

# ***THE CULINARY CONNECTION***

***AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION  
Chefs de Cuisine Association of California, Inc.  
<Incorporated 1923>***

[www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) or [www.chefsdecuisine-acfla.org](http://www.chefsdecuisine-acfla.org)

*Volume XIII, Number 1*

*November – December, 2003*



***ESCOFFIER DINNER CELEBRATION...PRESIDENTS REPORT....***

***CCAC CULINARY COMPETITION/CHEF OF THE YEAR RESULTS***

***WEBSITE UPDATE.....FROM THE GRAPEVINE.....***

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Web Sites: [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) or [www.chefsdecuisine-acfla.org](http://www.chefsdecuisine-acfla.org)

E-mail: [ccacafla@aol.co](mailto:ccacafla@aol.co) or [office@acfla.org](mailto:office@acfla.org)

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## DECEMBER

**Monday, December 1st:  
Les Amis d'Escoffier Dinner,  
The Regency Club  
10900 Wilshire Boulevard, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles California 90024  
(310) 208 - 1443  
6:30 P.M.**

**Executive Chef Patrick Jamon  
Champagne Reception in the Terrace Room  
Dinner in the Regency Room**

**Cover \$150.00**

**Parking \$5.00**

**(Enter parking lot off of Westwood Blvd. One block south of Wilshire Blvd.)**

**No Host Cigar Bar & Cognac**

**Black Tie Attire**

**Prepaid Reservations must be received prior to event.**

**Log on to [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) to purchase your tickets Limited Seating for this event.  
or Escoffier membership and medal. \$75.00**



*Les Amis d'Escoffier Society of Los Angeles*

**To all CCAC Members:  
2003/2004 Address:**

Chefs de Cuisine Association of  
California-Los Angeles  
15981 Yarnell, #124  
Sylmar, CA 91342-1054

Our phone 818-559-5218.  
Dennis Sheeler will be taking calls and  
answering any questions on request.

The fax number is 818-833-4350. Please be  
sure and put on your documents for CCAC or  
Chefs de Cuisine Association of California, as  
this is a shared fax machine.

## Report by President Dennis Sheeler



Chefs de Cuisine Members,

What an exiting year it has been! When last we spoke, we were all on a fast track to the ACF National Convention. President Leonard recognized the CCAC Chapter for its upcoming Chef of the Year Competition (as we were going to be the first local chapter to undertake the task under the new vision of the ACF) and wished us "all the best". Once we returned, it was a quick turnaround for the Chef of the Year Competition. The committee planning meetings work became reality, and we were positioned to showcase the CCAC on the biggest stage Los Angeles had to offer on the floor of the Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo. Past Chef of the Year recipients, competitors, judges and teams of volunteers worked diligently to execute the most professional ACF certified culinary salon of 2003. What a show of honor! When all was done, and all the participants were recognized, only one group's accomplishment was kept a mystery. Who Won Chef of The Year?

At the Presidents Ball during a well attended and beautifully presented evening, the video presentation awed the guests and the announcement was made. We had awarded the best Chef in Los Angeles based on merit. It really felt good. Thank you to all of the sponsors who helped to make the Presidents Grand Ball a success. Those of you that attended can attest to a truly exciting feeling of culinary professionalism. We know that with this momentum behind us we will finish the year stronger and growing.

The upcoming Escoffier Dinner is looking very enticing and I encourage everyone to attend as Patrick Jamon of the Regency Club is set to entertain us in grand style. Space is limited so make your reservations on line at [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) and don't miss this chance of a lifetime.

The CCAC Board of Directors has set a preliminary schedule for 2004. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending, as we would greatly appreciate all the input and expertise you would like to share with us. You can help us to make a difference in the lives of future culinarians, those less fortunate and in yourself by bonding with a group of your peers.

**Information on upcoming events for 2004 will be posted on the website at [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) and the newly formatted web based newsletter will begin in January.**

### Chapter Chefs' of The Year

1970 Richard Morgan AAC	1981 Robert W. Bryan AAC
1971 Kaare K. Erlandsen	1982 Juan Aguirre, AAC
1972 Otto Nasser	1983 Steve W. Givings AAC
1973 Harry F. Bannigan	1984 Werner Glur
1974 Walter Roth	1985 Raimund Hofmeister CMC
1975 Richard H.Gee AAC	1986 Kay Corning
1976 Raymond Marshall	-Martin AAC
1977 Marvin	1987 Leonard Mack
Slaughter AAC	1988 Hugo Fressle CEC
1978 Jack LaBriola	1989 Wilson Brown CWC
1979 Ryo Sato, CEC	1990 Ernest W. Green AAC
1980 Harold Nightlinger	1991 Joe Cochran

1992 Luis Martinez AAC  
1993 Nancy Berkoff AAC  
1994 Francois Studer AAC  
1995 Luis Vega AAC  
1996 Mario H. Sosa CEC AAC  
1997 Jaques Tokar  
1998 LeRoy Blanchard AAC  
1999 Daniel Drumlake CEC  
2000 Ernest W. Green AAC  
2001 Whitney Werner CEC  
2003 Stefano Sampson *Valentino*

### Membership Report as of Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> 2003

Active: 99, Junior: 60, Associate: 7,  
Senior Chefs: 33, Lifetime: 1,  
For a Total of: 200.  
National: 30, Non Member Support: 45.  
Associate-Duel: 2, Chapter Social: 2,

***For a Grand Total of: 279***

**AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION LOS ANGELES, CHEFS DE CUISINE, CALIFORNIA RESTAURANT ASSOCIATIONS WESTERN EXPO CULINARY SALON RESULTS**

August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003

**Chefs de Cuisine Sponsored  
Chefs Table Competition**

TEAM DESSERT SPRINGS.....GOLD  
TEAM KEOKI.....SILVER  
TEAM BEACH CITIES.....SILVER  
TEAM PROVINCE.....BRONZE  
TEAM MISSION COLLEGE.....BRONZE

**Chefs de Cuisine Sponsored  
Cold Food Salon**

BEST OF SHOW AWARD...Connie Vasquez  
JUDGES AWARD.....Rob Chandler

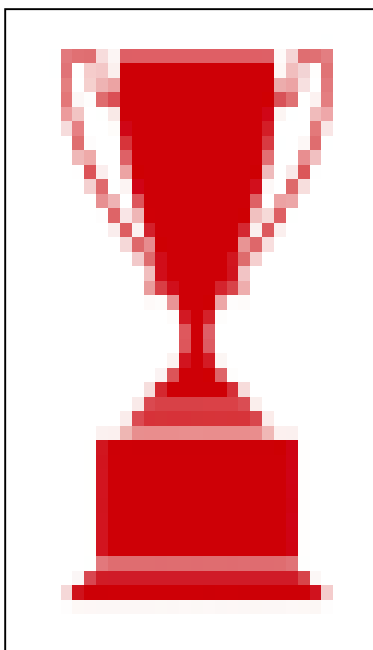
Congratulations Cold Food (A), Hot and Cold Food (B), Patisserie (C), Showpiece (D) Participants.....

SILVER.....Rob Chandler, Scott Sullivan, John Cardoma, Allyson Ames, Quynh Vu, and Connie Vasquez

BRONZE.....Jose Luis, Grady Adkins, Candace Kasulka, Quynh Vu, Jimmy Zang, Gabriel Torrero, Teresa Zamora, Aviana Medwa, Olga Volquartz, Jimmy Zang, Will Almazan, and Martin Gilligan.

DIPLOMA...Franklin Ras, Francis So, Yucheu Itu, Jack Greenspan, Steven Stover, Richard Tse, Raymond Tang, Karen McMillan, Charissa Murphy, Adee Finn and Owen Buccat.

Congratulations to all of those who challenged themselves and strive to become greater culinarians through competitive competition, our toques come off and salute you!



**The ACF/CCAC Board of Directors  
Are Looking For Dedicated  
Culinarians to Join Our Team.**

**The Goal of Making a Difference In The  
Professional Foodservice Industry and  
The Ability To Give Back To The  
Culinary Community A Must.**

Please Contact the Chefs de Cuisine at  
818 559 5218

# ***2003 CHEF OF THE YEAR COOKING COMPETITION RESULTS***

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5th, 2003 California Restaurant Show**

## **Valentino Chef Takes the Gold and is named “Chef of the Year” in Los Angeles**

I am proud to announce that 2003 marks the beginning of a new Los Angeles Chapter American Culinary Federation (ACF). The Los Angeles chapter nominated all the great chefs of LA, whether they were members of the ACF or not, to compete in a cooking competition for the title of “Chef of the Year.” This is the first ever “Iron Chef” style cooking competition for LA Chefs. This is also new to the ACF “Chef of the Year” award because in the past, the recipient had to be a member of the ACF and the nominees were sent out by ballot for a popular vote by the membership.

The National ACF’s greater mission is to “get into the mainstream,” making The American Culinary Federation a household name and for all chefs and the general public to know that ultimately the National Chef of the Year title will be awarded to the best cook in America! This past July marked the first time regional winners had to cook for the national title-thus a new tradition was born. Now we are the first to complete the national mission down to the chapter level!

For our first ever Chef of the Year Award (CYA) Cooking Competition we brought in the “Dream Team” of judges including Joe Amendola (2002 National Chef of the Year Winner and Culinary Institute of America Instructor forever! In fact, rumor has it that Joe laid parts of the original tile in the kitchen floors for the first CIA in New Haven), Roland Shaeffer (invented many of the successful brands for Heinz products-The Near East Line is one of his biggies!), John Hui (Caesars Palace-probably the most sought after ACF Certified Pastry Judge in the country) and the ever so intimidating and notoriously strict kitchen judge the “Darth Vader” of chefs – ACF Certified Master Chef Roland Henin (who I had as an instructor, by pure luck, for two classes at the CIA.)

The judges watched and tasted for three days, not completely knowing what to expect, as history was in the making! This was a first for all involved. This was the first chapter CYA Competition for all chefs, judges, students and the Reed exhibition company too! We were all energized!

The competition was fierce and the tension was mounting throughout the weekend. When it finally came to an end, the competitors would walk away without a clue as to what they scored or how they placed. They would have to wait two and a half months before the Los Angeles Chef of the Year Award Winner was to be announced and any ACF culinary medals won by other competitors would be presented at the President’s Ball on October 20, 2003. That was the beauty of having the competition ACF sanctioned-all of the competitors could receive ACF Culinary Medals whether they won the “Chef of the Year Award” or not. This gives much more appeal to the busy chef that runs a successful restaurant to compete who may think “oh well, I’m just too busy to get involved.”

**As the Competition Chair I am proud to announce that Chef Steve Samson of Valentino in Santa Monica not only won the Chef of the Year Award but took home an ACF Gold Medal.**



Chef Samson put on an amazing show including more technique in one hour than most cooks display in a lifetime. This marks the first ever Chef of the Year of an ACF chapter that competed in an ACF sanctioned cooking competition for the award, rather than by popular vote. Not only did Steve compete in a cooking contest for the award, he took the only gold in the entire competition including the chef's tables and all the cold and dessert display categories! However, the single most outrageous and controversial point of Steve winning the award is that he was not a member of the ACF. For all those who are skeptical of the new criteria for the Chef of the Year Award nomination being open to non-members - Steve and five other non-member competitors were inducted the night of the President's Ball before the results were announced!

We in Los Angeles have taken the next step and, for the good of the organization and President Leonard's mission, I urge all chapters to do the same. We held our competition as an ACF sanctioned one-hour, bring your own ingredients and produce four plates for judging by ACF "K-category" competition standards. By doing the competition by ACF competition rules it was much costlier because of the requirement for ACF certified judges, etc. (which is one reason we decided to run the competition as a K-category rather than a mystery basket because we didn't have to supply a food storeroom.) The biggest upside to having the competition ACF sanctioned is the ability for all competitors to medal whether they win or not. This is the way you will attract the restaurant chefs who feel they're TOO BUSY FOR THE ACF!

We in Los Angeles have taken the first step and for the good of the organization and President Leonard's mission, I urge all chapters to do the same. Running this competition was four of the best days of my life and I wish you all the best when your chapter takes the plunge!

---

**To nominate your favorite LA area chef to compete at next year's competition, log on to [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org)** and click on the "Chef of the Year LA" link! Then check back through the year at the CYA Nominee link to see who has been nominated to date. If you go to the "calendar of events" link you will see when each nominee is scheduled to cook a course at an educational dinner/meeting as well as who the guest demonstrator will be. All event tickets will be available with a click of a mouse and I hope to see a big turnout this year given the new format.

**The new format for dinner/meetings will be as follows:**

6:30 Reception and Vendor Mixing.....7:00 30-Minute Guest Presenter.....7:30 CYA Nominee Dinner. No less than two Chef of the Year nominees prepare one or more courses to showcase their talent to the membership and the CYA committee (past CYA recipients). 9:30 Recognitions, inductions, issues from the floor.

All dinners must include following criteria: Each educational dinner awards attendees 1 point toward certification or renewal. ACF Junior Member Volunteers for the event will receive 3 points toward certification. Award/certificates must be available for attendees the night of the event for the guest chef presenter, past CYA recipients, board members or any pertinent person to sign the certification points document for validity. One-30 minute guest presenter for education. No less than three past Chef of the Year recipients must be present to evaluate.

**IF ALL CHAPTERS WERE TO FOLLOW THIS FORMAT THEN PRESIDENT LEONARD'S VISION OF A NEW, TRUE ACF WILL BE CLOSER THAN IMAGINED!**

*As you know, education is a primary goal of the ACF. Thus, we are putting together a "How to Hold a Chef of the Year Competition" package complete with our motivating video footage, our case study, templates, fundraising and marketing tips for our fellow chapters. Look for my article about the event in the National Culinary Review entitled "First Ever ACF Non-Member Chef takes the gold and wins the Chef of the Year Award in Los Angeles." Note: we will ask our fellow chapters for a small donation to help cover costs.*

**EDITORIAL**  
**STAFF**

Dennis Sheeler,  
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The contents of this  
magazine are not  
necessarily  
the views of the  
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Association of  
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members.

**THE CHEFS DE CUISINE  
ASSOCIATIONS  
“CULINARY CONNECTION”  
IS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE. THIS  
WILL BE THE NEW WEB BASED  
INFORMATIONAL SOURCE 24/7/365  
POSTED AT [WWW.ACFLA.ORG](http://WWW.ACFLA.ORG)**

This will be the last hard copy newsletter. Beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> if you still desire a printed copy of the Culinary Connection it will be necessary for you to contact the office, so one could be mailed to you.

**News of the Southland .....**

The American Culinary Federation proudly announces the opening of the new ACF Career Center. This new Career Center, launched in partnership with JobTarget, is a complete management tool for both job seekers and employers.

Check out the new ACF Career Center at:  
<http://jobs.acfchefs.org>

ACF Job seekers can view the newest / freshest jobs available; using the Job Agent they can seek jobs that match their specific criteria; using their Career account, they can manage their resume, cover letters, job listings of interest, and much, much more.

Employers can view resumes at no charge, only paying for ones they choose to use. Posting job openings is accomplished at very competitive fees with substantial discounts to ACF members. Using the Recruiting account, employers can manage all their job records including job listings, company profile, and job candidates.

**Our new web site is making progress.** Beginning in 2004 many new features will be operational. Chefs de Cuisine's new website, at [www.acfla.org](http://www.acfla.org) is member focused and highly interactive. Our site provides you with direct information access and is a central communications point for us. You can view the upcoming [event calendar](#), purchase event [tickets online](#), post your comments and [give feedback](#). You can view wish lists for events; find opportunities for participation, [post questions and share solutions](#). By being able to purchase your tickets in advance online our chapter will better be able to plan and confirm for seating at the 2004 functions. This new feature will enable the Chapter to use its funds to advance culinary awareness and award culinary scholarships in the future. *You will notice that most sections have [a page mentor](#); do you have a special knowledge or expertise? The gift of knowledge is priceless and is at the heart of our chapter. Being a web page mentor is a fast, simple and easy way to contribute to your chapter at your convenience, on your schedule, from your computer!*

DAN HANA  
Sales



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FAX (800) 597-2700

In Memoriam,

Anthony "Tony" Sterle, CEC, AAC  
12/16/1925 to 10/22/2003

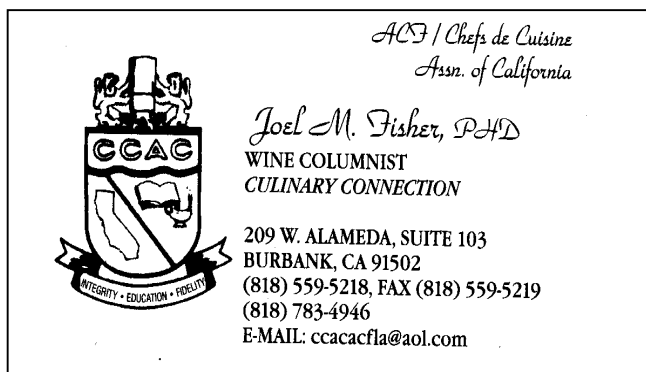
I knew you very well; I worked with you side by side;  
And because of knowing you, Chef, I am a better culinarians;  
And a better human being. You will be missed;  
The kitchen will not be the same without you.  
A moment of silence  
for our departed members...

## FROM THE GRAPEVINE

BY JOEL M. FISHER



*November-December 2003*



I decided to celebrate my birthday this year with a pair of trips to two of California's great winemaking regions: Paso Robles and Napa Valley. Some wine folk feel a rivalry exists between the areas, but each region should and can be enjoyed in its own right. Good wine is good wine, after all.

I started at Edna Valley, the scenic winery enclave just south of Paso Robles. My first visit was to Maurice Wedell, a former accountant who – while still doing some accounting – now happily makes Burgundy-type wines for his own label, **Wedell Cellars**. Maurice uses grapes from proprietary vines and also buys from his well-known consulting enologist John Alban to produce a variety of unfiltered and unfinned wines. The bottom line is that he doesn't like to compromise, and his products reflect that philosophy.

We started with his *1999 Wedell Cellars Chardonnay*, which is a Mersault-style wine with a flinty nose. (You can find this locally at The Flask and Manhattan Liquor for around \$24.) Next we sampled Wedell's *2000 Edna Valley Chardonnay* (\$30), which reflects *terroire*, has a mineral nose, and carries its fruit forward. I liked the *2000 Hillside Chardonnay* (\$37), which is a smoother, big wine. This bottle can easily be held for one year. We moved on to the reds, and the warm, spicy note of cinnamon filled my nose and palate when we tried the *2001 Wedell Edna Valley Pinot Noir* (\$35). The \$90 *2000 Hillside Vineyard Pinot Noir* has won raves in *Decanter* and *Wine Enthusiast* magazines, but I particularly loved the *2001 Hillside Pinot Noir*, which for the same price is really a Grand Cru product! I couldn't believe this wine was bottled just June 12<sup>th</sup> of this year. The full-bodied *Wedell 2001 Viognier* (\$21) is quite enjoyable with its aroma of melon and stone fruit. Only one barrel of this attractive and nicely done wine was made, so seek it out while you can!

...

I took my leave of Maurice and pressed deeper into the valley to **Domaine Alfred**, whose Califa label has been receiving some great reviews. I began with their well-balanced, well-structured *2001 Chardonnay Califa* (\$32), made from Edna Valley-area grapes. The *2001 Chardonnay* (\$22) proved fresher, with good fruits. I next enjoyed the young *2002 Vin Gris* (\$22), which has a Burgundian nose, an abundance of fruit on the palate, and is really quite nice! The *2000 Pinot Noir* (\$28), which is good on the palate, presents a veggie nose, fruit forward, and a eucalyptus tang. In contrast, the *2000 Califa Pinot Noir* (\$42) contains good fruit but has a fast-fading nose. We moved on to the *2002 Rose of Syrah* (\$22), which is a balanced but not-too-light wine. It has a nice color and good cherry and berry flavors. We concluded with the *2001 Da Red* (\$18), which is a 50-50 Pinot Noir and Syrah blend. This wine had cracked pepper on both the nose and palate, and I particularly enjoyed its great finish.

...

My next stop was at **Edna Valley Vineyard**, where Assistant Winemaker Tim Wilson met me. A Fresno State enology graduate, Tim is off to a good start with this winery, which makes a nice selection of varietals. I began with their *2000 Marsanne* (\$16), which is blended with Chardonnay and a dollop of Viognier. The end result proves to be both big and complex as well as clean and crisp. Next up was the *2000 Pinot Gris* (\$18). With grapes coming from the Paragon fields, the wine is a riot of peat, licorice, pear, apple and mineral on the palate that somehow works out to be nicely balanced. We then tasted the *2001 Chardonnay* (\$15), which has a Burgundian nose and is austere and flinty – fitting for it having been barrel fermented in French oak. The last white was a *2002 Vin Gris* (\$12): Made entirely from Pinot Noir grapes and boasting 13% alcohol, the wine possesses lovely strawberry aromas and lemon flavors. Moving on to the reds, we started with the *2001 Pinot Noir* (\$20), which improved in the glass to exhibit a good nose and cherry aromas. The simply titled *2000 Edna Red* (\$14) – a Cabernet-Syrah blend with blackberry and black pepper aromas – is a great buy. I finished the flight with the lush, tannic *2000 Petit Syrah* (\$19), a strong wine that contains plum and other purple fruit.

...

My last stop in Edna Valley was at the compact **Claiborne & Churchill**. Clay Claiborne's winery annually produces 5,000 to 8,000 cases of several varietals, many produced from purchased Monterey County-area grapes. A full 50% of this boutique winery's sales are done directly through its wine club. Clay loves Alsace – both the food and the wine – and warmly praises **Edna Valley Vineyard**, where this Ph.D. in Norse Studies began his hands-on induction to winemaking.

I began with their *2001 Riesling* (\$14), which is full of aromas and flavors that encompassed everything from berries and citrus to jasmine and lemongrass. This is a wine that could age well. The *2001 Dry Gewürztraminer* (\$18) had a giant floral nose and was also very good.

The *2001 Pinot Noir* (\$20) has rose petals and berry on the palate, with fruit forward and spicy flavors. The winery produced five hundred and fifty cases of this as their first red to be sold outside the winery, and Clay anticipates increasing production to around 2200 cases annually. This particular vintage uses grapes from a collection of vineyards within the Edna Valley Agricultural Viticulture Area, and just four months after release I thought the wine showed considerable potential.

Their non-vintage *Cuvee Elizabeth Dry Rose* (\$15) is very much worth the price. The wine is very nice, and the bottle has one of those great label designs that I take delight in seeing. We concluded with their *2002 Sweet Orange* (\$10), which is a very pleasant dessert drink.

That marked the end of my introduction to the beautiful Edna Valley. From there, I headed up Highway 101 to my friends at **Casa de Caballos** in Templeton. That night we did a taste-off between Wedell's Pinots and Tom and Sheila Morgan's Pinots and Merlot-Cabernet blends. All ended up performing very well against each other, and those of us drinking were the winners.

...

Next up was my long-awaited trip back to Napa. My first stop was the **Laird Family Estate**, which owns 200 acres in the Carneros area and does bottling and aging of bottles for a couple dozen wineries. Joan Smith, of their sales and hospitality staff, walked me through a few of their wines. We tasted their *2000 Merlot*, which while medium-bodied has considerable complexity. The bottle (\$60) was big and tannic, with lots of berries and fruit forward along with vanilla from the oak. Next was their 1999 Napa Valley Merlot (\$55) which opened up easily into a well-structured, balanced wine. Nice black-fruit flavors contributed to a great, long finish. This bottle could lie down for 10 years or so. We wound down with the *2000 Diamond Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$85). This is an elegant, vibrant bottle of wine that has a great ruby color and good fruit.

In the Laird barrel room I caught up with Doug Barr, the well-known actor who started the **Hollywood and Vine Winery** some time back. He, too, utilizes this facility for his production. Celia Masyczek, another star from UC Davis, is his winemaker. In 2002 they produced some 650 cases of white, and more than a thousand of red.

I tasted their *2001 Cabernet* (\$78), which comes from grapes from Mt. Veeder. This big elegant wine, which was released in October, opens nicely with ruby colors and cherry tones. I also enjoyed a preview of the *2003 Cabernet* straight from the barrel. With berries, chocolate, and leather on the tongue, this wine is a year away from being ready but already possesses a strong finish.

...

I continued to push northward into Calistoga, where I visited Vincent Arroyo, the man and the winery. Arriving on the scene from Hollister in 1974, Vince now has 68 acres, produces 8,000 cases annually and likes red varietals. His house wine (\$15) is the *2000 Mélange* (made from Gamay). *Joy's Choice* (\$17) – named after the winery's beloved dog who has passed on – is a Cabernet/Malbec blend that goes nicely with pizza. The *2000 Merlot* (\$26) is a smooth, fruity wine that is light on tannins but big on balance. We next sampled the velvety *1999 Cabernet* (\$28), for which the black stone fruit flavors should age nicely for five more years. The *1998 Reserve Cabernet* (\$54) possesses a larger-than-normal nose with hints of pepper, spices and berry fruits. This has aged for three years in the barrel, and has a good finish. Vince personally likes Petite Syrah and makes four of them, of which we tasted two. His *1999 Reserve Petite Syrah Greenwood Reserve* (\$50), with strong spices and a big nose, is not for the wimpy. The *1998 Reserve Petite Syrah* (\$65) is smooth, well-balanced and well-structured. The regular *2001 Cabernet* (\$28), still in the barrel, is worth keeping for five years or so. Also still in the barrel is the *2001 Merlot* (\$28) which has fresh green pepper on the nose and nice fruits on the palate. The last wine we sampled from the barrel bowled me over. The gutsy *2001 Petite Syrah* has had 3,000 bottles pre-sold! I do

think it well worth the price. (**\$32**) Although Vincent Arroyo may be off the beaten track, his wines are really worth the effort.

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Five minutes away is Charlie Johnston's **Helena View Johnston Winery**, which produces approximately 1500 cases a year. It was a pleasure to taste some wines that deviated from the norm. His very lively 1992 *Cabernet Sauvignon* has received a gold medal in the Pacific Rim competition. The seductive, decadent and fruity 1992 *Cabernet Franc* is made organically. The 1996 *Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve Select*, is a big wine with eucalyptus on the nose. Johnston has their very own cult wine – the \$25 1996 *Moon Mountain* – which has a two-bottle purchase limit. The wine has an appealing trace of mint on the nose. The 1996 *Cabernet Sauvignon* (**\$45**) contains 25% cabernet franc, is big and velvety, and has lots of fruit. Still in the barrel and unfiltered, the 1999 *Cabernet-Merlot* blend has strong fruit and raisin tastes, with some oak. I was quite pleased with the 2001 *Zinfandel*, also in the barrel, which gave the impression of earthy, ripe overtones and charter oak. The winery will probably produce 300 to 500 cases of this wine. The 1994 *Cabernet Franc* (\$45) has yet to open, but should expand with time into a big wine with strong fruit. Softer and more elegant is the 1995 *Cabernet Franc* (\$39). Johnston's 1996 *Cabernet Franc* (\$39) has fruit at the front end, is round at the center, and possesses a wickedly decadent rear end. At 14% alcohol, this is a big wine. This is another winery well worth visiting when you're in the neighborhood.

...

I was happy to finally have a chance to visit **Duckhorn Vineyards**, off the Silverado Trail, and taste their new Paraduxx label. I plunged into their whites. Most notable is their (*year?*) *Sauvignon Blanc* (\$22), which is a subtle wine consisting of 24% Semillon blended in. This would make a good food wine. Among their reds, I really liked the smooth 2000 *Napa Merlot* (\$46), which at 14.5% alcohol is a big wine. It is holding on to good fruit, and is both structured and balanced. The 1999 *Howell Mountain Merlot* (\$45), released in April 2003, is downright lovely with its ripe fruit tones! Another terrific big wine is the 2000 *Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$56), which had beautiful cherry/berry flavors and good tannins. Last, but not least, the signature 2000 *Parradux* (\$46) proved to be a mellow if tannic wine that should continue to smooth out nicely. Duckhorn Vineyards is a very nice place to taste. Do visit, and try to make an appointment in advance if possible.

...

I ended my trip with one of my all-time favorite winery: **Long's Vineyards**, which lies on the east side of Napa valley. I also had the pleasure of finally meeting Robert Long, a producer of wines I'd enjoyed for nearly 30 years. Robert had just returned from giving a speech in San Francisco and was tired, but hospitable. A refugee from the mortgage banking industry and a graduate of UC Berkeley's business school, he got into the wine game in 1977. Assisted by his then-wife and chief winemaker Zelma, his first wine was a chardonnay made at the **Trefethen Winery**, followed by a Riesling in 1978. In 1979 he unveiled his first Cabernet at the Oakville Experimental Station.

In 1990, Robert planted his own Cabernet grapes. He now has 18 acres, which include four of Cabernet Sauvignon, 11 of Chardonnay, plus some Riesling. His chief wine maker is now Sandy Belcher.

We tasted his 2001 *Chardonnay* (\$30), which is very nice, as is his Riesling (\$25) and his Pinot Grigio (\$18-20), which he first introduced in 1992. I enjoyed Long's 2000 *Old Vineyard Chardonnay*, which has great style: spare, austere, acidic, yet balanced. No matter how good his whites are, however, his reds are flat-out remarkable. He started making Sangioveses in 1994, and the 2001 *Sangiovese* (\$25) is immensely approachable with its strong fruits and smooth finish. It pairs wonderfully with pasta dishes. The 2001 *Cabernet* (\$80) needs to be paired with something stronger, although sipping it by itself on a brisk winter night certainly has its own charms. The tannic but silky wine has smooth overtones of eucalyptus and mint, which round out in a long finish. Another favorite was the 1998 Merlot (\$40), which has a big nose of berries and currants that hits you at first sniff. This bottle should last eight to 10 years, and will improve with age.

If you have never had the pleasure to taste a bottle of Long's, I urge you to seek it out and try it. Odds are that you will fall in love as much as I have.

That wraps up my wonderful, decadent wine trip. I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. May you only drink good wines.

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Joel M. Fisher, Ph.D is Wine Instructor for the Culinary Arts Department, Art Institute of California-Los Angeles. He is Director of Public Affairs for the world famous Palace Hollywood, and conducts wine tastings and wine and food pairings in the Los Angeles, San Fernando and Conejo Valley areas.

# **2004 Schedule of Events**

## **January**

**Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting**

**L.A. Mission College 6:00pm.**

**Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> Junior Member Recognition/Installation Dinner**

**L.A. Mission College 6:30pm.**

## **February**

**Monday, 2nd Board of Directors Meeting**

**L.A. Mission College 6:00pm.**

**Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> Chef of the Year Reception TBA**

**Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> American Culinary Federation Western Regional Conference,  
The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs, Co.**

## **March**

**Monday, 1st Board of Directors Meeting**

**Art Institute of Santa Monica 6:00pm.**

**Monday, 15th Chef of the Year Nominee Dinner**

**Breamar Country Club 6:30pm.**

**Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> ACF Certification Training Sanitation Refresher**

**L.A. Mission College TBD**

## **April**

**Monday, 5th Board of Directors Meeting, The Beach Club 6:00pm**

**Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> ACF Certification Training Nutrition**

**L.A. Mission College TBD**

**Monday, 19th Chef of the Year Nominee Dinner**

**The Beach Club 6:30pm.**

**Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> ACF Sponsored Student Culinary Competition**

## **May**

**Monday, 3rd Board of Directors Meeting**

**Monday, 17th Chef of the Year Nominee Dinner**

**Compass Group Location TBA 6:30pm.**

**Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> ACF Certification Training, Supervision and Training**

**L.A. Mission College TBD**

**Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> National Restaurant Show, Chicago IL.**

## **June**

**Monday, 7th Board of Directors Meeting, Daniel Drumlake's Home 6:00pm**

**Sunday, 20th Day at the Races, Hollywood Park, 12:00pm**

**Monday, 21<sup>st</sup>, Chef Purveyor Golf Tournament, Braemar Country Club 6:00 am**

## **July**

**Monday, 12th Board of Directors Meeting, Luis Martinez's Home 6:00pm**

**Friday, 16<sup>h</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> ACF National Convention, Orlando Fl.**

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# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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This form and dues/fees structure replaces all previous forms and is valid September 1, 2003 through August 31, 2004

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