

## Kathryn Schindler

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**From:** Kathryn Schindler  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 19, 2012 4:29 PM  
**To:** viticulture@unl.edu  
**Subject:** Nebraska VineLines 2012 Holiday Issue

# Nebraska VineLines from Dr. Paul Read



## **Season's Greetings!**

*from Your University of Nebraska Viticulture staff  
(Paul, Steve, Kathy, Kat, Christina, Ben and Vivian)*

### **Save the Date!**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Forum and Trade Show will be held at the Kearney Holiday Inn from Feb. 28-March 2, 2013. A great lineup of speakers is being assembled to help us focus on improving our already outstanding grape and wine industry. The theme of the 16<sup>th</sup> conference is "Growing an Industry."

When looking over evaluations of previous presentations of the Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Forum and Trade Show, a common thread has been "let's hear more from local growers, experts, winemakers", so we have listened and that's why the 16<sup>th</sup> Forum's theme is "Growing an Industry." The lineup of the speakers for the overall program will include successful Nebraska grape growers, winemakers, grape enthusiasts and experts from Nebraska and neighboring states. More details will be forthcoming in our electronic Nebraska VineLines early in the new year and also will be posted on our web site <http://agronomy.unl.edu/viticulture>. Registration details will be available in mid-to-late January also.

We will also be calling for submissions of wines for the competition featuring Nebraska's best wines to match each course of the banquet. It's going to be an exciting program filled with great information and the NWGGA's new Executive Director will provide insights on the state of the industry, as well as coordinating what promises to be a great Trade Show. Save the dates and plan on seeing your fellow grape growers and winery folks at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Winery and Grape Growers Forum and Trade Show at the Kearney Holiday Inn on February 28 and March 1 & 2, 2013.

### **Also for your Calendars**

The 3rd Annual Sustainable Viticulture Conference is set for Feb. 20, 2013, at Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC. According to Chuck Blethen, executive director of the Sustainable Appalachian Viticulture Institute, the special speaker will be Hugh Courtney, one of North America's most famous teachers/practitioners in biodynamics. There will be lectures, demos, exhibits, wine tasting and more. For further information, contact Mr. Blethen at 828-606-3130, [blethen@GrapeSAVI.org](mailto:blethen@GrapeSAVI.org), or view the website at: <http://www.GrapeSAVI.org>.

### **Association Hires Montgomery as Executive Director**

The Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association (NWGGA) has hired Jennifer Montgomery as the organization's new executive director. Ms. Montgomery comes to the NWGGA after a 10-year stint with Wine America, the national trade association of American Wineries, in Washington, DC.

While with Wine America, she served as director of Grassroots and Political Affairs. Her primary responsibilities in that position included lobbying Members of Congress and working with and reporting on public policy developments. Issues of responsibility included those related to agriculture, research, immigration/labor, and taxes, among others.

"We're very excited to have a person with Jennifer's experience and background as our new Executive Director," said Seth McFarland, President of the NWGGA. "She not only has a wealth of experience for this job, but she also has an incredible background in the wine industry. And, because of her involvement with Wine America, she's very familiar with Nebraska wines."

A native of Richmond, VA, Ms. Montgomery earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from Radford University. Prior to her time at Wine America, she worked for the Lindl Corporation, a public relations and lobbying firm, Richmond VA, was the media coordinator for the Richmond Association of Realtors and, was also a reporter for the Roanoke Times and World News.

She will become the NWGGA's first full-time Executive Director, and has already begun her duties. The NWGGA represents the Nebraska wine and grape Industry, and is leading the industry toward economic viability and sustainability. There are currently 28 farm wineries in the state and more than 400 acres of grapes being grown. The association's mission is to:

- Promote and develop the Nebraska wine and grape industry, its members' interests and activities;
- Promote industry excellence and quality assurance thereby enhancing the marketability of the industry and its products.
- Promote education, internally for its members and externally for the greater community...and to do so in the spirit of cooperation and continuous improvement.

For more information, contact Seth McFarland, Seth McFarland, president, Nebraska Winery & Grape Growers Association at 308-325-9534.

## **Ponderosa Vineyard Availability**

In a previous Nebraska VineLines, we noted the untimely passing of Harold Smolik, co-owner of Ponderosa Vineyards, Alma, NE. His widow, Jan, provided the following:

"It is with a heavy heart that I discuss my Ponderosa Vineyard. My husband Harold's recent death has created a different story than I have been telling for 9 ½ years.

Harold's vision and hard work built this 3,000-plant vineyard that we monickered The Ponderosa due to a landmark tree that grows there. He and I, both, understood that it was high art and did not frustrate ourselves by calling it a living.

The reality is that I, alone, cannot operate this project at its previous level of maintenance and production. Therefore, I am adjusting my antennae in several directions as I try to pick up vibes from people who may have an interest in a beautifully established and maintained vineyard planted with marketable wine grapes.

As there is a habitable cabin (though modest), on the property, I thought I would explore the possibility that a viticulture student would be interested in management of the vines, for a season, in exchange for living at the cabin. I would also expect to pay a stipend for grounds keeping.

The vineyard is located near the Harlan Reservoir, between Alma and Republican City, NE. This lake and river valley, 60 miles south of Kearney, attracts thousands of boaters and recreationists from May 'til September of each year. Alma is a progressive, small town with housing development, a lovely golf club and it sets right on the shore of the 3 x 8-mile lake.

Ultimately, my message is to pass the information that Ponderosa Vineyard is available. And, that our project contains 12-13 varieties of wine grapes and can produce up to 600 pounds of Reliance. We harvested and sold over 25,000 pounds of grapes this past season.

I am sending this because I want to tell anyone who might see this as a nice opportunity. I am deeply appreciative of your sharing my plight... Visitors are welcome, just call or email: Jan Smolik, [pndrsa@hotmail.com](mailto:pndrsa@hotmail.com), 308.920.2547.

Following is a log of the 2012 harvest:

### Ponderosa Vineyard

(Grapes, as of 2012 harvest)

	<u>Harvested</u>
Edelweiss	3,046 pounds
St. Croix	1,713 pounds
LaCrosse	2,819 pounds
Cayuga	1,976 pounds (harvest bins included some Chardonel)
Marechal Foch	3,171 pounds
Dechaunac	2,171 pounds

Frontenac	5,867 pounds
Traminette	694 pounds
St. Vincent	3,586 pounds
Chardonnay	nominal amount harvested this year
Riesling	50 plants
Marquette	100 plants planted in 2011
La Crescent	100 plants planted 2011 and 2012

Past harvests have shown a higher yield. This year's weather patterns affected the production. Although there was less poundage, we picked as many clusters. We also heard that the vintages were excellent even if the berries were smaller.

## Wacky Year Indeed!

As noted in the June, 2012, issue of the Nebraska VineLines, "What a Wacky Growing Year"! Little did your University of Nebraska Viticulture Program (UNVP) staff realize how prophetic those words would be. Following the mild winter, the early bud break that mostly escaped late cold weather damage and the quite good fruit-setting weather, one of the driest and hottest growing seasons on record put a severe damper on many vineyard operations. A number of vineyards also experienced extreme herbicide damage and others had serious hail storms that caused significant (in some cases, complete) crop losses.

In spite of this series of viticultural challenges, there have been reports of good, even great, crops produced in the 2012 growing year. Vintage 2012 will be a memorable one, a year of ups and downs, a year of good grapes, bad grapes and in some cases, no grapes. On the bright side, several growers had better than average crops and the small berry size that contributed to some yield reduction probably led to better quality grapes because of the greater skin to pulp ratio. Does that mean better wines? We'll have to wait and see. Ed Swanson, Cuthills Vineyards co-owner and winemaker, made an interesting observation (in spite of a tremendous reduction in his 2012 harvest) that "Brianna came through the best of anything" and that one source of Brianna had wonderful floral and tropical fruit characteristics. We had some really nice fruit quality and excellent yields at our UNVP Nebraska City research vineyard, especially with Vignoles and Norton, so we're optimistic that others will have some potentially good wines. I know that some wineries are either already bottling some whites and rose's or soon will have some available. We can look forward to trying some of these wines and put forward our Santa wish list for a better vintage in 2013.

## For Your Book Shelf

Two books have come to the attention of our staff that we'd like to recommend:

1. Concepts in Wine Chemistry, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Yair Margalit (edited by James Crumb, Ph.D.)

The primary text since 1997 for scores of universities and winemakers in a dozen countries, Concepts in Wine Chemistry, by physical chemist and winemaker Yair Margalit, is now totally revised and updated, making it, in editor James Crumb's words, "the broadest, most meticulous book on the topic in print."

Under study here is the basic and advanced chemistry behind the practical concepts of winemaking: must and wine composition, fermentation, phenolic compounds, aroma and flavor, oxidation and wine aging, oak products, sulfur dioxide, cellar processes, and wine faults. Dr. Margalit also gives the biochemist's slant on the question: is wine good for you?

New to this edition are the latest discoveries that have changed winemaking and brought about new techniques and innovations, including advances in the understanding of volatile esters, red wine phenolic compounds, yeast and factors affecting fermentation, flavor compounds and red-wine color characteristics, technical properties of "naturally fermented" wines, pesticide use, malolactic fermentation, and the use of wood.

The book may be purchased from The Wine Appreciation Guild, 360 Swift Ave., South San Francisco, CA 94080, [info@wineappreciation.com](mailto:info@wineappreciation.com), for \$89.95. The phone number is 800-231-9463 and the fax number is 650-866-3513. The ISBN number is: 978-1-935879-81-7 and the book contains 400 charts and graphs in 528 pages.

2. Vineyard Mechanization: Development and Status in the United States and in Major Grape Producing Regions of the World, edited by Justin R. Morris and Pamela L. Brady.

This book is an in-depth resource for commercial grape producers around the world. It discusses the history, development, and implementation of vineyard mechanization in the United States. A detailed account of the key steps in developing and implementing a total vineyard mechanization system concept is presented, along with an extensive bibliography in the appendix.

Order for \$60 through the American Society for Horticultural Science, 1018 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314, <http://shop.ashs.org/home.php>, phone: 703-836-4606 and fax: 703-836-2024.

## **Support Your University Viticulture Program ... and Get a Tax Deduction too!**

Many people make year-end tax-deductible contributions to their favorite charities, but did you know that a tax-deductible contribution may be made to support the University of Nebraska Viticulture Program? A contribution can be made to the University of Nebraska Foundation, 1010 Lincoln Mall, Ste. 300, Lincoln, NE 68508. Provide the notation "Gift for the University of Nebraska Grape Cultivar Evaluation Fund #3017." In these days of tight budgets, every dollar counts – by your donation, you can help the research and education programs and at the same time, gain a tax deduction. Thanks for your support!

Cheers,

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(Sent by Kathy Schindler)