLEEPING BEAUTY, featuring the Evansville ballet company.

Saturday, June 23: DVORAK AND STARS OF TOMORROW: Dvorak's Symphony No. 7 and a Concerto by James Stephenson.

Tuesday, June 26: NORTHERN LIGHTS AND THE SEA: Debussy's La Mer (never performed in Southern Illinois) and Grieg's Piano Concerto with Kara Benyas.

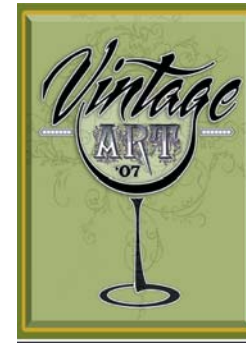
Saturday, June 30: THE ELIXIR OF LOVE, by Donizetti, fully staged by John Lipe, sung in English with supertitles,

Hits of the Season:

BOGEY'S RESTAURANT

- We paired up with Bogey's at Stone creek to kick off the first ever "**Meet the Winemaker**" dinner that took place on the evening of April 12, 2007 and it was a huge success. The dinner tickets sold to over 50 people for a lovely evening of fine cuisine and fine wines from our cellar. We look forward to many more to come and we extend a warm "thank you" to Denise and Don Pippins and Chef Dave Fontana for a fabulous evening at Stone Creek in Makanda, Illinois.

Hits of the Season Cont'd:



-For those of you that couldn't make it this year to our Vintage Art celebration mark your calendars each and every March to celebrate the arts along the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail. Each winery on the trail selects an artist(s) and showcases their art on Saturdays and Sundays providing hoerdourves and refreshments all month long so don't miss out next year, we'd love to see you there!



AMATEUR WINE COMPETITION AT ALTO VINEYARDS-CHAMPAIGN:

- Our winemaker Paul Renzaglia was invited to judge amateur wines on a panel of well respected individuals which include: Brad Beam, Enology Specialist for the state of Illinois, Paul Simpson, wine buyer and owner of Piccadilly Liquors, and Sam Vandergraff, wine buyer and manager of Friar Tucks. This was the second annual Amateur Wine Competition to be held in Illinois and our outlet in Champaign lent itself a host to some 130 entries, a very large turnout compared to the previous year's 23 entries. Paul remarked, "It was a great feeling to experience so much interest in regional wine and its quality, people want to learn about what we do and how to do it". Alto Vineyards looks to host this event each year and we hope the interest in regional wines continues to grow not only at our winery but at wineries across the state of Illinois. We would like to extend our support and thanks to Chad Collins for a job well done in organizing this event, "Salute', Chad"!

DON'T FORGET



Please come and join our case club. We offer special discounts for those of you that can't get enough of your favorite award winning Alto Vineyard's wine. Buy a case and you automatically become one of our preferred customers. We are at a 1,000 members and growing each year.

A Tribute to Lucy:

- Most of you can recall an instance when you were standing at our tasting bar and in the midst of tasting wine you were interrupted by a friendly face below, it was Lucy. Her presence wasn't the most lady-like but her greeting was warm and gentle as her right ear hung in the balance of an ever wanted scratching or a pat on the head to say, "Hello" to all that came through our door. Lucy grew up at our winery throughout the years from a curious puppy frolicking through the vineyard and became our most respected public relations gal, even having her own space to lie down in the office. She was a good friend to many that have come and gone throughout the years and since her death this past winter we celebrate her contribution to our business as our family, friend and employee. We all loved our Winery Wiener; we raise a glass to her namesake the **Wiener Dog White**.

