We visited another 150 wineries during 2008. As in the previous year, we met many owners, partners, winemakers and staff that had a heart-warming story. This year, both the December and January issues of the Wine Trail Traveler Newsletter will present some of these “chicken soupish” stories, just in time to warm one’s heart during winter’s chills.

Extending a Helping Hand

Donald Coe’s belief in value-added farming has helped turn Black Star Farms into an agricultural destination. This Leelanau Peninsula, Michigan farm goes beyond the vineyard, winery and tasting room. It also offers an inn, cherry orchard, vegetable farm, farm market, creamery, stables, equestrian facility, and trails. Visitors can spend an entire day and then spend the night and awaken to a gourmet breakfast. The true strength of this destination lies in action. Donald extends a helping hand.

John and Anne Hoyt owned and operated the artisan cheese company, Leelanau Cheese Company. They outgrew their facilities and approached Don Coe to inquire about space to age cheese. At the time, Black Star Farms was creating cellars for wine storage. Don embraced the idea wholeheartedly, offering not only to dig a cave for cheese aging for the young couple, but also offering to build a facility for the creamery. Visitors to the tasting room can watch the making of cheese through a large window and sample the cheese with Black Star Farms wines.

An area pear orchard owner approached Don and stated that he had to go out of business since he was only earning four cents a pound for his fruit. Once again Don extended a helping hand. Today, Black Star Farms produces Pear and Its Spirit. The orchard grower ties a bottle over a budding branch in the hopes that a Bartlett pear will grow inside the bottle. When the pear is harvested, the winemaker fills the bottle with pear brandy, made with pears from the same orchard. The pear in the bottle makes a stunning presentation and is the perfect gift for many people. This idea helped the orchard owner keep his farm and make an agricultural living.

These are but two examples of Don’s practice of extending a helping hand.

T.S.

Last Three Rows

Many winemakers make wine and do not farm the vineyards. Likewise, the majority of growers tend the vines but do not make wine; some don’t even have an opportunity to taste the wine made from their grapes. Once in a while you have a winemaker and grower who know each other well and understand each other’s trades. Larry and Kimberly Laurello owners of Laurello Vineyard LLC in Geneva, Ohio source most of their wine grapes from growers in the Grand River AVA of Ohio. One grower they source from is Tim Frania. Tim has been growing grapes for years. He has also dappled in winemaking. The last three rows of his vineyard are his grapes that he uses to make wine. Larry, the winemaker at Laurello always commented on Tim’s wine, “I use to tell him it was good.”

In 2008, Tim was diagnosed with melanoma and passed away in August. His wife, Sheila Frania, and volunteers from the Vintners in Northeast Ohio wine club harvested his eight acres of grapes. The final day of the harvest was emotional for all. Larry wanted to do something special with the three rows of grapes Tim used to make his wine. So he is making wine for Sheila from the grapes from those three rows. Aptly enough, Larry is calling the wine, Last Three Rows. This is a winemaker’s tribute to a grower who went beyond farming to learn more about grapes and winemaking.

T.S.

In This Issue

Extending a Helping Hand

Last Three Rows

Austin’s Red and Austin’s White

Families Creating Together

Wine Trail Traveler: a Winery and Vineyard Virtual Visitor Center
Austin’s Red and Austin’s White

Many people involved in the wine industry today have had previous work experience in other fields. Often one can make a connection between previous work experiences and present work-related duties. This is the case for Grand River Cellars President, Cindy Lindberg. Cindy was a school psychologist at two schools in the Mayfield City School District of Ohio. In that position, Cindy worked with many students, some who had special needs. Students with autism touched her heart, and Cindy wondered what she could do to give back to students in her former career now that she had a new career in the wine business.

The answer came when she and her partners decided to create two wines, Austin’s Red and Austin’s White. One dollar from the sale of each bottle is donated to the Northeast Ohio Autism Group. A contest was held last year for the design of the labels on the bottles. There were fifty entries from children who were diagnosed with autism. Michael, a three-year-old, created the label for the Austin’s White. Anthony, an 11-year-old with autism, created the label for the Austin’s Red. Each year Cindy hopes to have children with autism send entries for the bottle label contest.

At the time of our visit, the winery was sold out of Austin’s Red. In part, this is due to Applebee’s restaurants carrying local wines in many of their restaurants. Several Ohio Applebee’s restaurants carry the Austin’s Red wine. Cindy is making an impact on her past with the present.

Families Creating Together

After visiting numerous wineries of all kinds, we discovered that a number of the wineries have a common theme of parents and children. In some cases, children became interested in the many aspects of the wine industry from helping in the vineyards to working in the winery or tasting room. We would like to take a moment to honor many of those wineries that have a lifestyle that the future generations appreciate.

Balistreri, in Colorado, is owned by John Balistreri, winemaker. His daughter, Julie, also makes wine and deals with the business end of the winery. As we spoke with John and Julie, we became aware of the love and respect for each other. Julie watches out for her father and knows where he is and what he is doing. John’s son, while not involved at the winery, is an artist and professor at Bowling Green University. He provided the sculptures seen in the landscaping.

Cave Spring Cellars located in Jordan, Ontario is a large family-run destination site. The Pennachetti family works together linking the vineyard, winery, tasting room, inn and restaurant together. The Inn on the Twenty offers a lovely ambience and On the Twenty Restaurant offers good food and atmosphere. Cooperation between family members is a key element to their success.

Harry Hepron developed Dove Valley Vineyards and Winery, in Maryland, because he wanted to preserve the land for his children and grandchildren. It is important to Harry to have a legacy for his family. We were delighted to talk with Harry and his daughter, Janel. Everyone in the family pitches in to help in the vineyard, winery and tasting room.

Ferrante Winery & Ristorante, one of Ohio’s largest wineries, began in 1937 with the purchase of 60 acres of land. A restaurant was added in the 1980s. In November 1994, the restaurant was destroyed by a fire.
The Ferrante family came together and rebuilt the facility as it stands now. Today the 4th generation is very involved in the winery. As we sat in the tasting room talking with Mary Jo Ferrante, family members, young and not so young, stopped in to visit and stay awhile. They opened a bottle of wine and enjoyed each other’s company. This Thursday, late morning get-together included three generations of the family. It is as if the winery is their home and visitors are welcome to come and stay. The Ferrante family created a dream winery and restaurant that welcome visitors.

Not far from the Ferrante family in Ohio, the Mazza family, in North East Pennsylvania, has operated Mazza Winery for almost 36 years. Mario Mazza, second generation, is the enologist. Mario’s father and uncle started Mazza Winery in 1973. Today the Mazza family owns two additional wineries, South Shore Wine Company, also in North East, and Mazza Chautauqua Cellars in New York. Mario recommended that we visit South Shore Wine Company, and, there, we met his mother who gave us a guided tour and talked about the work that her husband was doing to renovate the building.

Sometimes family is separated by thousands of miles but still helping each other. Reif Estate Winery, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario is the result of two brothers interested in the wine industry in Canada. Klaus is the 13th generation in winemaking. His uncle, Ewald Reif, came to Canada in 1977. When Klaus and his father visited Uncle Ewald, his father realized that vineyards would do well here. Klaus and his father returned to Germany and ultimately Klaus came back to Canada to help in his uncle’s winery. Today Klaus is the president and winemaker of Reif Estate Winery and his uncle enjoys riding through the vineyards on a small tractor. Many of the large wood barrels are from Klaus’ father’s winery in Germany. Both son and father enjoy each others’ wines even though their wineries are thousands of miles apart.

West Wind Farm Vineyard & Winery located in southwest Virginia is family-owned by Paul and Brenda Hric. Their nephews, David and Jason Manley, are very involved in the winery. The land was in the family for four generations. A desire to find a way to keep the “family farm in the family” resulted in the decision to plant vineyards and build a winery. On tours, Jason is quick to point out that he personally touches every bottle of wine.

Although not a winery, Wine Country Inn in Palisade, Colorado does have 16 acres of grapes. Wines made with their grapes and bearing the Wine Country Inn label are produced by their next door neighbor. The Inn is new on the scene and provides a delightful stay for visitors. Wine Country Inn was built by Jean and Richard Tally. Their daughter Anne is deeply involved with the inn and supportive of her parents and the inn.

Sometimes family is separated by thousands of miles but still helping each other. Reif Estate Winery, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario is the result of two brothers interested in the wine industry in Canada. Klaus is the 13th generation in winemaking. His uncle, Ewald Reif, came to Canada in 1977. When Klaus and his father visited Uncle Ewald, his father realized that vineyards would do well here. Klaus and his father returned to Germany and ultimately Klaus came back to Canada to help in his uncle’s winery. Today Klaus is the president and winemaker of Reif Estate Winery and his uncle enjoys riding through the vineyards on a small tractor. Many of the large wood barrels are from Klaus’ father’s winery in Germany. Both son and father enjoy each others’ wines even though their wineries are thousands of miles apart.

West Wind Farm Vineyard & Winery located in southwest Virginia is family-owned by Paul and Brenda Hric. Their nephews, David and Jason Manley, are very involved in the winery. The land was in the family for four generations. A desire to find a way to keep the “family farm in the family” resulted in the decision to plant vineyards and build a winery. On tours, Jason is quick to point out that he personally touches every bottle of wine.

Although not a winery, Wine Country Inn in Palisade, Colorado does have 16 acres of grapes. Wines made with their grapes and bearing the Wine Country Inn label are produced by their next door neighbor. The Inn is new on the scene and provides a delightful stay for visitors. Wine Country Inn was built by Jean and Richard Tally. Their daughter Anne is deeply involved with the inn and supportive of her parents and the inn.

Sometimes family is separated by thousands of miles but still helping each other. Reif Estate Winery, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario is the result of two brothers interested in the wine industry in Canada. Klaus is the 13th generation in winemaking. His uncle, Ewald Reif, came to Canada in 1977. When Klaus and his father visited Uncle Ewald, his father realized that vineyards would do well here. Klaus and his father returned to Germany and ultimately Klaus came back to Canada to help in his uncle’s winery. Today Klaus is the president and winemaker of Reif Estate Winery and his uncle enjoys riding through the vineyards on a small tractor. Many of the large wood barrels are from Klaus’ father’s winery in Germany. Both son and father enjoy each others’ wines even though their wineries are thousands of miles apart.

West Wind Farm Vineyard & Winery located in southwest Virginia is family-owned by Paul and Brenda Hric. Their nephews, David and Jason Manley, are very involved in the winery. The land was in the family for four generations. A desire to find a way to keep the “family farm in the family” resulted in the decision to plant vineyards and build a winery. On tours, Jason is quick to point out that he personally touches every bottle of wine.

Although not a winery, Wine Country Inn in Palisade, Colorado does have 16 acres of grapes. Wines made with their grapes and bearing the Wine Country Inn label are produced by their next door neighbor. The Inn is new on the scene and provides a delightful stay for visitors. Wine Country Inn was built by Jean and Richard Tally. Their daughter Anne is deeply involved with the inn and supportive of her parents and the inn.

Sometimes family is separated by thousands of miles but still helping each other. Reif Estate Winery, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario is the result of two brothers interested in the wine industry in Canada. Klaus is the 13th generation in winemaking. His uncle, Ewald Reif, came to Canada in 1977. When Klaus and his father visited Uncle Ewald, his father realized that vineyards would do well here. Klaus and his father returned to Germany and ultimately Klaus came back to Canada to help in his uncle’s winery. Today Klaus is the president and winemaker of Reif Estate Winery and his uncle enjoys riding through the vineyards on a small tractor. Many of the large wood barrels are from Klaus’ father’s winery in Germany. Both son and father enjoy each others’ wines even though their wineries are thousands of miles apart.

West Wind Farm Vineyard & Winery located in southwest Virginia is family-owned by Paul and Brenda Hric. Their nephews, David and Jason Manley, are very involved in the winery. The land was in the family for four generations. A desire to find a way to keep the “family farm in the family” resulted in the decision to plant vineyards and build a winery. On tours, Jason is quick to point out that he personally touches every bottle of wine.

Although not a winery, Wine Country Inn in Palisade, Colorado does have 16 acres of grapes. Wines made with their grapes and bearing the Wine Country Inn label are produced by their next door neighbor. The Inn is new on the scene and provides a delightful stay for visitors. Wine Country Inn was built by Jean and Richard Tally. Their daughter Anne is deeply involved with the inn and supportive of her parents and the inn.
Our Winery Partners
Stop by these wineries that advertise with Wine Trail Traveler.

Colorado

Garfield Estates Vineyard and Winery
3572 G Road
Palisade, Colorado 81526

Two Rivers Winery & Chateau
2087 Broadway
Grand Junction, Colorado 81503

Maryland

Dove Valley Vineyards and Winery
645 Harrington Road
Rising Sun, MD 21911

Fiore Winery
3026 Whiteford Road
Pylesville, MD 21132

Michigan

Black Star Farms
10844 E. Revold Rd.
Suttons Bay, Michigan 49682

Chateau Chantal
15900 Rue de Vin
Traverse City, MI 49686

New York

Three Brothers Wineries & Estates
623 Lerch Road,
Geneva, NY 14456

North Carolina

Grove Winery and Vineyard
7360 Brooks Bridge Road
Gibsonville, NC 27249

Ohio

Ferrante Winery
5585 N River Road W (State Rt. 307)
Geneva, Ohio 44041

Grand River Cellars
5750 South Madison Rd. (Route 528)
Madison, Ohio 44057

Oregon

Kramer Vineyards
26830 NW Olson Road
Gaston, OR 97119-8039

Redhawk Winery
2995 Michigan City Lane NW
Salem, Oregon 97304

Pennsylvania

Pickering Winery
Rt. 187 Between Wysox and Rome
Wysox, PA 18854

Virginia

Barrel Oak Winery (check Wine Trail Traveler website for a tasting coupon)
3623 Grove Lane
Delaplane, Virginia 20144

Chateau O’Brien at Northpoint
3238 Rail Stop Road
Markham, VA 22643

Kluge Estate Winery & Vineyards
100 Grand Cru Drive
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902

Pearmund Cellars
6190 Georgetown Road
Broad Run, VA 20137

Veritas Vineyard & Winery
145 Saddleback Farm
Afton, Virginia 22920

The Winery at La Grange
4970 Antioch Road
Haymarket, Virginia 20169
Want to be listed on this page? Call or send an email to Wine Trail Traveler.

Phone: 410-997-8138

e-mail: terry@winetrailtraveler.com