



March 2011

Hello Friends of Democracy!

Love by the Glass – Love Democracy – Democracy Vineyards will be pouring at Grapes of Taste in Ladysmith as part of the second annual Virginia Wine Week: Love by the Glass. This statewide promotion of Virginia wine runs March 18 through 27 and is sponsored by the Virginia Tourism Office and the Virginia Wine Marketing Board. Throughout the Commonwealth, Virginia wine by the glass will be featured at participating restaurants and wine shops combining the best of culinary traditions with elegant local wines and special tasting menus. Special events throughout the week along with Love by the Glass travel packages give visitors a lot to love about wine travel in Virginia. For additional information, please visit virginiawine.org.

Join General Manager, Jim Turpin on **March 19 from 4 to 8 p.m.** at **Grapes of Taste**, 18196 Jefferson Davis Highway (Rt 1), in Ladysmith, Virginia to celebrate Virginia Wine Week! For more information about this wine tasting, please visit, grapesoftaste.com.

March of Democracy Continues – We are pleased to announce three new retail outlets this month!

- **The Caboose Wine and Cheese**, 104 South Railroad Street, in Ashland. The shop, now in its eleventh year, is located in the historic section of Ashland along the railroad track. We will be pouring there on Friday, July 8. More details to follow. For additional information, please visit, <http://caboosewine.com/>.
- **Westover Market**, 5863 North Washington Boulevard in Arlington. The store has been a grocer tradition in Arlington dating back to the 1940s and now features a beer garden and wide selection of Virginia wines. We will be pouring at the store on Friday, June 3. Details to follow. For additional information, please visit, <http://www.westovermarket.com/>
- **Lovingston IGA**, Tankbark Plaza, just off Rt. 29 in Lovingston. This independent grocery joins its sister store in Nellysford in offering our wines. For more information, call the store at 434-263-8663.

All of our retail outlets can be found on line at our website democracyvineyards.com. You can search the nearest retail locations by zip code.

And remember, you – our customers – are our best sales people. If you cannot find our wines at your favorite wine retailer, just contact us at democracyvineyards@att.net and pass on the name and any additional contact information and we will take it from there.

Upcoming Festivals! – With the spring, our very active festival season begins!

- First up is **The Bloomin' Wine Festival in Winchester** on **April 15 and 16**. This will be our first foray into this event held in conjunction with the annual Apple Blossom Festival.

Located on the downtown pedestrian mall, this festival will feature 18 Virginia wineries in two wine gardens along with craft and food vendors and plenty of musical entertainment. The hours are 3 pm to 10 pm on Friday and 11 am to 6 pm on Saturday. For additional information and advance ticket sales, please visit <http://www.thebloom.com/events/wine-arts-festival.html>.

- At the end of April, we'll be at **The Reston Great Grape Festival** which takes place from 12 to 6 pm on **April 30** and **May 1**. For more information and ticket purchases see <http://www.uncorkthefun.com/reston-virginia/site-info>
- We are pleased to be returning to the **Montpelier Wine Festival** on the grounds of President James Madison's Montpelier estate on **May 7** and **8**. For additional information and advanced ticket sales, please visit, <http://www.montpelierwinefestival.com/index.html>.
- Finally, we will be returning to the 25th Annual **Front Royal Wine and Craft Festival** on **May 14**. For additional information and advance ticket sales, please visit <http://www.wineandcraftfestival.com/index/index.php>

And remember – extra hands are always welcome! If you would like to assist at any of our festivals, do let us know by email to democracyvineyards@att.net. Volunteers receive a bottle of wine for every two hour shift, admission to the festival and a tasting glass.

From the Vineyard and the Orchard -- March also means that spring is fast approaching. We just hope not too fast. Our concern is that the weather not warm up too quickly as this will accelerate the swell of the buds and potentially expose them to frost damage. While we are as tired of winter as everyone else, we need colder temperatures to continue until near the first of April. The pruning of the vines is pretty much complete. The next step will be for Vineyard Manager Ed Martin to tie up the vines [with some assistance from the General Manager if he doesn't get in the way] to position them for the growing season. In May, we will also be planting replacement vines for those that failed to thrive after the 2009 installation (roughly 300 out of over 7000). The apple orchard is pruned and ready to go for the 2011 season.

Tasting Room Update -- Many of you have asked us when we are going to have a tasting room. We are equally anxious to welcome you to our vineyard! Some progress has already been made with the preparation of a site plan and initial tasting room design by our architect, J. Paul Lewis. Structural engineer, Roger Nelson, has completed the perk test and, with our contractor, Ronnie LeNeave, has been outlining placement of the septic field for the tasting room. A small problem arose when they determined that the water table was too high where we'd initially planned to locate the septic field – and you really don't want to flood such a location. They cleverly developed an alternative approach to deploy the field in such a way as to maximize the overall use of the property. Ronnie has also cleared a line of unsightly brush along Rt. 718, providing a more inviting vista of the vineyard. All this is very encouraging but we recognize we've still got a long way to go.

Wineries Unlimited Comes to Richmond -- From March 29 to 31, Democracy Vineyards will be participating in the 35th Annual Wineries Unlimited, the largest east coast trade show for the wine industry. This year marks the first time the event will be held in Richmond and represents a significant accomplishment for the Virginia Wine Industry.

February Festivals Recap – Our two winter festivals proved rewarding. For a first time venture,

the Historic Staunton Festival at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel had a good turnout and promises to break up the dreariness of winter in years to come. We were delighted to see many long time friends and introduce new ones to our wines at Virginia Wine Expo. Over 100 people signed up for the workshop pairing Velvet Revolution and Forum with some of the fabulous confections of Gearharts Chocolates. Velvet Revolution was paired with Criolla, an extra bittersweet chocolate ganache dipped in dark chocolate and Forum accompanied a semi-sweet chocolate ganache with Kirsch surrounding dried Michigan cherries and dipped in dark chocolate. We are grateful to our vineyard manager, Ed Martin, for his help in Staunton and for spending a considerable portion of his weekend in Richmond assisting with set up, staffing and breakdown. Thanks also go to our friend and very good customer, Lee Page, who once again demonstrated his extraordinary sales and marketing skills pouring for most of Saturday at Expo.



Ed Martin and Lee Page staff the Democracy Vineyards booth at Virginia Wine Expo. Democracy Vineyards Velvet Revolution and Forum surround Gearharts Chocolates.

This and that from Susan and Jim – What did you get for Valentine’s Day? Some people give chocolates or those nifty little blue boxes from Tiffany’s. What did the Democracy Vineyards owner receive from her spouse, the general manager? Why the perfect gift -- *The Complete Idiots Guide to Starting a Winery*. Actually chock full of useful insights into the business, the book provided some comforting reassurance that maybe we’re not totally clueless about this venture!

In February, Jim joined the Piedmont Workforce Network as Nelson County representative to this regional board. Part of Virginia’s workforce development system, the Piedmont Workforce Network oversees programs and services intended to provide residents of 16 counties and the city of Charlottesville with the skills needed to meet labor needs of local employers. Jim hopes to bring attention to the employment needs of the over 45 wineries and vineyards located in the central Virginia area.

Cheers! Susan and Jim