



The Spokane Enological Society

WineMinder

February 2020

What do **Albert Einstein** and **Mike Scott**, our distributor representative and host for the February Tasting, from **Cru Selections**, one of the premiere wine distributors in the Northwest offering small production, hand crafted, family owned wines and ciders, have in common? Absolutely **NOTHING!** Although...if I think about it, Einstein was a “regular guy,” and Mike is kind of a “regular guy.” They are (were) both **creative**, they both think (thought) about **liquid molecules**, they both have (had) some mathematical knowledge, and they both are (were) a little bit “**disturbed.**” Also, Albert Einstein was famously disruptive in elementary school classrooms, a trait that some careful research in England’s midlands disclosed he shares with Mike Scott...hmmmm, there’s probably more to that story.

February’s Tasting is titled, “**The Taste for New Immigrants.**” No, the Trump administration hasn’t changed its immigration policies...this is about our immigrant ancestors who brought with them cuttings from their homeland vines and famous vineyards from all over Europe, to America. But what happened to these great vines (known as *Vitis vinifera* or classic grapes) of Europe? What did the Spanish Missionaries and French settlers have to do with the first U.S. vineyards?

To learn more, join us for what just might be the most entertaining, educational, and darn-right delicious wine tasting event so far this year! It’s like the theory of relativity, and the laws of physics, you mix learning about immigrant vines, with tasting delicious wines and food, with Mike’s clever-minded sense of humor, your good SES company, and the result is a great time tasting great wine at a great price! And just like Einstein, this might make Mike a “force of gravity” and GENIUS to us all!

SES Board of Directors Nominations Update

A final slate of Board Director candidates for the six annual board positions will be reviewed by the Board at our February 10th meeting. The nominees will be introduced at the February 17 Tasting event. The new Board of Directors shall be installed at the Annual Board Meeting on March 24th, and the new Board will then elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. **Again, if you are interested in participating on the SES Board, please let me know on or before February 7th – send me an email: claudia@thinklakeside.com, or call/text me at 509-979-7692.**



And did you think I wasn’t going to say something about **Valentine’s Day** and wine?

...plan a great date and bring a yummy bottle of wine to share over a fabulous dinner. Tell that special someone about a fond memory you have of something you did together and why that moment you’ll always remember. Toast to the fun times you’ve had together, and toast again to the fun times you look forward to having in the future...including sharing another yummy bottle of wine together overlooking the Yosemite Valley! *Love you honey!!*

Claudia Hersey
SES President

NAME	APPOINTMENT
Austin, Deb	Membership Director
Austin, Dick	(Interim thru 4/2020)
Boyle, Mike	Chair, Social Media/Facebook/Chair, Membership Recognition Committee
Boyle, Shelly	Program Director
Cloninger, Pam	
Digiacinto, Darren	Treasurer
Goodwin, Kyle	Financial Auditor
Goodwin, MaryAnn	
Gross, Terry	A/V & Entertainment Director
Deby Hanson	(Interim thru 4/2022)
Hersey, Claudia	President
Hersey, Paul	(Interim thru 4/2020)
Jones, Frances	Vice President
Leininger, Jack	Secretary
Leininger, Lyn	
Lunt, Evan	
Rimpila, Charlie	Co-Chair, Web Master & WineMinder Editor
Simonson, Michael	Chair, Extra Special Events

NAME	APPOINTMENT
DeNio, Dionne	Chair, Glasses & Linens
Kogler, Barb	Co-Chair, Food Committee
Roberts, Eva	Chair, Special Events
Snow, Jeffery (Dr.)	Education Director
Wende, Jody	Co-Chair, Food Committee
Whipple, Dave	Chair, Web Master & WineMinder Editor

BOARD MEETINGS

The SES board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of every month except July and August. Board members are asked to provide a bottle of wine and appetizer to share.

Meetings are held at the Southside Community and Senior Center, located at 3151 E 27th Ave, Spokane, and are open to members (with prior notice to a member of the Board of Directors).

REGULAR EVENTS

There are 10 events per year, with July and August off. Dinners are in December and April (dates TBD), and all Tastings are on the third Monday of the month.

Special Dinners are held at the Spokane Club at 6:30 p.m., and Tastings are held at the Southside Community and Senior Center at 7:00 p.m.

ABOUT THE SPOKANE ENOLOGICAL SOCIETY (SES)

The Spokane Enological Society is a not-for-profit (501c7) organization governed by an elected 18-member board of directors. The purpose of the society is to provide its members opportunities to gain further knowledge and appreciation of wine. Functions are social and recreational, centered on learning through tasting, comparing and evaluating wines.

Being a not-for-profit organization allows us to get a special event license from the Washington Liquor and Cannabis Control Board. This allows us to buy wine at wholesale prices directly from Washington distributors or wineries. These savings help keep our costs low and are passed along to club members.

The Tastings, Special Dinners, and occasional extra special events are always an exceptional value for members. Guests are also welcome to attend at a slightly higher cost.

JOIN US!

Becoming a member is easy. The cost to join is \$30 single, \$45 family (2 ppl), which includes a 1-time \$5.00 set-up fee. Membership is renewed yearly in June. The cost to renew your membership each year is \$25 single, \$40 family (2 ppl). A membership application is available on-line at www.spokaneenologicalsociety.org or at our Tasting events.

Membership benefits include a subscription to our monthly newsletter, the WineMinder (by email or to a mailing address), and member discounts to all SES Tastings and/or special event dinners, and discount on the wines available to purchase after each Tasting.

A printed membership application is available at the registration desk at each SES event, or you can apply on-line at:

<https://www.spokaneenologicalsociety.org/resources/Documents/New%20SES%20Membership%20Application%20-%20Liability%20Release%20Form.pdf>

Membership fees can be paid on-line via credit card or by mailing your check and completed membership application to SES, P.O. Box 31404, Spokane, WA 99223.

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO ATTEND OUR TASTING AND SPECIAL DINNER EVENTS!

“THE TASTE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS”

Presented by Mike Scott

With precious few examples - and even fewer drinkable examples - nearly all wines produced in the U.S. are grown upon vines that were originally “immigrants.” If not for these European immigrants, we would be forced to accompany our favorite meals with a glass or two of barely aged **Scuppernong**, or for the truly adventurous, **Durango**. Not that these wines are truly awful, just reasonably so.

And who better to present a program on immigrants and their value to our daily lives than me, **Mike Scott**; maybe not valuable, but certainly an immigrant.

During this presentation we will explore how newer, less well-known European vine transplants have flourished and developed in the hallowed and fertile soils of the Pacific Northwest.

FIRST FLIGHT

Our first flight will compare an **Albarino** from its ancestral homeland of *Rias Baixas* on the Atlantic coast of Spain, against the very same varietal grown in the warm climate of Washington's Columbia Valley.

SECOND FLIGHT

Our second flight keeps us in Spain to compare a **Tempranillo** from the north central Spanish region of *Rioja*, next to one grown in the Rattlesnake Hills AVA in south central Washington.

THIRD FLIGHT

For our third flight we will bring together a **Dolcetto d'Alba** from the *Piemontese* region of Italy and taste it side by side with one grown in the Columbia Gorge area, again in Washington State.

FOURTH FLIGHT

Then for our finale we will do away with the comparative theme, instead simply celebrate the remarkable expression brought forth in old world grapes when transplanted in the rich and fertile soils of the Pacific Northwest. Oregon has embraced **Gamay Noir** as a natural extension of their Burgundy inspired wine industry, and we will be tasting a particularly polished version from **Brick House** and their *Ribbon Ridge* vineyard.

Beside it we will show an exemplary **Graciano**, a grape notoriously difficult and low yielding when grown in Spain. Yet this one from *Idilico* that was grown on Snipes Mountain in the Yakima Valley, will surprise and delight you with its richness and depth.

This program, “**THE TASTE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS**,” promises to be fun and enlightening. Not only will we taste a great line-up of wines, but we will also be able to pull out not just differences but also similarities in the way these varietals express themselves. In both their native tongue, and with an American accent.

The cost for this program is \$23 for members, \$28 for Guests. Bring two glasses each, **plus an open mind...**

Looking forward to our evening together!

**“THE TASTE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS”
TASTING EVENT REGISTRATION FORM**

SEATING IS LIMITED – PLEASE REGISTER EARLY!
Reservations must be received on or before Monday, February 10th, 2020

MAIL REGISTRATION FORMS TO: Spokane Enological Society / P.O. Box 31404, Spokane, WA 99223	
“THE TASTE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS” February 17, 2020 7:00 P.M.	TASTING LOCATION Southside Community and Senior Center 3151 E 27th Ave., Spokane, WA 99223
COST EACH: Members: \$23, Guests: \$28 # of Glasses Required: 2 SES Logo Wine Glasses are available to purchase at the Tasting events at a cost of \$6.00 ea (cash or check only)	
Enc. is \$ _____ for _____ (#) Members.	▶ NAME(S): _____
Enc. is \$ _____ for _____ (#) Guests.	▶ NAME(S): _____
<p style="text-align: center;">BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE SES IS EASY!</p> <p>The cost to <u>join</u> the SES is \$30 single, \$45 family (2 ppl), which includes a 1-time \$5.00 set-up fee. Membership is renewed yearly in June. The cost to <u>renew</u> your membership each year is \$25 single, \$40 family (2 ppl). A membership application is available on-line at www.spokaneenologicalsociety.org or forms are always available at the registration desk at our Tasting events.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REMEMBER TO BRING A VALID STATE ISSUED IDENTIFICATION CARD WITH YOU MUST BE 21 TO ATTEND</p>	

SNOW ON WINE

Wine Ratings: What's in the Number?



by Dr. Jeff Snow

We've all been there: dinner guests coming – spouse wants no embarrassments – and here you are at the wine store “Sum of All Wine” confronted by Ratings: WS 92, WA 89, WE 93 and little placards proclaiming, “**Dicky's Favorite Merlot**” or “**Chris's Best Choice for Burgers.**” It's complicated with so many variables and choices. Like picking a hotel. *Booking.com; Trivago.com; Tripadvisor.com* or web pages of Westin, NH, Marriott, or Clarion, who all claim to give us the insight of professionals who, we hope, are knowledgeable but independent of commercial influence or bias and who also comment on varying taste and style in a way we can understand.

Reliance upon a wine critic to compare and rank wines is not new. Archeologists Heskett and Butler, in their book “**Divine Vintage**”¹ described Roman wine writer Martial's blunt tasting notes: “*We drink the black poison of a Corsican Jar.*” While noting that “*Pliny and Columella are generally in agreement on the best wines in the (Roman) empire...*”. Direct language and critics who generally agree are good. Because tastes vary widely, knowing who makes the rating helps us understand it. A rating number allows us to rank wines for overall quality, but it doesn't tell us if a wine is ready to drink now or if it is an acidic or tannic monster which won't drink well for decades, nor any other considerations of aroma, taste or food compatibility. Only tasting notes can do that.

In 1978 attorney Robert Parker wanted to provide wine consumers with an **independent** and **consistent** review of wines. He created a new 50-100 point quality scale to provide greater levels of differentiation than the commonly used 20 point rating system. He founded a bi-monthly consumer's guide titled, “**Robert Parker's Wine Advocate**” (abbreviated variously as Parker, RP, TWA or WA). Not accepting advertisements and relying on subscription rates to pay for everything helps insure independence from the wine trade. Initially all tasting samples were purchased from wine stores so that Parker got the same wine you or I would and not some “special bottles” from the winery or distributor. Today 60% of tasting samples are purchased. Detailed tasting notes describe a wine's appearance, aroma/bouquet, initial taste, mouthfeel, finish, and overall quality – summarized as the ranking NUMBER. Parker states that numerical scores can narrow choices but purchasers should only buy based on detailed reading of the notes. (see *addendum on point meaning*).

British wine writers Jancis Robinson (author of “**The Oxford Companion of Wine**”) and Michael Broadbent (author of “**The World Atlas of Wine**”) use the (older) 20-point scale and provide copious tasting notes. Membership in JancisRobinson.com with weekly wine newsletter and reviews costs 85 pounds (~\$111 U.S.) and she does not accept advertising.

Another popular rating system is used by **Gambero Rosso**. This Italian food and wine publishing group uses an experienced tasting panel to rate Italian wine. They award “Tre Bicchieri,” or 3 glasses, to “extraordinary wines”, “Due Bicchieri” to “very good wines”, and “Uno Bicchiero” to “good wines”. They provide detailed tasting notes and historical winery summaries.

Parker's (WA) 50-100 system² caught on and **Wine Spectator** (WS), **Wine Enthusiast** (WE) and many others have now adopted it. But did they adopt Parker's **independence** and **consistency**? Well, be your own judge. WS does publish wine trade advertising, and rates primarily winery donated wine, but claims to pay for about 2% of rated wines. To their credit the editors who rate their wines are identified, and tasting notes are clear. And WE? It is a group of related companies. **Wineenthusiast.com** takes you to the WE Catalogue, and when you click on “**buy wine**” you are redirected onto **wineexpress.com**. **WineMag.com** takes you to the WE Magazine, and selecting a wine to buy takes

you to **wine-searcher.com**. On the WineMag site go to the bottom and select “trade” then “submit for rating” or “advertising.” You will discover their “claims “... *to create immersive, memorable, custom content experiences that tell a brand's story...*”³.

Some other ratings services commonly include “**James Suckling**” (formerly a WS editor), “**Jeb Dunnuck**” (formerly a wine critic with Robert Parker’s WA), **Vivino.com**, **Cellartracker.com**, and **Decanter.com**.

Many less well-known sites, bloggers, and of course wine merchants, offer wine rating as well. I use them all from time to time but am careful to read accompanying tasting notes and consider their objectivity and independence.

Notes:

- 1) Heskett, Randal & Butler, Joel; Divine Vintage: 2012, Palgrave MacMillan, p. 109.
- 2) RobertParker.com, About Us, RPWA Rating System.
- 3) WineMag.com, Advertise, Enthusiast Idea Lab.

Addendum:²

Robert Parker created our original rating system with the first issue of **The Wine Advocate**, and it remains unchanged to this day. It employs a 100-point quality scale (in which wines are given a rating of 50 to 100 points). Since its inception, Robert Parker’s 100-point scale has become the wine industry’s standard.

The Wine Advocate takes a hard, very critical look at wine, since we would prefer to underestimate the wine's quality than to overestimate it. The numerical ratings are utilized only to enhance and complement the thorough tasting notes, which are our primary means of communicating our judgments.

The score ranges correlate to the following assessments:

96-100:

An **extraordinary** wine of profound and complex character displaying all the attributes expected of a classic wine of its variety. Wines of this caliber are worth a special effort to find, purchase and consume.

90 - 95:

An **outstanding** wine of exceptional complexity and character. In short, these are terrific wines.

80 - 89:

A **barely above average to very good** wine displaying various degrees of finesse and flavor as well as character with no noticeable flaws.

70 - 79:

An **average** wine with little distinction except that it is a soundly made. In essence, a straightforward, innocuous wine.

60 - 69:

A **below average** wine containing noticeable deficiencies, such as excessive acidity and/or tannin, an absence of flavor or possibly dirty aromas or flavors.

50 - 59:

A wine deemed to be unacceptable.

SHARE YOUR TASTEFUL SES EVENT PHOTOS ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES



When you experience something fun, it's natural to want to share it
With friends, family and the general wine-loving audience.

**SES Instagram and Facebook page hashtags:
#SES and #SpokaneEnologicalSociety**

We'll choose the best ones and create photo albums on the SES website.

RECIPES FROM OUR JANUARY SOUTH AFRICA TASTING

Chakalaka (Vegetable Relish)



INGREDIENTS

3 T oil
1 onion (finely chopped)
2 cloves garlic (crushed)
2 green bird's-eye chiles (Thai chiles), seeded and chopped
(was not included in Tasting recipe)
50 g (2 oz) ginger (finely grated)
2 T mild curry powder
1 red pepper finely chopped
1 yellow pepper finely chopped
5 lg carrots (unpeeled but scrubbed) grated
2 T tomato puree *(used tomato paste)*
400 g (14.5 oz can) canned chopped tomatoes
2 sprigs fresh thyme (leaves only)
400 g (16 oz can) baked beans *(used Bush's original - gluten free)*
Salt & Pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

To a pan over medium heat add the oil. Then add onion and saute' until translucent and softened.
Add garlic, ginger and curry powder, stir to combine.
Add peppers, cook for 2 min.
Add carrots, stir to combine and ensure they're coated in curry powder.
Add tomatoes and tomato paste. Stir to combine.
Cook mixture for 5-10 min. Mixture should be well combined and thickened slightly.
Add baked beans and fresh thyme. Simmer for 5 mins.
Remove from heat. Can be served hot or cold.

Quick Olive Tapenade



INGREDIENTS

1-15 oz. can green pitted olives (drained)
1-15 oz. can black pitted olives (drained)
3 T sun-dried tomatoes (drained)
2 T capers (drained)
2 to 4 cloves of garlic, minced
2 T chopped fresh parsley
3 T chopped fresh basil
¼ C olive oil
2 T fresh lemon juice

INSTRUCTIONS

Add all the ingredients into a food processor and pulse to desired consistency. Serve immediately or chill up to 48 hours.
Serve with crackers or baguette rounds
Makes 6 servings

Savory Palmiers

INGREDIENTS

1 pkg Trader Joe's Puff Pastry (defrosted)
¼ C Pesto
½ C grated Parmesan Cheese
¼ C finely chopped Sundried Tomatoes (in oil)
¼ C toasted Pine Nuts

INSTRUCTIONS

Lightly flour counter and unfold sheet of puff pastry dough.
Roll out with rolling pin until it is 9 ½ x 11 ½ inches.
Spread with half of the pesto and sprinkle with half of the tomatoes, parmesan and pine nuts.
Working from short end, fold/roll each end halfway to center, then fold again so ends just meet in center. Then fold in half.
Wrap dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour. Repeat with second sheet of pastry.
Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Slice rolls of pastry into ¼ in. slices and place on parchment paper lined baking sheets.
Bake for about 14 min or until golden brown.

