

Lamorinda vintner receives coveted wine competition awards



Photo Vera Kochan

Bill Scanlin proudly holds Deer Hill Vineyards' award winning wines.

By Vera Kochan

Lamorinda Wine Growers Association President Bill Scanlin's Lafayette-based Deer Hill

Vineyards was awarded a Bronze for his 2016 Sangiovese and the highest honor of a Double Gold for his 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon during the

recent San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition.

Deer Hill Vineyards went commercial in 2010 with wines available in Diablo Foods, Total Wine & More and through the vineyard itself. Scanlin explains his road to the awards by saying, "I haven't really entered many competitions lately. As a board (LWGA), we decided that we needed the recognition for our location as we try to pursue American Viticultural Area designation."

The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition was founded in 1983 as the Cloverdale Citrus Fair Wine Competition. It was renamed in 2000, due to a sponsorship agreement with The Chronicle. The location was moved to San Francisco where it became the largest wine competition of American wines in the world. The number of entries grew from 3,800 wines in 2007, to

nearly double that in 2018 with a total number of 6,960 entries from the United States.

Deer Hill Vineyards went through four days of judging by a panel of judges from trade, media, education and hospitality industries. The judges are aware of the category of wine (Pinot Noir priced above \$30), but they know nothing else about the wines that remain blinded until the competition's conclusion. Scores are based on criteria such as bouquet, clarity, ripeness, intensity, delicacy and subtlety. Oftentimes the judges have heated debates as to which wines deserve top honors, because the taste is in the tongue of the beholder. In order to achieve Double Gold status a wine has to receive a gold medal vote from every judge.

Scanlin entered the competition online and was required to submit five bottles of

each entry. Once the bottles were shipped, all that was left to do was wait. The old adage "Good things come to those who wait" couldn't be more appropriate for Deer Hill Vineyards. Being an award winner can change the status of a wine by increasing sales and brand recognition. "It gives me some credibility to expand," Scanlin said, "and to look at my marketing efforts by getting my name out there."

The SFCWC creates an opportunity for all participating wineries to showcase their products at the Public Tasting held at Fort Mason in San Francisco on Feb. 15 from 1 to 4:30 pm. The winners are encouraged to display their plaque awards at their tables.

For more information about Deer Hill Vineyards visit DeerHillVineyards.com or call (925) 200-7676.

A horse walks into a bar...

... continued from Page A1

Sinclair says a comment from a gentleman in his late 80s was truly touching for all of them. "You guys remind me of my late wife! She loved horses so much! She's smiling down from heaven right now!"

Farmyard Darlings, now in their 10th year of business, say they aren't just farmyard-type-of-gals; they are also philanthropic-giving-gals who donate time and products through their Darling iGive Program. They are also part of a select group of Northern California cowgirls called Sisters on Saddles - a group of

cowgirls with a mission to engage with individuals who don't necessarily have access to the horse-world. Berry and Sinclair hope to become more active with this organization, visiting retirement homes and schools soon with their horses, Dixie and Hank. Roundup Saloon owners, Mike and Karen Johnson love

having the cowgirls stop by. "It's always fun to see them riding downtown," says Mike Johnson, "The Roundup is a central place and the horses blend in with the theme of the saloon."

The Farmyard Darlings say they are trying to raise money for hitching posts outside the Roundup.

However, at this point at least for Dixie and Hank, they seem just fine walking on in.

Details on the Farmyard Darlings' philanthropic program can be found on their website <http://www.farmyarddarlings.com/>

Council strikes a more measured note in response to Skinner letter

... continued from Page A3

Burks did not support the final vote to send out a slightly modified draft of the more neutral letter, which passed 4-1.

In comments made after the meeting he indicated his intention as an independent council member to refer the letter to the California Department of Justice, the State Senate Select

Committee on Ethics and the U.S. Department of Justice Public Integrity Section, saying he is doing so on behalf of the constituents, based on what he believes they elected him and the entire council to do - "to uphold and defend values of integrity and transparency."

"I will continue to pursue action that calls Senator Skinner's actions into question and places analysis of potential vio-

lations of ethics and public corruption in the hands of trained investigative/enforcement and specialized legal experts; of which we as a council and our retained city attorney, are not," Burks said, adding that his focus is solely on the senator's action, not the project.

Burks said that, while he has great respect for his colleagues, he was disappointed with the council's reversal. "The

council signaled indignation only two weeks before, expressing strong dissent with the senator's interference ... I took this as a sign of commitment to the expected principles required of us as elected leaders."

Burks continued, "The Constitution of this state grants us, the city and residents of Lafayette, with the extraordinary authority to govern local land use, which in turn will

shape the future of Lafayette and the character of our hometown; I believe this imperative wasn't recognized on Monday night and in my opinion, we let our community down."

Editor's note: Sen. Skinner's office did not respond to a request for comment by the time this paper went to press.

3 Generations Working Hard to Pass Measure L.



"As products of Lafayette schools, and now LAFSD parents, we know first hand the benefits of receiving an outstanding education. Stand with us to protect quality education in Lafayette TK-8 schools. Please VOTE for Lafayette Schools—YES on L!"

— Danielle & Graham

- David Deutscher
Former Springhill Elementary Student
- Graham Deutscher
Former Springhill Elementary Student
- Will Deutscher
Future Springhill Elementary Student
- Katrina Silvani
Former Happy Valley Student
- Danielle Silvani Gallagher
Former Springhill Elementary Student
- Grace & Lauren Gallagher
Springhill Elementary Students



PROTECT GREAT SCHOOLS
www.YesForLafayetteSchools.com

VOTE YES on Measure L by MAIL or at the POLLS on Tuesday, March 3rd.

Measure L includes a **SENIOR CITIZEN EXEMPTION** option and strict **TAXPAYER SAFEGUARDS** to ensure proper spending.

CoCoTax Endorsed by the Contra Costa Taxpayers Association

Paid for by Residents to Protect Lafayette Schools – Yes on L 2020. PO Box 663, Lafayette 94549. FPPC# 1423254.