



AMERICAN WINE SOCIETY

Grapevine



Lehigh Valley Chapter January 2023

Co-Chairs: Peter Staffeld & Leslie Staffeld chair@lvaws.org 610-838-7372

Vice Chair: Kevin Campbell vicechair@lvaws.org 484-358-3926

Treasurer: Joe Pugliese treasurer@lvaws.org 610-297-2253

Board Members: Anne Dougherty, Percy Dougherty, Matt Green,
Barry Isett, Michael Orbin, Nancy Parker, Mike Parker, Judi Roggie, Dean Scott

Newsletter: Michael Orbin newsletter@lvaws.org 610-703-4292;

Chairman Select: Dean Scott & Kevin Campbell; Education: Suzanne Laverick-Stone
LehighValleyAWS.org

January Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Thai Avenue Restaurant

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 6:00 PM

4791 Tilghman St, Allentown, PA 18104

Hosted by Judi Roggie

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, January 8th



Tuscan Wines

Monday, January 23, 2023 - 6:00PM to 9:00PM

Hosted by Sal Manino

Ecco Domani

216 E. Fairmount St, Coopersburg, PA 18036

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, January 15th



February Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at DiMaio's Restaurant

Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM

27 Main St, Hellertown, PA 18055

(across from McDonalds and same plaza as Hellertown Diner)

Hosted by Judi Roggie

Register at LVAWS.org by Tuesday, February 7th



February Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting

Southern Rhone Wines

Saturday, February 18, 2023 - 2:00PM to 4:30PM

Hosted by Barry Isett & Kevin Campbell

Carriage House Restaurant

745 Gravel Pike (Rt 29) in East Greenville

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, February 12th



Connections from the Co-Chairs Peter & Leslie Staffeld



Happy New Year! Here's to a happy and healthy 2023!

We continue to be grateful for our wonderful, supportive **Board and Executive Committee**. Together everyone makes the Chapter flow. Thank you. We especially want to call out the members who go beyond: **our tasting hosts, BYOB coordinator, newsletter team, and holiday party committee**. **Dean and Bonnie Scott** did a wonderful job of organizing the 50/50 and Silent Auction – all to benefit AWSEF. Dean shares a full report in this newsletter. We happily celebrated these members' contributions at the Holiday Party. Thank you all!

Having fun? Then please remember to **renew your dues**. As per the bylaws, **\$10 per member was due by December 31**. You received email reminders which allow you to just click and pay on-line. Remember, you can pay for a friend by using the donation tab located on the website. Just list their name and "Dues" in the comment area. Thank you to those who have renewed their membership.

This month we are looking forward to a fun **BYOB on Tuesday, January 10** at Thai Avenue and a **Tuscany Tasting** at Ecco Domani on **Monday, January 23**. Ecco Domani will only be open to our members for this special tasting. You can read more about both events in the newsletter.

We have a great Chapter because of the extraordinary people in the group!

Cheers!

Peter and Leslie Staffeld

Are you Registered?

If you register for an event, (for example, a BYOB or tasting) you will receive an **immediate confirmation** email notice. If you do not receive an immediate email confirmation, you may have missed a step.

Summary of Board of Directors Meeting – Leslie Staffeld

The Board met on January 4, 2023. The following members attended:

Kevin Campbell, Percy Dougherty, Mike Parker, Joe Pugliese, Judi Roggie, Dean Scott, and Leslie and Peter Staffeld. Anne Dougherty, Matt Green, Mike Orbin, Nancy Parker, and Barry Isett were unable to attend.

The following topics were discussed:

Report from the Co-Chairs: Leslie and Peter Staffeld

Membership Update: We ended the year with 120 members. Twelve members joined in 2022. As of now, 96 members have renewed their memberships for 2023.

Board Reconfiguration: We congratulate Judi Roggie for being elected Chair of the Northampton Chapter of AWS. Judi has invited Leslie and Peter to join the Northampton Board as a liaison. Judi has agreed to remain on the Lehigh Valley Board in a similar role.

Report from the Treasurer: Joe Pugliese

This is the report for the end of the year 2022. We started the year with a balance of \$3,409.19 in our checking account. Our current balance, as of 01/04/2023, is \$5,385.79.

Included in our current balance are registration fees of \$1,700 for the January 2023 Tuscany Tasting and contribution to the AWS Education Foundation of \$1,604. Subtracting these funds from our current balance puts us at \$2,081.79. This does not include the \$1,000 deposit necessary to secure the Aster Center for the 2023 Holiday Party.

The holiday dinner Education Foundation fund raiser brought in a total of \$1,604; \$1,189 from the silent auction, \$288 from the 50/50 raffle and \$127 from Member donations. A check for that amount was sent to AWSEF on December 19, 2022. The check has not yet cleared the bank.

Our expenses for 2022 were primarily captured in three checks that total \$759.17: \$21.17 for the website domain, \$648 for the website itself, and \$190 for the wine gifts at the holiday dinner and replacement of a lost microphone.

It is estimated that for 2023 our total expenses are going to increase to approximately \$900. However, if we maintain our membership at 92 members or higher, our revenue will continue to exceed our expenses. As of today, we have **96 members** who have already paid their dues for 2023 and 14 members still yet to pay the 2023 dues. If all members pay their dues, it will bring the total to over \$1,000 net revenue.

Reports from the Board of Directors

- **AWSEF Scholarship: Dean Scott**
 - Last year LVAWS donated \$1,456 to AWSEF. This year the silent auction raised \$1,189, the 50/50 raised \$288 and donations were \$127, for a total of \$1604. This puts us at a total of \$3,060 raised toward the next \$5,000 scholarship. Next year we hope to raise the remaining \$1,940 for a \$5,000 scholarship.
- **BYOB Coordination: Judi Roggie**
 - The January and February BYOB's are scheduled and in the newsletter. Since Judi is assuming her new role in the Northampton Chapter, she will be changing roles. Therefore, the co-chairs have asked Ann Vlot to join the Board in March and she has agreed to assume this role.
 - Because of the great response to BYOBs, we may need to allow restaurants to move to abbreviated menus. When registering, members are reminded to check for an **immediate confirmation** that their registration went through. It is important that we give restaurants an accurate count.
- **Historian: Barry Isett**
 - Barry was unable to attend this meeting.
- **Liaison to Northampton Chapter: Judi Roggie**
 - As the new chair of the Northampton Chapter, Judi has invited Leslie and Peter to join the Northampton Board as a liaison. Judi has agreed to remain on the Lehigh Valley Board in a similar role.
- **Membership: Matt Green**
 - Matt was unable to attend this meeting. However, in 2022 Matt helped welcome 12 new members to LVAWS. The Chapter already welcomes 3 additional members in 2023.
- **Newsletter: Mike Orbin**
 - Mike was unable to attend this meeting. However, he thanks the newsletter team, reminds the team of the Google share drive for photos, and he suggests that we include travel articles in future newsletters. Parameters may include- wine related, recent travel, a paragraph, and include a photo.
- **Past Chair: Percy and Anne Dougherty**
 - Percy did not have a report.
- **Publicity: Nancy Parker**
 - Facebook posts continue as does mailing newsletters to two members who do not have email.
- **Tastings for 2023: Kevin Campbell**
 - A tentative calendar is in the newsletter. Note that dates and themes continue to evolve
 - The schedule is full and there are members who are willing to host, so we'll add a November tasting in addition to the AWS Conference.
- **Website: Mike Parker**
 - The website is working well, and Mike is open to suggestions.

Other topics discussed include ideas shared at the National Conference in October.

AWS' Cru 100

- The Board is not interested in subsidizing at this time.

Auction extra wine from tastings

- Unless a presenter (i.e., a winery or distributor) donates a bottle of wine, the Board is not interested in auctioning wine at this time.

NTP- Southern Rhone

- LVAWS has the same theme scheduled for February.

AWS Insurance Policy

- Any former member who attends a Chapter sponsored event will be expected to renew his/her Chapter membership.

Paul Mas Tasting

- June 24 (rain date June 25) at Bergeist Vineyard
- LVAWS will invite Northampton and Berks Chapters

Small group activities – Dean

- Ideas such as education classes, game nights, and amateur wine judging were discussed. The Board will continue to consider and plan for these types of events.

Drop in events

- The Board talked about ways to attract more ‘non-vintage’ members by offering tastings at vineyards and tasting rooms during the week and inviting small groups of new members to informal appetizers and wine tastings.

Dues for New Members:

- The Board voted to offer new members who join in October, November or December, those three months free, similar to what AWS did this year. In other words, if a new member joins in late fall of 2023, their \$10 dues will include 2024.

Holiday Party 2023:

- The party will be on Sunday, December 10, 2023, at the Aster Event Center.
- The Board approved the contract and agreed to the \$1,000 deposit.

Meeting concluded at 6:45.

National AWS News – Leslie Staffeld

Here's a message from the AWS Board of Directors:

We wish you all the best in 2023. To make a fun and enjoyable wine year, we are developing many new educational programs and activities.



Some upcoming activities for members to be aware include:

- **President’s Pairings of Food and Wine** - These monthly Zoom events will start January 25, with Food and Wine Pairing 101 on adjusting food to go with your favorite wine.
- **Winter Wine Weekend in Harrisonburg, Virginia**, February 23-26. Madison Hotel is offering a Special AWS Early Bird Registration with 25% saving, if received by January 6. The Package Includes: 3-Night Stay at the Madison Hotel (February 23-26, 2003), 5 AWS Wine Tasting Workshops (You pick among 20 Wine Tasting Workshops), Madison Hotel Welcome Reception, Sparkling Wine Brunch, Grand Tasting Workshop with numerous Shenandoah Valley wineries, food, live music & wine crafts.
[Click here for Single Attendee Room](#) or [Click here for Double Attendee Room](#)
- **Explore Tuscany**, March 28 – April 5. [Click here for details](#) or Call Collette Travel at 1-800-581-8942 for reservations
- **Rhine River Wine Cruise**, April 11-18. Details at 2023 [AWS Wine Cruise Details](#) or call 877-651-7447 for reservations.
- **AWS National Conference**, November 9-11 in St Louis, MO.
- **Expand our “AWS Welcome Here” Program** and Corporate Sponsors to include more Wineries and other wine businesses.
- **Expand our educational opportunities** with other wine educational organizations.
- **The Board of Directors is implementing the Strategic Plan Goals** and Initiatives by establishing, approving, updating, and monitoring performance metrics for the Core Values of the Strategic Plan:
- **Education** – Increase outreach of educational opportunities. Develop educational opportunities for all levels of wine enthusiasts, Develop a portfolio of offerings for a diverse audience.
- **Fun** – Create an inviting and energetic atmosphere. Promote sharing and communicating experiences, and Increase program participation.
- **Integrity and Respect** – Promote the Values and image of the American Wine Society. Develop and uphold a code of conduct and Improve brand recognition.

- **Community** – Foster and develop new partnerships and develop ways for members to connect with other wine enthusiasts.
- **Innovation** – Continuously review offerings, programming, and technology to seek improvement.
- **Member-Focused** – Formalize member retention and recruitment strategies. Build a diverse membership and Strengthen Chapter Involvement.
- **Stewardship** – Diversify revenue mix. Incorporate short- and long-term financial goals in strategic planning.
- **The Board of Directors will conduct Townhall meetings** to keep members informed. These will be conducted quarterly, starting in late March.

Each Board Member has additional plans to make 2023 even better.

John Sporing, the Interim Executive Director, and the National Office team, are working diligently on membership renewals. Remember, as a 501(c)3, donations to the American Wine Society Educational Fund and the Cru 100 are tax deductible. Cru 100 is adding 2 new levels of Premier Cru and Grand Cru.

Eric Feldhake, the Vice-President, is working with the National Conference Committee to plan this and future Conferences, the Strategic Planning Committee to implement the Strategic Plan, and the Marketing, Education, Membership Finance, Governance, Cru 100, IT, and other Committees.

Ron Natalie, the Secretary, is already working to improve IT, starting with IT security, automating manual processes. and website improvements.

Rich Berezinsky, the Treasurer, is preparing for an audit of 2022 and budgeting for the various activities for 2023.

Annemarie Morse, Director of Education, has already expanded the Wine Smarts Program. More activities are being planned to provide more Chapters resources such as new videos and updating and organizing existing videos and other educational materials on the website. More updates will be announced during the first quarter.

Carrie Garczynski, the Director of Membership, has established a “Chapter Chair Mentoring Program”. Carrie will be working with the Chapter Chairs and Regional Ambassadors on future direction and projects. Quarterly Uncork & Discover events will continue.

Rex Bambling, the Director of Competitions, has already started planning for the AWS Commercial and Amateur Competitions.

The above are only a few of the Boards plans and activities for 2023, many more are being planned, and will be announced later in the year.

Wishing You a Great Wine Year!

CHEERS!

Bill Stefan, President
 Eric Feldhake, Vice-President
 Ron Natalie, Secretary
 Rich Berezinsky, Treasurer
 Annemarie Morse, Director of Education
 Carrie Garczynski, Director of Membership
 Rex Bambling, Director of Competitions
 John Sporing, Interim Executive Director

AWSEF NEWS – Dean Scott

The Holiday Party was a huge success for the AWSEF! The Silent Auction raised \$1,189, the 50/50 raised another \$288 and donations of \$127 were received. That is a **grand total of \$1,604** toward the next LVAWS sponsored AWSEF scholarship.

Thank you to everyone who participated. This year we had 25 items upon which to bid, and 26 members donated these items. Thanks to everyone- those who donated,



those who bid and those who played the 50/50! All funds are going to a good cause as LVAWS supports the next generation of winemakers!

It's not too late to send a contribution to AWSEF at <https://www.awsef.org/files-AWSEF/GIVING> or click on the AWSEF donations on our webpage. Please be sure to note LVAWS, so the contribution goes toward the Chapter's next scholarship.

January Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at Thai Avenue Restaurant

Tuesday January 10, 2023 at 6:00 PM

4791 Tilghman St, Allentown, PA 18104

Hosted by Judi Roggie

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, January 8th



For a small eatery, Thai Avenue Restaurant serves up some mighty big flavor. The fare is clearly fresh and freshly made — no wonder the flavors are so bold.

The South Whitehall Township restaurant opened in quarters formerly home to a burrito restaurant in a shopping center on Tilghman Street. It's a far cry from the eatery's previous Southwestern-themed decor to the understated, sophisticated elegance of its current incarnation.

This top-notch Thai cuisine is worthy of focus. Soups, salads, fried rice, curry dishes, and stir-fry entrees are featured, along with noodle combinations, seafood dishes, and a number of different duck preparations.

Please sign-up by Sunday, January 8th, and remember to bring glasses and wine to share.

January Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting

Tuscan Wines

Monday January 23, 2023 - 6:00PM-9:00PM

Hosted by Sal Manino

Ecco Domani

216 E. Fairmount St, Coopersburg, PA 18036

Cost \$50 per person

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, January 15th



Sal is the son of Julio, one of the owners of Ecco Damani. Sal works part-time at the restaurant, but his full-time job is working for F. Magnotta LLC, an importer and distributor of fine Italian wines.

Sal is very knowledgeable of both the wines and the wineries and will be sharing this knowledge with us during the tasting. We will be tasting a variety of Tuscan wines from some of the region's top producers.

Menu

We are trying something new and having our monthly tasting on a Monday evening. Ecco Damani is normally closed on Mondays and is opening specifically for our tasting.

Sal and Julio will jointly work on a menu that complements the wines. They are planning to serve the food buffet style in stages, coordinated with the particular wines we will be tasting.

We will begin with a salad, then have some pastas, followed by a few entrée choices, and then conclude with dessert accompanied by an Italian dessert wine.

Please bring 2 wine glasses and wine to share.

February Lehigh Valley Chapter BYOB

BYOB at DiMaio's Restaurant



Thursday February 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM

27 Main St, Hellertown PA 18055

Hosted by Judi Roggie

Register at LVAWS.org by Tuesday, February 7th



DiMaio's is a family run Italian restaurant that is a Hellertown tradition. Dinners are cooked to order and sandwiches are made on our fresh, homemade bread. A pizza is not just a pizza at DiMaio's. They use only the finest quality ingredients.

Please sign-up by Tuesday, February 7th, and remember to bring glasses and wine to share.

February Lehigh Valley Chapter Tasting

Southern Rhone Wines

Saturday February 18, 2023 - 2:00PM-4:30PM

Hosted by Barry Isett & Kevin Campbell

Carriage House Restaurant

745 Gravel Pike (Rt 29) in East Greenville

Cost \$55 per person (wine & food)

Register at LVAWS.org by Sunday, February 12th



Nobody is a bigger fan of Rhone wines than **Barry**. As we go through the tasting, **Barry** will be sharing his knowledge of the history and his experiences while visiting the region. This tasting will include wines from five of the nine cru regions of the Southern Rhone. It will start off with a rose ice breaker from the Tavel region, followed by a pairing of whites, including a white Chateauneuf-du-Pape. We will then move on to four pairings of highly rated Rhone red blends.

Menu

Donna and Bob (Chef) Schultheis are excited to welcome us to their historic circa 1745 Carriage House Restaurant. We will be served a buffet, starting with a mixed greens salad, entrees will include penne pasta with tomato basil cream sauce, salmon w/ dill sauce and pork medallions Normandy. Sides will include twice baked potato and string beans almondine. Dessert will include apple strudel and raspberry almond torte.

**Please bring 2 wine glasses and wine to share.
This tasting is limited to 42.**



Wine Education – Suzanne Laverick-Stone

Vino Toscana – A Capital Idea

It's hard to write about Tuscany without using a lot of capitals and exclamation points. It's the birthplace of the RENAISSANCE! And the ITALIAN LANGUAGE! Legendary Tuscans past and present include MICHELANGELO! DA VINCI! GALILEO! GUCCI! BOCELLI! PINOCCHIO! And the cities – FLORENCE! SIENA! PISA (with THREE leaning towers)! See what I mean? Tuscany is arguably Italy's most important wine area with grapes cultivated since the 4th century BC, and you've most likely heard of some of the best of today's Tuscans – CHIANTI CLASSICO! BRUNELLO di MONTALCINO! VINO NOBILE de MONTEPULCIANO! SUPER TUSCANS! Thirsty for more? Before we explore these beautiful wines, we should review Italian wine classifications and specific Toscana regulations as well, but just so you know, dio mio, it can be messy.



Since 1963, in order to compete in the global market, Italians have governed grape varieties, wine styles, aging requirements, border limits, and more with a tiered system that has been tweaked over the years and often ignored by frustrated winemakers. Currently, there are three basic tiers, and they must appear on the bottle by law. I know what you're going to say – it seems fairly straightforward. Hah! In Italy, rules are made to be broken.

- The EU's PDO, or Protected Designation of Origin, includes both the original DOC (Denominazione di Origine Controllata) which guarantees that the wine is from the stated place and was made using guidelines for quality and authenticity, and the DOCG (Denominazione de Origine Controllata e Garantita), a stricter version, with wines approved by committee via analysis and tasting.
- IGT (Indicazione Geografica Tipica), introduced in 1992, is a broad category specifying that all grapes come from the region on the label. International grapes are permitted. Many times, IGT wines, often made from various indigenous grapes or international varieties, are higher quality than DOC and DOCG classified wines.
- VdT, Vino da Tavola, is table wine. There are very few rules, and experimentation is allowed, but placing a vintage on the bottle is forbidden.

“Vineyards were planted on land that couldn't be used for anything else.” Benjamin Lewin

The Tuscans make some of the most iconic wines in the world but it took time for them to focus on quality. It has only been the last 30 years that Tuscan wines have been recognized globally. The area, located along the Tyrrhenian coast, is 68% hills, and except for the coastal regions of Maremma and Bolgheri, the best vineyards are located on steep, vertical hillsides which moderate the summer heat; wineries are often built into hills or even underground. The climate is mild in the coastal areas, harsh and rainy in the interior, with an active freeze-thaw cycle between winter and summer, good for soils. Tuscany ranks third after Piedmont and Veneto in producing DOC/G quality wines, with more than 80% of it being red.

“If it isn't made from Sangiovese, then why even drink it?” Olive Ansell

Your bottle of Tuscan red won't say that it's made from Sangiovese because in Italy, the place is the type of wine, like Chianti. But Sangiovese (san-joe-vay-zay) is the grape that is used for most Tuscan wines. It is Italy's most important black grape variety, cultivated for thousands of years and indigenous to both Tuscany and southern Italy, the offspring of the Tuscan Cilieggiolo and the almost extinct Calabrese Montenuovo from the south. It is a complicated grape which echoes its terroir and it is susceptible to mutations, so longevity has produced a jumble of clones, synonyms, and biotypes. Its thin skin makes it at risk for botrytis and yellowing, but it is resistant to drought. Considered both *Vitis vinifera* and a “wild vine,” it grows prolifically, budding early and slow to ripen, requiring a long growing season. For the best expression, it needs to be water-challenged, and thrives in high elevation, in limestone (alberes) and friable shale-clay (galestro) soils. It is grown throughout Italy, with 50% in Tuscany where it is used to make renowned wines, including Brunello di Montalcino, Chianti Classico, and Vino Nobile de Montepulciano. The Sangiovese wines of old were often cheap, light, tart reds made from overproduced grapes, but winemakers in the past few decades have vastly improved from the mid-20th century when, for example, Chianti was often blended with pale Trebbiano grapes and illegally stretched with meatier bulk wines



from the south. Much of the improvement can be attributed to scientific assessment of clones grown all over central Italy, with two, R24 and T19, identified as standouts. The grape, which lacks color-creating phenolic compounds, is high acid and high tannins, requiring the winemaker to find balance, and now that Tuscan winemakers are interested in upping quality, they have discovered that balance can be achieved by cultivating different clones based on individual terroir, and lowering yields, thereby taming the acid and tannins. The best wines can be 100% Sangiovese (Brunello de Montalcino and some Chiantis) or blends (Chianti and Super Tuscans), if the blending wines are not too bossy, and oak is used judiciously. Of the three dozen major wine regions of Tuscany, there are a few that are the most notable and all involve Sangiovese in some way.

Chianti: “This is the night, it’s a beautiful night, and we call it bella notte.” From *Lady and the Tramp* (by Steve Tyrell)



Many of us got our advice about *amore* from childhood Disney classics such as this famous “spaghetti scene.” But what’s that behind the breadsticks? Wine advice. That straw-covered candlestick is a Chianti wine container that has been used for 700 years. It’s called a *fiasco* which in Italian means to fail, traced back to a glass-blowing mistake resulting in round-bottomed bottles. Not deterred, they wrapped the bottles in sun-dried swamp weed, allowing them to stand upright. The average American’s understanding of Chianti, the wine, stops there, but appreciating Chianti, the wine and the region, is more complex, and a bit confusing.

Chianti and Chianti Classico – what are the differences? Chianti is the largest wine-making area in Tuscany and Chianti Classico is an area in the heart of Chianti. In 1716, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, a Medici, issued a proclamation creating what is now known as Chianti Classico, the first legal appellation of origin for wine in the world. Even earlier, the 1384 “League of Chianti” delineated the area with the famous black rooster as its symbol still seen today on bottles of Chianti Classico. In 1872, Baron Ricasoli, a future prime minister and wine tinkerer, created a “Chianti recipe,” a blend of 70% Sangiovese, with white Malvasia and Trebbiano grapes. In 1932, the government added subzones to the Chianti Classico region, creating an area 100 miles from north to south that managed to muddy the waters. The terroir variation is substantial, but can broadly be described as hilly with the mountainous eastern border protecting against cold weather. Most vineyards face south/southwest, with galestro, alberese, and arenaria as the major soil types, and with temperatures warming to the south.



Chianti Classico is the central subzone, but the added zones - Rufina, Colli Senesi, Colli Fiorentini, Aretini, Pisane, Montalbano, and Montespertol - are permitted higher yields, lower alcohol levels, a minimum of 70% Sangiovese and a maximum of 10% white Malvasia and Trebbiano, often resulting in lighter reds, although Rufina and Colli Senesi wines are known for quality. In 1984, Chianti attained DOCG status and two higher categories: Superiore (wines from lower yields), and Riserva (aged at least 2 years), and in 1996, the rules for Chianti also permitted other red grapes like Canaiolo Nero, Colorino, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Syrah. Also in 1996, Chianti Classico separated to become its own DOCG. Since 2006, white grapes are not permitted in Chianti Classico; the wine must be at least 80% Sangiovese, and the other 20% must be allowable red grapes. The vineyards are at higher elevations, and new oak, which Sangiovese soaks up, is for the most part no longer used. Gran Selezione, the highest Chianti Classico designation, was added in 2013, and requires estate-grown grapes, tasting panel approval, and 30 months of aging (3 in bottle), and since 2021, must be at least 90% Sangiovese and 10% indigenous reds. Vin Santo, a high alcohol sweet tawny wine, is made from Trebbiano and Malvasia grapes, hung to dry for several months and fermented for three years in small barrels. Tuscans continue to strive to make wines that consumers will recognize from specific terroirs, so an impending change in regulation was introduced in 2021, creating 11 subzones called UGAs (Unità Geografiche Aggiuntive) which impact Gran Selezione wines only.

Super Tuscans: *Something new under the Tuscan sun.*

Super Tuscans were born from frustration in regulations that limited the winemakers’ ability to increase quality. Throughout the 70s and 80s, the Italian appellation system annoyed just about everyone. There were complaints about sub-par areas awarded DOC and DOCG status, and arguments about grapes and allowable percentages; almost no one was a happy camper. Tuscany, the center of the boot, was also the center for much of the dissatisfaction. Chianti sales were slumping, and DOC rules required a blend of *no more than 70%* Sangiovese, which angered two types of winemakers: those who wanted to make wines of 100% Sangiovese, and those who wanted to produce Bordeaux varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, and the mandated Ricasoli recipe certainly stymied innovation. So, no surprise, they went rogue and did their own thing. The catch? The wines had to be labeled lowly *Vino da Tavola*. But a funny thing happened on the way to the forum

– these Tuscan table wines, dubbed “Super Tuscans,” became very popular, undermining the system, so the system created the IGT classification specifically for vintners who make high quality wines from a specific region but do not follow the strict regulations of the DOC/G. Of the 86,000 hectares of vineyards in Tuscany, 30,000 are DOC or DOCG classified but the reality is that many top wines are Super Tuscans sold under the IGT Toscana classification. Piero Antinori’s “Chianti- style” Tignanello, a Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon blend, is a legendary Super Tuscan yet labeled a table wine in 1971. Ironically, Tignanello could now be classified as Chianti Classico. Many Chianti producers have an IGT Toscana as their most expensive wine.

Bulgheri: A Super (Tuscan) star.

The Bulgheri region of southwest Tuscany was originally a marsh with malarial mosquitoes until it was drained, allowing viticulture and better living conditions. With its close proximity to the Tyrrhenian Sea in Maremma, its maritime climate and stony limestone soils, it a great place to grow Bordeaux grapes. The vineyards lie in a narrow band between the sea and the mountains. The region is credited to be the birthplace of the first Super Tuscan, Sassicaia (the 1988 vintage played a role in *Sideways*). Masseto is a famous single-vineyard Super Tuscan planted entirely to Merlot. Granted DOC status in 1994, the Super Tuscans are regulated with possibilities and choices: each bottle can contain up to 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, or Cabernet Franc, or they can be a blend of 50% Syrah or Sangiovese, or perhaps a blend with up to 30% Petit Verdot. In this region, Sangiovese takes a backseat with only 1.5% of the vineyard area. Wines labeled Superiore must have a minimum alcohol level of 12.5%, and must be aged two years with a minimum of one year in oak. The Bulgheri whites can be Vermentino or blends of Sauvignon Blanc or Trebbiano. Interesting to note that Bulgheri wines are among the most proclaimed in Italy, and yet it is just a lowly DOC. Some Super Tuscans remain classified as IGT Toscana and some fall under the Bulgheri DOC. Even though blends are comparable, Bulgheri Super Tuscans differ from those in Chianti because the Bulgheri terroir produces fruitier wines that are lower in acid and tannins. The wine world is closely watching the rapid growth of the Maremma Toscana DOC region, formed in 2011, just south of Bolgheri, where an increasing number of Super Tuscans reds are being produced from Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Franc and whites from Trebbiano, Vermentino, and others.

Brunello di Montalcino: “Brunello...it’s worth the wait.” Madeline Puckette

One of the most acclaimed wines of Italy, the 100% Sangiovese Brunello di Montalcino was not noticed by the world until the 1970s. Before the 1880s, Montalcino was known for sweet Moscadello, but an outbreak of fungal oïdium spurred vintners to plant the more resistant Sangiovese Grosso, a local grape with thicker skins, producing bold fruit, high tannins, and high acidity, enjoyable in its young days if you like a bit of astringency, but greatly improved by softening the tannins and acids with aging. Brunello di Montalcino became a DOC in 1980 and in 1996, it surpassed Chianti in the international market. Montalcino is 25 miles south of Siena; the north and east have volcanic clay soils and the climate is mild and wet, and those of the south and west are calcareous with warmer drier weather. DOC Rosso di Montalcino is aged one year; DOCG Brunello di Montalcino is aged two years in wood and held for five years, and DOCG Brunello di Montalcino Riserva is held for six years after aging in wood. In traditional production, such as those from Biondi-Santi, Slovakian oak imparts very little taste and wines age longer; the modern method, as those from Banfi, take on the oak from small French barriques and use greater extraction. DOCG regulations ensure that vineyard altitudes stay below 1,968 feet for ideal ripeness. Currently, the trend is for the Riservas to come from single vineyards, often made only in top vintages, and many larger producers also make Super Tuscans.

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano “For the present, I confine myself to the physical want of some good Montepulciano.” Thomas Jefferson

TJ knew his wines. Vintners in Montepulciano call their Sangiovese “Prugnolo Gentile,” and produce the patrician Vino Nobile di Montepulciano which attained DOCG status in 1980. This wine must be at least 70% Sangiovese, with some winemakers insisting on 100% while others blend with local grapes or Merlot and Syrah, so the wines can differ greatly. Minimum oak aging is now the norm for both normal and Riserva, the difference being that the normal version is held for two years, including 12 months in oak, and Riserva three. There is also an earlier maturing Rosso di Montepulciano. Since the wine is sometimes mistaken for Montepulciano d’Abruzzi from southern Italy, “Toscana” has been added to the labeling, but many feel changing the name to “Nobile” would better stem the confusion. The climate is continental and the appellation is divided into 37 informal subareas, with plans afoot to make them legit.

It's Tasting Time

It's clear that the wines of Tuscany are worth exploring. For the occasion, I've invented a simpler rating system based on my extensive research (ok, that's code for tasting): *Deliziosa*, *Più Deliziosa*, *Più Più Deliziosa*, and the highest accolade, *Più, Por Favor* (More, please). All caps, exclamation point.



Sources: Lewin, B. (2022). *2023 Tuscany: Wines and Top Vineyards*; Cullen, A. & McNally, R. (2014). *Decoding Italian Wine*; D'Agata, I. & Longo, M. (2021). *The Grapes and Wines of Italy*; Johnson, H. & Robinson J. (2019). *The World Atlas of Wine (3rd Edition)*; <https://blog.chwine.com/understanding-italy-doc-dogc-igt-vdt/>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscany>; <https://mamalovesitaly.com/cheers-in-italian/#:~:text=Salute.pretty%20universal%20Italian%20toasting%20expression.>; <https://vinepair.com/articles/real-reason-italian-igt-created-government-money/#:~:text=The%20Italian%20wine%20law%20system.already%20Destablished%20French%20AOC%20system.>; https://www.italyabroad.com/wine_blog/italian-wine-classification-demystified; <https://www.rabbies.com/en/blog/6-reasons-visit-tuscany>; <http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscany>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuscan_wine; <https://medium.com/@oliveancell/the-unspoken-rules-of-tuscany-9e617e10ed8c>; www.jancisrobinson.com/learn/grape-varieties/red/sangiovese; <https://www.winescholarguild.org/blog/harmonious-balance-in-sangiovese-ruminations-on-a-tuscan-taste>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/susangordon/2019/03/07/how-to-love-sangiovese-for-the-rest-of-your-life/?sh=1f7498ac27e4>; <https://glossary.wein.ls/sangiovese>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sangiovese>; <https://www.wine-business-international.com/wine/styles-regions/chianti-launches-11-new-sub-zones-us-importers-are-yet-be-convinced>; www.santovinowineblog.com/post/history-of-a-fiasco; www.winefolly.com; <https://www.thegrandwinetour.com/en/favorite-italian-wines/wine-bolgheri-super>; <https://www.winemag.com/2020/04/03/maremma-tuscan-red-wines/>;

Lehigh Valley AWS 2022 Holiday Party

The LVAWS events for 2022 ended with a fabulous Holiday Party!

Sixty-four guests registered and everyone had a great time. The Aster Event Center was beautifully decorated in a festive theme. The wait staff served hot hors d'ouerves while guests helped themselves to a variety of wines from the share table.

Our co-chairs, **Leslie and Peter Staffeld**, honored the following members with bottles of Primitivo and a holiday ornament:

Suzanne Laverick-Stone for writing the monthly education articles,
Judi Roggie for organizing the monthly BYOB's,
Mike Orbin for formatting the monthly newsletter,
Judi Roggie for the January Cava tasting,
Kevin and Michele Campbell for the February Portuguese tasting,
Dave and Shannon Tompkins for the March NE Italy tasting,
Dean and Bonnie Scott for the April Folino tasting,
Jody King and Jim Vozar for the May Four Italian Grapes tasting,
Bob and Kim Hale for the June Bob's Fav's tasting,
Kevin and Michele Campbell for the July Galen Glen tasting,
Dean and Bonnie Scott for the August Summer Wines tasting,
Mark and Kathy Breloff for the Sonoma Vs. Paso Robles tasting,
Mike and Nancy Parker for the Celebrity Wines tasting, and
Annette Derkacs, Nancy Parker, Jan Thomas, and Ann Vlot for planning the Holiday Party.



Then everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner of salmon, chicken francaise, or short ribs followed by a rich flourless chocolate cake. Guests had the opportunity to bid on a variety of items in the silent auction for AWESF. And we all learned that Mick and Julie Hasson celebrated their 57th anniversary with us that night! Some members stayed overnight and kept the fun going at the abundant buffet breakfast the next morning. All in all, it was a great event and a lovely way to close the year.

See Photos of Holiday Party at end of Newsletter

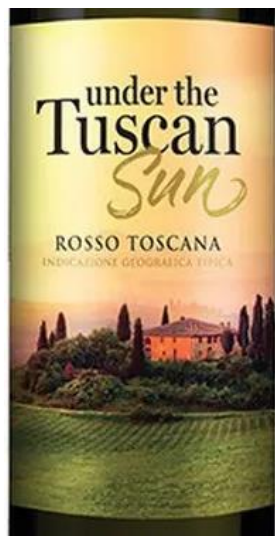
Chairman's Selection ??? – Dean Scott

I thought I would do something different for **Chairman Selection** this month. I decided to do a **Wegman Selection**. I looked for wines at Wegman's that are not available at the PA Wine and Spirit shop.



Parini Prosecco Rose Brut **\$11.99**

From Italy. Aromas of white peach, citrus and strawberry. Delicate on the palate with a fruity and floral finish. Pair with appetizers. 91 Wegmans Rated



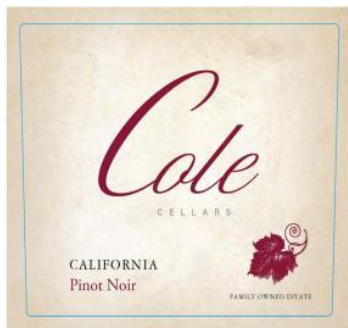
Rosso Toscana **\$17.99**

From Tuscany. Aromas of fresh red and blackberry fruit with a touch of oak. An Italian red that pairs perfectly with pasta and pizza. 92 Wegmans Rated.

On the palate, a heady mix of red fruit and blackberries gives way to ripe plum flavors and the added complexity of well-integrated oak. True to its name, Under the Tuscan Sun is a wonderful example of the red blends so common to this region. A mix of 60% cabernet sauvignon, 30% merlot, and 10% syrah, it's an exciting newcomer to the market.

The nose is very pretty, lifted, floral, perfumed like a meadow of wildflowers and wild herbs, especially fennel, thyme, oregano, while fruit spans the spectrum of fresh red and blackberry into very ripe dark plum fruit, with well-integrated oak influence.

Dean's notes: The name is misleading; it is not an Italian wine. I thought it tasted more like a Bordeaux table wine with a little Rhone Syrah added to give it a little spicy, peppery finish.



Cole Cellars - Pinot Noir 2020 **\$13.99**

Hints of herbs and spice on the nose, with layers of bright cherry and strawberry fruit on the palate.

Tasting notes

An expressive Pinot Noir which shows hints of herbs and spice on the nose, with layers of bright cherry and strawberry fruit on the palate. Lovely fresh acidity, with a floral lift on the finish. Great on its own or when paired with a wide variety of cuisines.

Description

The right soil, the right climate, the right people. This elegant Pinot Noir is produced from grapes sourced from California's best growing regions, 55% from Clarksburg and 45% from the Lodi appellation. Warm days and cool evening breezes create a uniquely Mediterranean climate perfectly suited to cultivating premium grapes. These vineyards are meticulously managed by multi-generational family grape growers. They farm with a commitment to sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices, which results in a wine that is both complex and very food friendly.

Dean,s Notes: The color was darker than most Pinot's. The nose was heavy oak but the taste was not. The taste was plum and dried figs. I thought it was over ripe fruit. The finish and tannins were smooth and pleasant.



Cole Cellars – Cabernet Sauvignon 2020

\$10.99

Tasting notes

We embraced the structure up front when making this wine because we wanted a strong phenolic profile to bind with and stabilize the tannin. Baking spices (clove and cinnamon) with a kiss of oak. Ripe black fruit on the palate, black currant and blackberry. A hint of vanilla and smooth tannins on the plush finish.

Dean's Notes: *My first impression (influenced by Kevin Campbell) is this is going to be a nice wine. It had a very heavy thick bottle with a deep Punt. The wine had a nice color, oaky aroma. Hint of blackberry, plum and leather. Not overly complex but pleasant simple wine. A little sweet on the finish. Ok Pizza wine.*

Darrin (my son) thought it was aged in Stainless with oak wood chips added. Some over ripe fruit. Oak and vanilla on the nose but not in the taste.



Grand Fossil, Sauvignon Blanc

\$10.99

Remarkable aromatic with pretty white flower and fruit fragrances. On the palate it reveals a freshness that is pure and clean. Notes of citrus, apple and gooseberry with hints of passion fruit are found in this lively and bright wine. An incredible value. An excellent aperitif that is also outstanding with goat cheese, fish and seafood.

From the Loire. Aromas of white flower and citrus fruits. The palate is fresh and full of citrus, apple and passion fruit. Pair with seafood.

90 Wegmans Rated



Famiglie Pinot Grigio

\$10.99

From Italy. Aromas of pear and apple. Attractively soft and round with a touch of spice, a dry finish with refreshing citrus. Pair with chicken.

89 Wegmans Rated

Dean's notes: *I was suspicious of this wine being Non Vintage. Since most Pinot Gris are only good for 1-3 years. The bottle we bought had nice fresh, crisp taste and nice acidity, but if it sits on Wegman's shelves for a few years it could be a disappointing wine.*

If you take one thing from my little wine investigation, "Wegman Selection". Be cautious of unknown wine at Wegmans. Cole Cellars does not even have a webpage. I believe they are mass producing generic wine for Wegmans. Famiglie is non-vintage. Tuscan Sunset is a conglomerate of non-Italian grapes from a region none for Brunello.

Wegmans has an excellent selection of wines that are also available in the LCB store at about the same price. I recommend sticking with the wines you are familiar with and avoid Wegman generic wines at a discount price.

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to welcome **Dan Williams** (Kathy Lauer-Williams' husband), **Barb Repko** from Phillipsburg, NJ, and **Peter Frisch** from Sidney, New York. Please introduce yourself and let's help our new members feel welcome.

Lehigh Valley Chapter Wine Tastings & Events

<u>2023</u>	<u>Hosts</u>	<u>Theme</u>
Jan 23	Sal Manino	Tuscan Wines
Jan 10	Judi Roggie	BYOB Thai Avenue
Feb 9	Judi Roggie	BYOB DiMaio's
Feb 18	Barry Isett	Southern Rhone
Mar	Shannon & Dave Tompkins	Australia
April 22	Joe Pugliese	Puglia
May	Michele & Kevin Campbell	Loire Valley
June 24	Bonnie & Dean Scott and Leslie & Peter Staffeld	Paul Mas Vineyards
July	Lisa Mancuso & Chris Zajacek	TBD
August 5	Julie & Mick Hasson	LVAWS 50 th Anniversary
Sept	Ann Vlot & Matt Green	Burgundy
Oct	Kate & Alex Korch and Leslie & Peter Staffeld	Blind Tasting
Nov 9-11	National AWS Conference	Missouri
Dec 10	Jan Thomas and committee	Holiday Party

Promoting wine appreciation through education

National and Lehigh Valley AWS Dues

YOU MUST JOIN BOTH THE NATIONAL AWS & THE LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
Both memberships run from January to December.

National AWS Membership: To join, you need to register with both the national American Wine Society (AWS) organization and a local AWS chapter. The national organization has a variety of membership plans available, but the most popular are an "individual" membership for \$49/year, and a "household" membership (for two people at the same address) for \$62/year. You can register for one or two local chapters. We ask that you select the Lehigh Valley Chapter as your Primary chapter! You can sign up for national membership online at AmericanWineSociety.org.

Lehigh Valley Chapter AWS Membership: The Lehigh Valley Chapter has one membership level which is **\$10/year per person.**

You can complete the form (below) and **mail** it (LVAWS Treasurer Joe Pugliese, PO Box 98, East Texas, PA 18046), **OR** you can individually visit LVAWS.org and **pay on-line**, **OR** you can individually go on LVAWS.org, sign in as a member, and then click the **Donations Tab** to pay dues for a spouse, family member, or friend.

Once you become a Lehigh Valley Chapter member you can register for all of our wine tastings, educational events, and BYOB dinner parties.

Name(s) _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone # _____ City _____

State _____ Zip code _____

Holiday Party Photos

