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Vintners adopt county schools

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Paul Franson | Posted: Thursday, October 6, 2011 4:58 pm | (0) Comments

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Aside from the beauty and amenities of our chosen home, we who live in Napa Valley have another rare benefit. The Napa Valley Vintners — and individual vintners — are famously generous.

They donate the proceeds from the Auction Napa Valley to local nonprofits, and this year, the total passes \$100 million.

They also host functions, provide auction events, donate an ocean of wine and plenty more.

It would be impossible to list the donations of the winery and vineyard owners, and some like Lesley Rudd and the Trincherro family try to keep their donations low key.

In addition, many wineries 'adopt' local schools, which need a lot of help in this post-Proposition 13 world. The Napa Valley Vintners and the Napa County Office of Education collaborate on the nationwide Adopt-A-School program.

The goal of the program is to have Vintner members adopt each of the 47 kindergarten to 12th grade public schools including continuations, court schools and the Adult Day School in Napa County.

So far 37 schools have been adopted.

Since 2000, the Vintners have "adopted" Napa High School.

Through this partnership, the Vintners provides support through programs such as AVID, which is designed to prepare students in the academic middle for four-year college eligibility and supporting school spirit through the Tribal Pride program.

Honig Winery in Rutherford adopted Redwood Middle School, and recently donated its tasting fees for a month to the school. The \$4,000 was a big gift to the school.

Michael Honig says that the winery took the step after it donated to earthquake relief in Japan, then realized the great need closer to home.

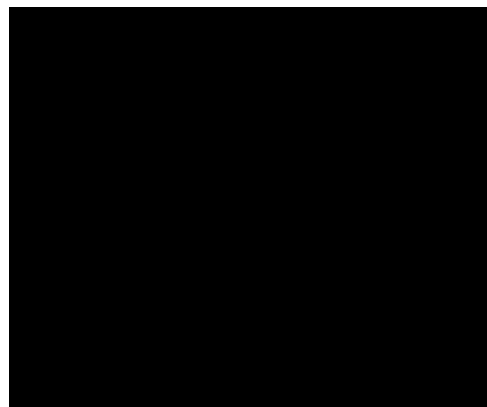
V. Sattui winery hosted a field trip for eighth graders from Robert Louis Stevenson Middle School in St. Helena, which focused on drawing correlations between core subjects — history, social sciences, language arts, mathematics and science — into the real-world workplace situations.



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Saintsbury landscaped the front of its adopted school, Carneros Elementary, now Stone Bridge School.

Anne Steinhauer, the Vintners' community relations manager, notes that wineries that adopt schools generally tend to give school supplies, provide speakers in classrooms, provide program underwriting for field trips or special programming, support campus beautification projects, support organic school gardening, host fundraisers, provide donations for silent auction lots, hire choirs or bands for events, host receptions for teachers and staff offsite, take phone calls to brainstorm ideas or concerns and more.

The Vintners also provide much of the funding for the Napa Valley College Teaching Winery.

For information on the Napa Valley Vintners' Adopt-A-School program, contact Steinhauer at ASSteinhauer@napavintners.com.

Raymond gussies up

Raymond Vineyards has been a solid winery making good wine at good prices, but never tried to show off.

Under new owner Jean-Charles Boisset, that's changing. The old girl has a new image.

They've added an impressive demonstration garden illustrating grape growing, including biodynamic principles. Kids who get bored visiting wineries will love the animals.

Inside are many new programs, an extensive sensory wall where you can sniff aromas wine writers love to recall, blending exercises, a room devoted to Napa's appellations, a room full of Baccarat crystal decanters and chandeliers for high-end wine tasting — and if you join, a fancy private club that'll make you feel like a high roller in Vegas.

All isn't show, however; they're also revamping the vineyards and upgrading the already fine winemaking under new winemaker Stephanie Putnam and consultant Philippe Melka.

Krug planning deli and museum

For decades, V. Sattui has been the only winery in Napa Valley with a deli. That will soon change, as Charles Krug, which is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, has received permission from St. Helena to add a deli.

Wineries in unincorporated parts of the county can't have restaurants.

The deli will be in the 1861 Redwood Cellar, the original winery. The winery will tear down the existing tasting room and move it into the Redwood Cellar.

It is also adding a picnic area and inside lounge.

The Peter Mondavi family, which owns Krug, has lovingly restored in the last few years. It also restor the adjacent 1881 Carriage House, which is used for events.

Mondavi is also considering adding a museum of Napa Valley wine making. Krug is a key part, but Peter Mondavi Jr. says the museum would be about the whole valley's wine history.

Krug is also the only winery in the Valley other than V. Sattui that legally can host weddings, and does.

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