



May 2010

Hello Friends of Democracy!

Vintage Virginia Right Around the Corner! Join us for the 29th Annual Vintage Virginia Wine Festival at Bull Run Regional Park on June 5 and 6 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. You can find us in **space D3**. Always a fun event, this festival will feature over 45 Virginia wineries [including us!], music from jazz to funk to R&B, artisans and specialty food vendors and much, much more! One day tickets purchased by June 4th are \$25/pp; \$15/designated drivers and teens; kids 6 -12 \$5; and kids under 6 – Free. For more information, directions and various FAQs go to www.vintagevirginia.com.

Nominate your favorite non-profit! In keeping with its theme, Democracy Vineyards invites attendees at the summer festivals to nominate their best loved charity to be the Democracy Vineyards' Cause of 2010. Participants in the fall festival season will select a winner from the top three nominees. A contribution from Democracy Vineyards will go to the winning charity equal to the votes it receives.

Festival Volunteers Welcome! We can always use a few extra hands to pour at these big festivals. In exchange for a couple hours work, volunteers get admission to the festival, a bottle of Democracy Vineyards wine and festival tasting glass. To get on the volunteer list for Vintage Virginia, let us know your availability by May 26th by shooting us an email to democracyvineyards@att.net. Or let us know if you can help at any of the other summer festivals!

Village View Gold Sells Out in 3 Hours! Our apple wine flew off the shelves at Montpelier and was completely gone by 2 p.m. on the festival's first day. If you're planning to attend Vintage Virginia and would like us to reserve a bottle of Village View Gold for you, please let us know! Reserved bottles not purchased by 3 p.m. Sunday will be made available to the public.

New Outlets! You can now find Democracy Vineyards' wines at over 50 retail outlets around the Commonwealth and District of Columbia. Our latest retailers include the *Very Richmond Gift Shop* [1051 E. Cary Street, 804.644.3613, www.veryrichmondgifts.com] in the James Center in downtown Richmond and *Once Upon a Vine*, 4009 MacArthur Avenue, Richmond, 23227, www.onceuponavine.us. You can also find our wines at *Stone Soup Books* – a bookstore and café with gardens located at 908 West Main St. in Waynesboro, VA 22980. Phone – 540-943-0084. For more information, go to www.stonesoupbooks.net. Democracy wines are in at *George Bowers Grocery*, an independent community grocer located at 614 West Beverley at

Fayette Street in Staunton [www.georgebowersgrocery.com; 540-255-6811] and in *Marshall Farms Corner*, 24109 Constitution Hwy, Unionville, VA 22567 Phone: 540-854-6800, marshallfarms@comcast.net.

Many thanks to all the retail outlets who support Democracy!

Life in the Vineyard – Ed Martin, our vineyard manager, has been tirelessly tying up the vines, now growing steadily to where they reach the second cordon wires. He has also been trunk stripping the vines which removes any lateral growth and forces the plants' energy into upward growth. Ed reports that many of the varieties – especially the Chambourcin, Merlot, Petite Verdot and Petite Manseng – look like they will be heavy fruit producers even at this young stage in their development. The Viognier is also coming along nicely but is later to mature as a vine. Some of the grape clusters will have to be thinned because the vines are still not sturdy enough to support the weight of a full crop. A later-than-expected delivery of our sprayer caused a small degree of anxiety but weather conditions have been such that, despite the delay in initiating our spray schedule, we have not detected any problems in the vines.

Orchard Update – Kevin Drumheller, our orchard manager, reports that the Ginger Gold apple trees may produce an abundance of apples this summer. That's a good thing – given the popularity of Village View Gold. Jim picked enough apples last August to make 50 cases of the wine but he's been instructed by the owner that the aim this year is to pick enough apples to make 150 cases!

We've taken down an acre of Winesap apples next to Rt 718 to clear the land for the future tasting room. And in a nod to the merits of recycling, we sold the trees to a Kentucky company that picked them up and hauled them away to make charcoal nuggets for smoking.

Festival Reports – We had a productive run at the Waynesboro Fly Fishing and Wine Festival in mid-April, although we nearly lost our tent when a gust of wind picked it up and almost tossed it in the South River! Many thanks to Ed Martin and Lisa Wooten for their cheerful and able assistance in pouring and chatting up the customers!

Our wines were also well-received at the Montpelier Wine Festival at the beginning of May. Unum, our new Viognier, proved to be a big hit and, as noted above, we ran through our festival allotment of Village View Gold in short order. We attribute our success in no small part to the entertaining presentations of our dear friend, Liesl Arends, who helped out the entire weekend, and Neil Williamson, otherwise known as “the grumpy marketing guy.”

Democracy On Stage! So, after a long day working the Waynesboro Festival, Jim and I thought it would be fun to attend a staged reading of a play under development at Hamner Theatre just off Rt. 151 in Nelson County. The theatre is one of Democracy Vineyards' best customers and the play in question was called “Red, White, Blue – and Black” – involving the dynamics surrounding an aspiring African American Congressional candidate, his GOP fiancée who wants him to run as a Republican, her

liberal mother, the candidate's Black ex-girlfriend and a Libertarian whom they're cultivating for an endorsement. As we entered the theatre, there on a liquor cart being used as a stage prop was a bottle of Democracy Vineyards Forum! How exciting! Now we know how parents must feel when their kid gets a walk-on in the school play!

Apple Wine Pairing -- Willow Restaurant in Arlington is offering Village View Gold as a dessert wine to be paired with their cheese charcuterie menu. We tried our apple wine with other light appetizers [strawberries and mild cheeses] at a recent wine pairing dinner to benefit the Avon Breast Cancer Walk. The combination turned out quite tasty! Given the low level of sweetness and light character of the wine, Village View is not what you usually expect from a fruit wine.

Festivals to Come – It's never too early to get on your calendar our upcoming summer festivals.

Summer Solstice Festival -- 12 noon to 8 p.m. on June 19 and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on June 20 at the Lazy Days Winery and Amherst Estate Vineyards just south of the intersection of US Highway 29 and Rt. 151 in Amherst, Virginia. Located on the grounds of the old central Virginia livestock market, this festival features wineries from Nelson and Amherst counties, music, food, arts and crafts and more! Tickets are \$10/online and \$15 at the gate. For more information go to www.summersolsticefestival.com.

Save Our Food Summer Festival -- scheduled for July 25, 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. at the Farm Bureau Center Exhibition Hall and lawn at The Meadow Event Park (*a new 63,000-square-foot indoor facility near Kings Dominion*) in Caroline County [13111 Dawn Blvd, Doswell, VA 23047]. The focus of the summer event will feature safe, fresh and locally grown Virginia agriculture products. For more information go to www.saveourfood.org.

Birth of Democracy -- Once again, we'll open the vineyard for our second annual Birth of Democracy Festival. We don't have a tasting room yet but you can join us on site at the farm from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday, August 28 to taste and buy our wines and sample some apple cake made from our very own Ginger Gold apples. Burgers and hot dogs will be available for purchase from the Nelson Ruritans. A blessing of the harvest will follow at 5 p.m. Make a weekend of it by coming down Friday August 27 to enjoy our wine pairing dinner at 7 p.m. at Lovington Café.

Cheers! Susan & Jim
www.democracyvineyards.com