

All year: Mon-Sat 11-5, Sun 1-5 *plus...*

Jul/Aug: Mon-Sat 11-6:00

Sep/Oct: Fri-Sat 11-6:00

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FENN Valley

VINEYARDS AND WINE CELLAR

May June 2009

For those who may have forgotten...
I-196 to exit 34 (between Holland & South Haven). East on M-89 at Exit 34 for 3½ mi to 62nd St. South (right) on 62nd 1 mi to 122nd Ave. Left on 122nd ¼ mi. Winery on right. *Follow the signs.*

<http://www.fennvalley.com>

Fenn Valley Wine Festival

For 17 years we referred to this event as our Open House. Over the years it has grown from 200 attendees in 1992 to over 1000 people the last few years. The first few years Open House was held entirely inside the winery and has gradually spilled out into the farm and vineyards surrounding the winery. Finally, last year, we decided that it was time to change the venue. We had outgrown the winery and needed more room to expand.

We looked around and decided to relocate this event on the other side of the winery where we had been staging "Blues in the Vineyard". Because it is usually hot at that time of the year and we need a place to get out of the sun, we have rented a huge 4000 square foot tent to house the event. In addition to a change of venue, we are increasing our food offerings and there will be three food vendors. Joining the "Traditional Mexican Picnic"

that has been with us for 15 years will be "Jim Hoyt's BBQ Specialties".

Other improvements will include an additional vineyard tasting station for a total of three tasting stations located in the vineyard. Both of our People Haulers will be making the round trip dropping participants off at each of the stations - or you may take a stroll down our farm lanes to visit the vineyard wine stations. *(Continued on page 3)*

Vidal Ice Wine Earns Top Award

Our winemaker recently spent 4 days judging wines at the Tasters Guild International Wine Competition held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Almost 2000 wines from around the world were entered in this annual competition, and our winemaker was able to taste 295 wines of all kinds ranging from delicate dry white wines all the way through bold reds and super sweet ice wines.

Serving as a wine judge has given us an insight into the workings of commercial competitions as well as the significance of the awards and medals granted. While all wineries covet Gold and Silver medals, a Bronze medal is worthy of merit as it signifies the wine has no obvious flaws and is of acceptable consumer quality. To earn a Silver medal, a wine must be above average but may lack that "something extra" in either the aroma or taste. A Gold medal is awarded to a wine that has above average aroma *and* flavor characteristics and has no obvious flaw. And the top award, a Double Gold means that the Gold medal was a unanimous Gold medal winner by all of the judges that tasted the wine.

Regardless of the competition, they all rely on the personal evaluation of wine based on the past experience of the participating judges. Most competitions involve a number of panels made up of 3 or 4 "experts" with significant wine experience. Each panel usually contains a winemaker or other "technician", a retailer or distributor representative, and a person trained in wine appreciation, such as a sommelier or wine steward.

Panels receive the wines in "flights" of up to five wines, with each bottle concealed in a paper bag and any identifying marks removed. Wines are *(Continued next on next page)*

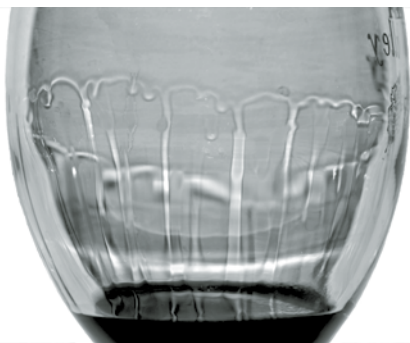
Wine Name	Medal
Vidal Ice Wine 2007	<i>Dbl Gold</i>
Cabaret Rose 2008	Gold
Cherry	Gold
Lakeshore White	Gold
Riesling 2008	Gold
Select Harvest Vignoles 2008	Gold
Traminette 2008	Gold
Blueberry	Silver
Dry Traminette 2008	Silver
Pinot Grigio 2008	Silver
Sparkling Riesling	Silver
Capriccio (2008)	Bronze
Dry Riesling 2008	Bronze
Edelzwicker 2008	Bronze
Meritage 2007	Bronze

2008 Tasters Guild Competition results

WINE COMPETITION *(continued from page 1)*

individually evaluated based on the color, aroma, and taste. Then the judges discuss the merits and flaws of each wine until they reach a consensus regarding the medal (if any). By utilizing a consensus of a panel of judges, it is more likely that the idiosyncrasies of any one judge's palate can be mitigated than if wines were judged individually by a single judge.

So how valid are the results? Some competitions, such as the Tasters Guild Competition, retaste a large number of wines to check for judging consistency, particularly if the judges on a panel have widely varying individual scores. Scores are adjusted if the second panel deviates significantly from the evaluation by the first panel. But it still boils down to the personal preference of a panel of judges, whose palate may or may not mirror your own personal tastes. Oh yes... For those who might think that it was four days of drunken debauchery, the judges spit the wine out, they don't swallow it!



Wine Legs

When wine is swirled in a clean glass, long tears can be seen streaming down the side of the glass after it is allowed to rest. These are referred to as "legs", and some people think that pronounced legs are an indication of a fine wine. There is actually no relationship between the presence of wine legs and wine quality.

The legs form because of the alcohol content of the wine. The more alcohol, the more pronounced the legs. A glass of vodka will exhibit spectacular legs, even though it would be considered a poor quality wine.

The cause of the wine "legs" is due to the differences in the surface tension and the vapor pressure of water and alcohol. Water has a higher surface tension (forms fatter drops) than alcohol, and alcohol evaporates more readily than water. Wine, which is a mixture of water and alcohol, will form a thin layer of liquid on the wall of the wine glass. The alcohol evaporates faster than the water, which increases the surface tension of the remaining liquid on the glass wall. The increased surface tension causes this liquid to draw together and form a drop, which falls down the side of the glass when it gets large enough. To prove this, cover the wine glass, which will retard the evaporation of the alcohol, and the "legs" will not form. Thus, the higher the alcohol content of the liquid (wine), the greater the change in the surface tension and the more pronounced the "legs".

Blues in the Vineyard

Join us from 4-8pm on August 1 for our third "Blues in the Vineyard". We will be featuring the talents of Funky Blues Institution 4-6PM and The Elwood Splinters Blues Band from 6-8PM. Admission is \$8.00pp and tickets are available at the gate.

We will have wine available for purchase and Jim Hoyt's BBQ Specialties will be available if you want a southern style BBQ. Guests may either bring in food and soft drinks or purchase these items on site.

Also, we have limited picnic table seating, so we encourage you to bring lawn chairs or blankets for lawn seating in front of the bands.



Now for the fine print... Please note that **NO** alcoholic beverages may be brought on-site and *we will be checking coolers* for alcoholic beverages. Since

the entire Fenn Valley farm is licensed as a Fenn Valley tasting room, *only Fenn Valley wines may be consumed anywhere on the farm.*

New Releases

Following is a schedule of release dates for our newest wines. If you are coming for a specific wine, please call first. In spite of our best intentions, wine is a natural beverage and sometimes Mother Nature can be fickle and have a different idea about when a wine is ready than those of us at the winery.

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Release Date</u>
Dry Traminette 2008	Released
Riesling 2008	Released
Sparkling Riesling	Released
Edelzwicker 2008	June 1
Meritage 2007	June 1
Cabernet Sauvignon 2007	July 1
Cabernet Franc 2008	August 1
Dry Riesling 2008	August 15
Chancellor 2008	Sept 1
Merlot 2008	Sept 1

WINE FESTIVAL (continued from page 1)

We will be hosting two bands during the course of the afternoon. The afternoon will begin with *Measured Chaos* who will play from 1 until 3pm. Measured Chaos is an accomplished band that plays a mix of blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll.

They will be followed by our all-time favorite, *Natchez Trace* from 3 to 5pm. Natchez Trace plays at many of our events, picnics in the vineyard, chili cookoff, and Open House last year. They play an eclectic mix of classic rock 'n' roll that'll make you want to get up and dance. Since we have limited picnic table seating, we encourage you to bring lawn chairs & blankets for lawn seating in front of the bands.

Besides all of the fun, this is your chance to replenish your wine supplies at substantial savings. All of the released wines tasted at this event will be specially priced at **25-30% OFF** the regular price. This special pricing applies to **STRAIGHT CASES ONLY** (12 of a kind). Purchases of 4 or more cases (mix & match whole cases) will receive a 30% discount, so you may want to pool your orders with your family and friends. Although all cases must be straight cases, not all cases in an order need to be the same wine.

The price of admission to the Wine Festival is only \$8.00/adult, which includes a souvenir Fenn Valley logo wine glass and a glass of wine of your choice. Finally, reservations speed the entry process but are not necessary. If you don't like the lines at the gate, call ahead and you will be able to pick up your glass and tasting tickets at a special "Prepaid Express Gate".



More "Boxed" Wines

Last year we introduced our first premium bag-in-the-box (BIB) wines when we brought out the Pinot Grigio and Capriccio in a 1.5 liter box. We knew from our experience with the Demi-Sec 3 liter BIB that people not only liked the economy of the BIB package, they also liked the convenience. What we were not prepared for was how readily the premium wine BIB was accepted. We sold out of these wines almost before they were on the floor!

This year we think that we are better prepared. By mid June we should have Pinot Grigio, Riesling, and Capriccio available in the 1.5 liter BIB. Each wine will be the same wine as in the bottle, just in a more convenient container - and priced at \$17 for 1.5 liters. These wines will be available exclusively at both winery tasting rooms - hopefully for the duration of the summer.

Remember that BIB wines are not made to be aged and are best when consumed within 6 months of their purchase - regardless of who made it.

Dollar Stretching Values

It's no secret that everyone is feeling the pinch of a recession, and we can all use a little relief when it comes to making purchases. So, last year we decided to implement the same relief strategy that we used during the *last* great recession in the early 1990's. This spring we saw many folks coming in to take advantage of these great prices, so we have decided to continue our "3 for 2" sale.

Every month we select a wine that we offer at the special price of 3 bottles for the price of 2 - a 33% savings. See the list below for the month that your favorite wine will be on sale. We have tried to schedule these sale wines to reflect the kinds of wines that are normally popular at that time of year. Purchased bottle quantities count toward our case discount schedule, but the case discount does not apply to the special sale wines. Some wines are available in limited quantities, and their "sale" ends when they are sold out - no rain checks..

June	Select Harvest Vignoles
July	Pinot Grigio
August	Lakeshore Sunset
September	Riesling
October	Cabernet Franc
November	Meritage
December	Mulled Wine & Classic Port

Chancellor is Back

Chancellor was one of the first premium red wines that we made back in the 70's and 80's. In the late 90's it was replaced by Cabernet Franc and Meritage and most of the Chancellor that we grew ended up being blended into our Lakeshore Red. As the sales of Lakeshore Red grew, due in part to the use of Chancellor in the blend, we couldn't grow enough Chancellor to continue to offer Chancellor as a varietal selection, so it was discontinued.

Some of our long-time customers remember Chancellor as a premium varietal red wine that aged fairly well and they frequently ask our winemaker when we will be making it available again. Well, your persistence has paid off! Since 2008 was such a good year for red wines, we decided to save enough Chancellor from the Lakeshore Red blend to bottle 100 cases as a varietal wine.

The 2008 Chancellor is aging in barrels as this tome is being written, and barring any unfortunate accident, it should be bottled sometime in mid-summer. With an additional 6-8 weeks of rest after the shock of bottling, you should be able to see Chancellor on our shelves on September 1.

FENN Valley

VINEYARDS AND WINECELLAR

6130 122nd Ave.
Fennville, MI 49408

Return Service Requested

MAY/JUNE 2009

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A Summer of Winery Fun...

June 27: FENNVALLEY WINE FESTIVAL. Join us for an afternoon of wine tasting in the vineyard, a Mexican picnic, BBQ specialty foods, live music, and a great time. See details on page 1. \$8.00 adults. *Reservations optional. 1-5pm.*

Aug 1: BLUES IN THE VINEYARD. The Elwood Splinters Blues Band and Funky Blues Institution are here singin' the blues. Bring a picnic basket and park it in the lawn for an evening of live blues, or purchase some of Jim Hoyt's BBQ chicken & ribs. Wine is available on-site. See page 2 for details and restrictions. *\$8.00 admission, no reservations*

July 10, 25, and August 7: SUMMER EVENING COOKOUT. You bring the grillmaster and an appetite for fun and good food. We supply all of the wine, champagnes, food, and live music. Enjoy a relaxing evening in our quiet country setting. \$30.00pp

July 10: Natchez Trace (Classic rock 'n' roll)

July 25: Michigan Mark & the Ardvark Stew
(Acoustic, Electric, Eclectic)

Aug 7: Natchez Trace (Classic rock 'n' roll)

Reservations required. Reservations accepted June 1.

Sundays in August: PERFORMING ARTS IN THE VINEYARD. Enjoy performing arts recitals in our vintage garden each Sunday afternoon from 2:30 until 4:30.

Aug 2: Tango Folias (Classical guitar & flute)

Aug 9: To be determined

Aug 16: Keith Scott (Blues)

Aug 23: Third Coast Ensemble (Acoustical music of many styles)

No reservations, no admission charge.

Tours.....

Our fun and informative cellar and vineyard tasting tours have grown in popularity and we will once again be offering a variety of tours to meet everyone's expectations and schedules.

CELLAR TOURS

Our cellar tours take just over an hour and includes some tasting in the cellar. The tours provide an in-depth look at how we convert our grapes into wine and how the winemaker can influence the style of the wine by altering various winemaking practices. *(Reservations suggested and are accepted up to 7 days in advance for cellar tours).*

Cost = \$8, includes logo glass & \$5 coupon.

Nov - July: Sat 3pm (except weekends with scheduled events)

July & Aug: Fri 4pm



VINEYARD TOURS

This summer we will once again be offering two different tours through the vineyard. Pick the one that fits your interest and time schedule.

The shorter "standard" tour, will be a 45-minute narration tour through the vineyard with limited wine tasting. Cost = \$5, includes logo glass. *Reservations required in Sept & Oct. Accepted up to 7 days in advance.*

Aug - Oct: Sat 1:30 and 3:00

For those folks that want a more detailed look at our vineyards, join us for our "extended" tour. This tour is 1:45 in length and includes extensive wine tasting in the vineyard. *Reservations are required and are accepted after July 1.* Cost = \$8, includes logo glass & \$5 coupon.

Sept & Oct: Sat 2:30 & Sun 2:45