



May 2011

Hello Friends of Democracy!

It's May, it's May, the merry month of May and that means the spring festival season is in full swing with multiple opportunities almost every weekend to enjoy Democracy Vineyards wines! Check out our full schedule through the end of June - set out below - to ensure that you don't miss a chance to grab a bottle!

Upcoming Events, Festivals and Pourings –

Montpelier Wine Festival -- Join us Saturday, **May 7** and Sunday, **May 8** on the grounds of the lifelong home of America's fourth President and "Father of the Constitution", James Madison. Enjoy two full days of distinctive arts and crafts; specialty foods; live music; "cooking with wine" classes; children's entertainment and rides; and tastings from two dozen Virginia wineries. The festival runs from 11am to 6pm on May 7 and from 11am to 5pm on May 8. Tickets are \$15/person if purchased in advance and \$25/person at the gate. For guests ages 12 to 20, tickets cost \$5/person and children under 12 are admitted free of charge. Advanced online ticket sales end at midnight, Wednesday, May 4. For additional information and advanced ticket sales, please visit, <http://montpelierwinefestival.com/tickets.html>

Hope for Virginia Wine Festival – Democracy Vineyards is pleased to have been invited to participate in an event for member of the Virginia House of Delegates Patrick Hope on Saturday, **May 14** from 3 to 7 pm at the Lyon Park Community Center, 414 N. Fillmore Street in Arlington. In addition to wines from several Virginia vintners, the event will feature Virginia made cheeses, arts and crafts, and music. Tickets are \$40 in advance and \$50 at the door. For non-drinkers, admission is \$25/person. Additional sponsorship levels are available. For information or to buy advance tickets on line go to http://www.hopeforvirginia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=650&Itemid=173 or RSVP to 703-486-1010.

We return to the 25th annual **Virginia Wine and Craft Festival** on Saturday, **May 21st** in historic downtown Front Royal from 10 am to 6 pm. For additional information and advance ticket sales, please visit <http://www.wineandcraftfestival.com/index/index.php>. In addition to tastings from 18 Virginia wineries, there will be artists and crafters from all over the east coast offering anything from fine handmade jewelry, hand painted wine glasses, hand crafted musical instruments, pottery to iron work. Wine Tasting admission tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the gate. General Admission to the festival is \$2.00 and children under 6 are free. For up to date information visit www.wineandcraftfestival.com.

June busts out all over beginning with a full round of Democracy Vineyards activities **June 3, 4 and 5** – starting with a wine tasting on Friday, **June 3rd** from 4 to 8 pm at Westover Market at 5863 Washington Blvd. in Arlington Virginia – for more information about this specialty grocer, go to <http://www.westovermarket.com/>. Then, **June 4** and **5** bring the 30th annual Vintage Virginia Wine Festival at Bull Run Park which will take place from 11 am until 6 pm on Saturday and 11 am until 5 pm on Sunday. For more information go to www.vintagevirginia.com.

June 18 – Join DV Manager Jim Turpin at the Olde Dominion Wine Shoppe in historic Occoquan, Virginia, from 1 to 5 pm. The shop is located at 408 Mill Street in Occoquan. For more information call 703-494-1622 or check their website at info@olddominionwine.com.

June 19 – Find us at the 7th annual Manassas Jazz and Wine Festival from 11 am to 6 pm.

June 25 and **26** – We return to our Nelson County neighbors for the Summer Solstice Festival at Lazy Days Winery in Amherst County.

More details on these June events will follow in our June newsletter.

From the Vineyard and Orchard – Spring has fully arrived in Nelson County. The weather is getting warmer and the rain is consistent - if not a bit exciting with the frequent thunder storms that pass by on an almost daily basis. We have been aggressively pursuing our spray schedule (about every ten days) to keep the pests at bay. In addition, we were more diligent in trunk stripping (removing new growth below the cordon wire) this year to enable the plants to concentrate their energy into growth focused on the production of more and better fruit. Shoot thinning is the next task to better manage the canopy to provide more air and light to the fruit as it develops. Finally, we are adding an additional level of catch wires to accommodate this year's expected growth in the vines. Early signs are that we could have a very good crop among all our grape varieties if our luck and hard work hold out. Our vineyard manager, Ed Martin, continues to patiently tutor General Manager Jim Turpin on how to effectively and efficiently work in the vineyard.

And then there's the tale of the blue beehive – You may recall the photo in last month's newsletter of the beehives distributed around our orchard to help pollinate the apple trees. Well, the keeper of the bees was apparently in a hurry to collect his hives and returned to our property one afternoon to carry the hives away – while the worker bees were still out in the orchard doing their thing. Jim arrived on site early the next morning in our blue Ford Escape to continue working in the vineyard and spied several thousand bees congregating in the branches of one of the gala apple trees with nowhere to go. Confounded, Jim felt that the best thing was to ignore the bees, park the car and go on about his business pruning the vines. Mid-morning he returned to the Escape only to find the entire driver's side of the car covered in those same several thousand confused honeybees who thought it resembled a bee-hive. Our neighbor called another beekeeper friend of his who arrived soon thereafter with his own beehives and – like a latter day pied piper – lured this massive swarm of bees away from our car and into their nice, cozy new home. Jim reports it was a rather interesting demonstration of bee

behavior to watch this cloud of insects lift from our car and follow the truck with the beehive and swoop inside to join their new queen. Fickle bees.

Save the date — Birth of Democracy Festival in the Vineyard – Labor Day Weekend, Saturday September 3 – Noon to 4 pm – Blessing of the Harvest - 4:30 pm.

Democracy Doesn't Flinch in the Face of Adversity – Okay, so the weather could've been a little better for the Winchester Apple Blossom Wine Festival in mid-April. Nevertheless, we were delighted to see so many people brave the downpour on Saturday and figured, if they could come out in the rain, by golly, we'd be there to serve them wine! Our unending gratitude goes to our friend and volunteer Liesl Arends who greeted our patrons warmly and smiled enthusiastically through the deluge, wind gusts and multiple tornado warnings.



Reston Great Grapes Festival a Great Success – Many thanks to those who stopped by our tent at the Reston wine festival on April 30 and May 1! And many, many thanks to volunteers Jessica and Bobby Lamb whose cheerful greetings and witty ripostes served to entertain our customers through another drizzly weekend afternoon!



Cheers!

Susan & Jim
www.democracyvineyards.com