

# CellarMasters

*"All the wines that are fit we drink"*

[www.cellarmastersla.org](http://www.cellarmastersla.org)

A Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 39 Issue 6 June 2012

## Monthly meeting

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## June 2012 President's Message

by 2012 President, Matt Lester

So now comes the dreaded hiatus in wine making. Maybe you find an excuse to rack, or run a test or two to keep in the "wine mind". Maybe you even start to look ahead to next year's harvest by beginning to look for grape sources. A couple of things come to my mind at this time of year such as fine tuning from last year's mistakes or could have done's. Or, maybe I should brew some beer!

With this in mind, June's wine topic will be on H<sub>2</sub>S (rotten egg, burnt match, burnt tire rubber, etc.). In



**Derby Day Host Horseshoe and Run for the Horses Trophy**



addition, we will have a "Brew Day". Got you interested? In the meeting discussion, we'll talk about H<sub>2</sub>S, what it is, how to prevent it (if possible), and how to get rid of it if you do happen to get it.

If you are interested in brewing some beer during our down time, it will be on Sunday, June 10th. Let me know if you are in the "yeast bit" interested and we'll get together and put a head on it!

Cheers,

Matt

## May 3rd Dinner Meeting

6:30 pm

The Shop

22836 VENTURA BLVD  
WOODLAND HILLS, CA 91364

## Winemakers Topic of the Month:

*H2S, How to prevent it and how to get rid of it*

### Dinner Theme:

Cheese

Bring your favorite cheese inspired dish!

Check out these [cheese descriptions and pairings](#) from the American Dairy Association.



## Dinner Meeting Protocol

**DUES:** Everyone attending should be a fully paid member of CellarMasters. Please make sure to pay your dues.

**GUESTS** are welcomed as an introduction to our club.

**POT LUCK** means everyone is expected to bring a dish to share.

**GREEN** dining is bringing your own plates, glasses, and utensils. We have emergency supplies only.

**WINE** is meant to be shared. Please bring a bottle along and share it.

**ATTENTION** given to our speaker is a sign of respect.

**WELCOME** new people by learning their names. Ask them to join you.

**CLEAN UP** is everyone's job. Don't leave without doing your share.

**RESPONSIBILITY** means drinking sensibly



## Calendar

### June 7th, 2012

Monthly Meeting at the Shop, 6:30pm

### June 10th, 2012

Beer Brewing

### June 14th, 2012

Planning Party at 7:00pm

Jennifer and Rich Swank

624 Lautrec Ct

Thousand Oaks, 91360

(805) 492-4137



## “Old Dogs, Children, and Watermelon Wine” By Robert Crudup



I was headed down the Camarillo grade the other day, just past where the truck scales are and came up alongside a 45' Dorsey 3000R semi trailer from Louisiana that had a message painted on the back doors. At first I didn't take time to read it and instead chose to squeeze over a lane to avoid being stuck behind it all the way down the hill. But as I looked up to judge the distance the message caught my eye. Stenciled in black letters was “Old Dogs, Children, and Watermelon Wine”. Whoa! I pulled back in behind the truck so get a better look to make sure I had it right. And sure enough there it was....Watermelon Wine. On the back of a semi from the deep South. Seriously? So I pulled out my Blackberry and quickly snapped a photo because I thought you'd all get a kick out of seeing it. Later on, I was thinking that this can't be some random musing by a trucker. There had to be something more to these simple words. So I googled it and here's what I found.

First of all and I think best so far is that “Old Dogs, Children, and Watermelon Wine” is the title of a remarkably well made country song by a man named Tom T. Hall. He's known to his fan base as “The Storyteller” due to his story-like lyrics in his songs. You older Cellarmaster's will remember him for his #1 hit “Harper's Valley PTA” and over the years 10 other #1 hits. Intrigued, I next headed to my iTunes account and found 50 or more versions recorded by various performers including the London Pops Symphony. But I wanted the Tom T Hall original and found one on the Greatest Hits album and for \$1.29 so I added it to my music library. Wow. What an interesting but simple story lies

in this song and it is sung with a deep south emotion that even made the little hairs on my arm stand up in recognition of an American Country Music icon.

But by now, I wanted to know more about the watermelon wine and started the searching in a new direction. I discovered that watermelon wine must have been a favorite in the old days when anything that has enough sugar or distinctive flavor was fermented into wine. And in the deep South, it turns out, watermelon was in abundance throughout the summer months. I guess some old Southerner must have looked across his watermelon patch and thought, hey, why not make wine. But the end results are less than reliable according to Jack Keller who writes on his site that most watermelon wines turn out to be flaccid and weakly flavored. But he had heard of an obscure book by Norma Jean and Carole Darden “Spoonbread and Watermelon Wine” and after a long search found a copy on eBay. Here he discovered the secrets of the past whose family recipes were passed from generation to generation. I will give you the best recipe he found and the notes to go with it. With summer on the way this might be a good time to source out some tasty melon and give this a try. By the way, I also tracked down the Spoonbread recipes as well and I intend to give that a go as well some night paired with some pinto beans, a glass of Syrah, and a slice of ice-cold watermelon for dessert.

### **Watermelon Wine from Jack Keller:** (makes 3 gallons)

2-3 large watermelons  
up to 7-1/2 lbs finely granulated sugar  
3 tsp acid blend  
2 crushed Campden tablet  
3 tsp yeast nutrient  
packet Champagne yeast

Extract the juice from two or three large watermelons (2 gallons 3 quarts total juice), discarding pulp. Ideally, you'd like

to end up with 2-3/4 gallons of pure juice. Measure 2 gal and 1 qt juice and put in primary. Set aside any residual juice in qt bottle(s) and store it in the refrigerator. To the primary add 7 lbs sugar [NOTE the warning at the end of the introduction, above, and determine exactly how much sugar your juice really needs], the acid blend and yeast nutrient and stir well to dissolve. Stir in crushed Campden tablets and cover primary with sterile cloth. Set aside 24 hours and sprinkle Champagne yeast on top of juice. When fermentation is evident, stir juice daily for seven days. Add remaining sugar [if needed] and stir to dissolve. Recover primary and set aside another 7 days without further stirring. Rack into 3-gallon secondary and fit airlock without topping up. Set aside for 10 days, top up with retained juice in refrigerator and set aside another 3 months. Drink or discard juice in refrigerator. Rack again and bottle if clear. If not clear, top up and refit airlock until crystal clear. Rack into bottles and age one year.

Warnings. First, watermelon juice has a tendency to spoil and will do so before the wine reaches a preservative level of alcohol unless you use a very fast yeast--like Montrachet. One way to reduce spoilage is to put the primary in a refrigerator while waiting that initial 24 hours for the Campden to work, then make up a yeast starter to add to the must at the appropriate time. I myself have had batches spoil on me, so take precautions. Second, there are all levels of sweetness among watermelons. When I first used the recipe below for pure watermelon wine, it only took 5 pounds of sugar to reach 13% potential alcohol--way short of the 7-1/2 pounds suggested in the recipe. Another user only added 4½ pounds of sugar and ended up with a 14% alcohol wine. So press the juice from all the watermelons you're going to use and mix the juices well. Then float a hydrometer in it and use a hydrometer chart to determine exactly how much sugar you really need to add. Indeed, you should do this with all recipes where pressed juice is used.

## Haunting Our Local Haunts

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Monopole Wine  
21 S El Molino Ave  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
626.577.WINE (9463)



For those of you who reside or work on the East Side, Pasadena's Monopole Wine is a store worth checking out. The emphasis of the shop is education - a fitting focus, as Monopole's founders met while studying for their WSET advanced-level wine exams. In addition to expanding your knowledge, Monopole offers premium wines from all over the world at pretty competitive prices. These wines are offered at daily tastings in their wine bar and are used in many classes ranging from Wine 101 Style to Master Classes on particular regions (Burgundy Master Class is coming up in June) or

countries (German wine overview was in January).

So please, if you're in the area, I highly recommend visiting their store, or you can peruse their website ([www.monopolewine.com](http://www.monopolewine.com)) and sign up for their special events newsletter to keep updated on upcoming classes and specials.

Gregg Ogorzelec

# Tarantula Hawk Vineyard

by Jennifer Swank

Knowing the nutrient status of the vineyard is key to maintaining healthy vines. I have outlined below how to monitor and maintain the nutrition status of the vineyard.

It is important to look for deficiency symptoms of individual mineral levels in the grapevine. The soil can be analyzed for nutrients, but the best way to determine nutrient deficiency in the vine is to have a mineral analysis done on petioles. Samples should be taken from the petiole opposite the cluster at bud bloom in order to determine levels of nutrients in the vine. Taking samples at the same stage of plant development each year is critical in determining the level of nutrients. The nutrient categories are: deficient, questionable, adequate or toxic.

The minerals we really care about in the vineyard are nitrogen, potassium, boron, zinc, magnesium, phosphorus, manganese and iron. It is helpful to set up a nutrient history to follow the levels of nutrients each year. Nitrogen is the most critical nutrient because it is easy to get too much. Levels over 2000 ppm are slightly toxic and levels above 3000 ppm are toxic to grapevines. Symptoms of excess nitrogen include lush, green foliage, long flat internodes on shoots. Buds and wood mature poorly.

Levels of zinc should be monitored in the Tarantula Hawk vineyard because there is will be low availability of zinc in the vineyard due a high soil pH of 7.9. Boron levels can also be low in soils with high pH. It will be important to watch for symptoms of potassium deficiency because the vineyard soil has high levels of magnesium and soils high in magnesium may block uptake of potassium in plants.

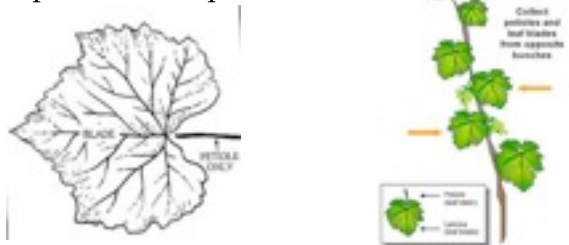


Table 1. shows the level of nutrients that are considered deficient, questionable or adequate for grapevines from petiole analysis at bloom.

Table 1.

	Deficient	Questionable	Adequate	Symptoms
Nitrogen (ppm)	< 350	350-500	500-1200	yellowing on green parts, reddish leaves and petioles
Potassium (%)	< 1.0	1.0 - 1.5	over 1.5	symptoms start with ripening, yellowing of leaves
Boron (ppm)	< 25	26-30	< 30	stunted shoots with zig-zag pattern, very short internodes, lots of lateral shoots, few clusters
Zinc	< 15	15-26	over 26	small leaves with chlorotic patterns, dark green veins
Magnesium (%)	< 0.2	0.2-0.3	> 0.3	yellow and chlorosis on leaves, starts at basal leaves
Phosphorus (%)	< 0.1	0.10-0.15	> 0.15	reddening of leaves, basal leaves turn yellow and fall off, red dots on leaf edge, poor cluster set
Manganese (ppm)	< 20	20-25	< 25	yellowing of leaves
Iron				yellow leaves,

Table 2. shows the appropriate amounts of important grapevine nutrients that can be applied in order to maintain proper nutrition in the vineyard

Nutrient	Fertilizer application
Nitrogen (ppm)	apply fertilizer after budbreak and again after berry set
Potassium (%)	Potassium Sulfate, may bind well with clays soils.
Boron	2-3 lbs/acre with 20% B spray
Zinc	spray zinc (52% Zn) two weeks pre-bloom through bloom
Magnesium	Epsom salts, 2-4lbs per vine
Phosphorus	apply 3lbs per vine of triple superphosphate

## References

Anderson, Mike; "VID257 Lesson 6 part 1 Nutrition.

Penn State College of Agriculture, <http://pss.uvm.edu/grape/Horticulture/GrapevineNutrition.pdf>

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# Taste & Trade

*a Cellarmasters of Los Angeles event*

- Members bring a minimum of two 750 ml bottles of the same homemade wine
- Open one of the bottles and provide tastes to all
- All receive a number from a random drawing
- As at Holiday-time “White Elephant” Exchange, oenophiles in number order, pick one bottle
- Each zealot chooses from remaining bottles, or “steals a bottle”
- Each bottle can only be stolen once
- At end of exchange every aficionado should have a new bottle



- Devotees may bring any number of extra bottles of tasted varieties for a session of “open trade,” bargain and barter after the formal exchange is completed.
- Fill all those niches in your collection of wines - let your friends be the vintners!
- *End up with wines which are likely far better, and more fun than any you could afford, or even find.*

**Time and Place  
to be arranged**

**Contact Cellarmasters  
Newsletter to express  
interest.**



## Equipment For Sale

My husband bought this wine press a number of years ago from the Home Wine, Beer and Cheese-making Shop in Woodland Hills. However it has never been used and has been stored in our garage all this time. He paid about \$400 for it. We would like to sell it for about \$100 to someone who could pick it up from our home in Agoura Hills.

Contact Laura Gallop at [lkgallop@gmail.com](mailto:lkgallop@gmail.com)

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P30 Wine Press, excellent condition, used only once. Sells for 395.00 at John's shop. Asking 300.00 on Craig's List. Will take 275.00 from a club member.

S1HS Manual Stainless Steel Crusher-Destemmer, including hopper, destemming grate and metal stand with stainless steel side chute, also in excellent condition used only once. Crusher-Destemmer sells for 585.00 at John's, and the stand is another 180.00. Asking 595.00 on Craig's List. Will take 550.00 from a club member.

Contact Len at 818-620-6058, or by email at [Lensummit@gmail.com](mailto:Lensummit@gmail.com).



## Vineyard and Winery For Sale

Home Winemakers Dream in South Auburn, CA.

1.5 acres of 5 varietals. Tasting room, 3700 sf Home

3 car garage, crush pad. Located on the Placer Wine Trail

Inventory and machinery not for sale. Call (530)305-7653

Gary Aleccia #01842919



## Grapes For Sale

It's Monty and Linda Swayze here letting you know that we will be selling our grapes again this summer (by the pound or by the ton).

We grow Grenache, Zinfandel, Alicante Bouschet, Tempranillo (this one may be pre-sold out, please inquire), Sauvignon Blanc, and Semillon.

We will still be selling for \$.50 a pound (minimum of 100 pounds) or \$1,000 per ton - you pick.

Last year everybody was able to take their time harvesting as the grapes slowly ripened over 2 1/2 months, like we were caught in some sort of time warp ("It's just a jump to the left..."), but who can say.

We also provide crushing/destemming for a small additional fee.

We can be reached through our e-mail address: [swayzevines@verizon.net](mailto:swayzevines@verizon.net) or by phone: [\(661\) 724-2074](tel:6617242074). Please contact us to be put on our brix update list. Let us know if you no longer wish to receive brix updates.

Hope to see you (again) this year.

Monty and Linda Swayze

# For your wine needs in 2012

*Get your order in, before we sell out!*

*Mail, FAX or In Person at The Shop Only,*

*Sorry , no web/email orders accepted*

*Quantities of these super-premium varietals are very limited and we sell out very fast:*

*It's first ordered, first reserved, until sold out*

*Go to: [www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com](http://www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com)*



*Winemaking*



*Beermaking*



*Cheesemaking*

Custom Crush

[www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com](http://www.HomeBeerWineCheese.com)

## Come and enjoy Camarillo Custom Crush Winery on the "Ventura County Wine Trail"

Visit, taste, and purchase our wines

Every weekend has a unique mix of three different local "vineyard estate wines."

All for only \$7.50, which also includes our custom winery glass. 11:00 – 5:00, Saturday and Sunday

300 S. Lewis, Unit C  
(The Imation building, Lewis at Dawson)  
805-484-0597.

<http://www.venturacountywinetrail.com/>





President – Matt Lester  
 805-746-6642  
[president@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:president@CellarmastersLA.org)



Web Master – Anne Bannon  
[webmaster@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:webmaster@CellarmastersLA.org)



Vice President – Michael Holland  
[vicepresident@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:vicepresident@CellarmastersLA.org)



Secretary – Elissa Rosenberg  
[secretary@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:secretary@CellarmastersLA.org)



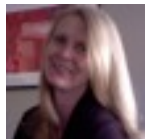
Treasurer - Stu Lenoff  
 (818) 788-5137  
[treasurer@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:treasurer@CellarmastersLA.org)



Membership Chairman - Dave Lustig  
 (626) 794-2883  
[membership@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:membership@CellarmastersLA.org)



Newsletter Editor – Jennifer Swank  
 (805) 492-4137  
[editor@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:editor@CellarmastersLA.org)



The CellarMasters Home Wine Club is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting the art and science of home winemaking. We provide a forum for the exchange of information on winemaking methods and personal experiences.

Monthly meetings are normally held the first Thursday evening of the month at the "Home Beer, Wine and Cheese Making Shop" (our sponsor) in Woodland Hills, California.

CellarMasters is the sole sponsor of the annual U.S. Amateur Winemaking Competition.

This is the official CellarMasters newsletter. Annual subscriptions are complimentary with CellarMasters membership. We attempt to publish monthly but harvest, bottling, and/or purely educational wine-tasting may well deter us.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the editor and are often wildly mistaken.

The CellarMasters newsletter welcomes your letters and comments. Any and all winemaking, wine growing, wine drinking and Club-related topics may be addressed, please send them to: [editor@CellarmastersLA.org](mailto:editor@CellarmastersLA.org). Our website is [www.CellarmastersLA.org](http://www.CellarmastersLA.org). Copyright © 2010 CellarMasters Home Wine Club and its licensors. All rights reserved.