



WineVision

WineVision Reaches Into the American Heartland

One of the key goals set before the start of this year's Second Annual Meeting of **WineVision: American Wine in the 21st Century** was to reach out to vintners across the country and expand their involvement.

To that end, the Second Annual Meeting—held this year in July in Rohnert Park in the Sonoma County wine country—was a resounding success, attracting wine trade association executives from Washington, Indiana, Ohio, North Carolina, Texas, Maryland, Missouri and others.

Simon Siegl, president of the American Vintners Association and chair of the WineVision Forum, a group of regional wine trade associations, organized an industry update by the directors of a half-dozen regional groups from throughout the country:

- Donnie Winchel, executive director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association, described her group's wine festivals as "an effective way to introduce wine drinking and experimentation to thousands."
- Rob Boordy of Maryland's Boordy Vineyards (the state does not have a trade director to represent its interests) recounted how the state's wine industry has

"refined its story" amid hostile politics: "We are family businesses, promoting rural tourism, high-value agriculture and land preservation."

- Sally Linton, executive director of the Indiana Wine Grape Council, described how demand is outstripping supply of grapes in her state.

- Tanie Dautlick, executive director of the North Carolina Grape Council, updated local efforts to promote winegrapes as an alternative to tobacco plantings, an idea embraced by Agriculture officials and lawmakers.

- Vicky Scharlau, executive director of the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers, updated efforts of the nation's second largest wine state to establish its own viticulture and enology training program and how it is adopting a voluntary Wine Quality Alliance.

- David Miller, executive director of the Texas Wine & Grape Growers Association, reported

state wineries can now ship direct to consumers, an effort that took years of lobbying.

- Jim Anderson, executive director of the Missouri Wine & Grape Program, said a winery owner has been appointed undersecretary of the State Department of Agriculture. The industry's recently completed strategic plan calls for doubling production and sales. **WV**

The Future is Now!

Author/researcher Amory Lovins unveiled a host of possibilities of living and working in harmony with the earth rather than in mere exploitation of its resources during his keynote address at WineVision's Second Annual Meeting last month. Amory Lovins, co-author of *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*, described a future in which business and environmental interests increasingly overlap, and in which businesses can better satisfy their customers' needs, increase profits, and help solve environmental problems all at the same time. The first of natural capitalism's four interlinked principles is radically increased resource productivity. Lovins advised that implementing just this first principle can significantly improve a firm's bottom line, and can also help finance the other three, which are: redesigning industry on biological models with closed loops and zero waste; shifting the business approach away from merely selling goods to the provision of services (wine, for example, should be sold less as a beverage than as a service of enjoyment, history, art and relationships); and reinvesting in the natural capital that is the basis of future prosperity. **WV**

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Putting the Vision in everyone's sight...

WineVision this summer hired the Napa consulting firm of Freerun Technologies to rebuild and expand the WineVision Web site. The goal is to utilize the power of the Internet to provide better communication, outreach and interaction on the issues being considered by the four task forces—one each on Globalization, American culture, Sustainability and Communication/Coordination and Information.

Plans call for the Web site to be divided into eight subsections.

- 1 **WineVision Plan:** an area to show the history, the organization, charts of objectives and the actual, written strategic plan.
- 2 **Membership:** an area to note sponsors, participants and instruc-



A preliminary mockup of a new winevision.org Home Page

tions on how to participate.

- 3 **Communications Center:** this will house a bulletin board system with agendas, minutes and an archive of information for each of the task forces.
- 4 **Industry Resources:** a collection of reference materials that includes wine community Web links and information on marketplace data, both domestic and global, to help individual companies improve competitiveness. Eventu-

ally, material on a Wine industry trends forecasting system will be housed here for wine community access and periodic review

- 5 **Calendar of events:** a comprehensive listing of trade events.
- 6 **Newsletter:** posting of current and past quarterly WineVision newsletters.
- 7 **Press Releases:** posting and archiving of media materials.
- 8 **Contact:** address, email, etc.

“The clear objective of WineVision’s new Web site is to house in one place all the information everyone involved in the process needs in order to further the objectives and to provide a way of enticing others in the wine community to join this effort,” said Tary Salinger, who has worked on WineVision’s Web site revamping subcommittee. *WV*

The Wine Community Takes Responsibility...

If there is a poster child for the potential of what WineVision’s approach of coordinating parallel efforts of trade organizations, individual companies and professionals—it would be the Sustainability Task Force. Under the leadership of Karen Ross, president of the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG), this band of activists has made the most progress of any task force toward its stated objective—assuring that the wine community is a leader in sustainable farming business practices.

At the Second Annual Meeting, the efforts to establish a statewide voluntary Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices were highlighted by presentations by Ross and Kari Birdseye of the Wine Institute. The Code will promote farming and winemaking practices that are sensitive to the environment, responsive to the interests of society-at-large and are economically feasible in practice.

Community relations is a centerpoint of this effort, as evidenced by the presentation at the July meeting of CAWG’s prototype Guidebook for Establishing Good Neighbor

and Community Relations, a program based on open communication and respect of neighbors with an emphasis on farming practices, facility activities, affordable housing and employee and family education.

The Sustainability Task Force has made protection and enhancement of watershed ecosystems a key component of its efforts in the coming year. The Task Force will be examining programs that help the wine community take a leadership role in this critical area, which is affecting farming operations throughout the United States.

Also presented at the meeting was an extensive discussion of the human resource needs of the American wine community. Professor Liz Thach of Sonoma State University received the task force’s endorsement and funding to an effort that will:

“Sustainability can create a new platform for years to come with which we can speak to consumers, and the topics are almost endless. And there is no question this can help us market because it can differentiate us with unique attributes and help us leverage and harness the world’s positive views of California.”

—Jeff O’Neill, Wine Institute Chairman

- ✱ Identify the best practices in human resource issues, such as employee relations, training, compensation and benefits, staffing and recruiting, and legal issues.
- ✱ Identify programs to support and share best practices
- ✱ Study feasibility of group buying programs to make benefit packages accessible to all sized companies
- ✱ Developing a code of social responsibility. *WV*

Finding Wine's Cultural Imperative in America....

Author Paul Lukacs—whose book *American Vintage, The Rise of American Wine* traces the roots of U.S. winemaking back to Colonial times—challenged the American wine community during the Second Annual Meeting to restore wine's traditional role in America as “the true agent of temperance,” which he said in its original, historical definition meant moderation, or as Ben Franklin put it—“not to dullness; not to elevation.”



“Thomas Jefferson’s and [Nicholas] Longworth’s, and many others after them, rationale was that wine belongs in America because it has a unique cultural role to play. It is not booze...The advocacy of wine as an agent of temperance defined as moderation—dominated virtually all 19th Century attempts to make wine part of American culture...wine was promoted as an alter-

native to spirits—a civilized part of a cultured life, something to be consumed with food at the table, a drink of moderation, family and fellowship.”

Lukacs argued that Prohibition “changed everything because it linked wine by law with all other alcoholic beverages. That is, it made wine booze. And what I want to suggest today is that is the link that must be broken, the association that must be severed, if wine is ever to truly become an integral part of American culture.” **WV**

 **At winevision.org:** A copy of Paul Lukacs speech is online

For Wine, It's A Small World After All...

John Philips, president of **Diageo's** wine group, **Guinness UDV Wines**, told the Second Annual Meeting that the popularity of New World wines globally and the increasing global competition within the American domestic market—which has now become the most valuable, in terms of total revenues, in the world—means it is essential that U.S. producers begin concerted efforts at selling abroad.

“Now’s the time to act and go out and get our fair share,” said Philips, noting that U.S. production share of world winemaking is far greater than its share of international sales.

New World markets will be the center of growth. Philips cited data showing that 28 percent of the \$31 billion growth by 2003 in the existing \$194 billion world wine market will come in North America.

Following Philips’ talk, a panel from the Globalization Task Force discussed its newly published “white paper” calling for “renewed energy and commitment” to a coordinated, industry-wide exporting effort.

The Globalization Task Force also has prepared an “export readiness assessment,” which wineries can use to determine if they are using best practices in exporting as identified by extensive research at the **College of Business at San Francisco State University**.

“The ideas leading to the creation of American wine—technological superiority, quality as well as quantity, diversity, cost-effectiveness—are principles to be conveyed to the global marketplace, both domestically and abroad.”

—Globalization Task Force “White Paper” on American Wine Exports

The Task Force also is seeking to encourage the setting up of exporting workshops, covering both the “why” and “how” aspects. Additionally, the Task Force is recommending that the industry set up “network groups,” where successful wine exporters share their experiences with other members of the local wine community. Lastly, the Task Force recommends that experienced exporters establish a “mentor program” that provides advice and support via face-to-face conversations, email and telephone follow-up. **WV**

 **At winevision.org:** A copy of the Globalization White Paper on Wine Exports.

Post This in Your Tasting Room!

The American Culture Task Force decided during a discussion group at the Second Annual Meeting to begin studying how wineries and regional trade associations communicate with visitors in tasting rooms and during wine festivals. The goal of the review is to identify the most effective messages that induce both increased consumption among existing wine consumers and experimentation among novices as well as among those who, because of lack of knowledge or fear, do not drink wine at all. Besides identifying the “best practices” of wine consumer communications in tasting rooms, wine festivals and at other events where everyone from non-wine drinkers to novices and experienced wine drinkers might be encountered, the task force will write a “wine consumer bill of rights” that attempts to relieve traditional consumer fears about wine drinking—whether it be over mispronunciations or personal taste preferences. “The goal of the ‘bill of rights’ is to let people know they need not fear wine drinking; they need not walk into a tasting room scared to death,” said Mark Chandler, chair of the American Culture Task Force. **WV**

 Email the American Culture Task Force group with ideas on effectively communicating with consumers. **Send emails to mark@lodiwine.com**

WINEVISION:

AMERICAN WINE IN THE 21ST
CENTURY

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FAX BACK THIS PARTICIPATION FORM TODAY!

I am interested in becoming a
WineVisionary! I will join...

___**American Culture:** Make wine an integral
part of American culture

___**Global:** Develop and implement a U.S. wine
positioning strategy that conveys high-quality,
high-value products.

___**Sustainability:** Establish the wine
community in the role of leadership in
sustainable practices—environmentally sound,
socially responsible and economically sound.

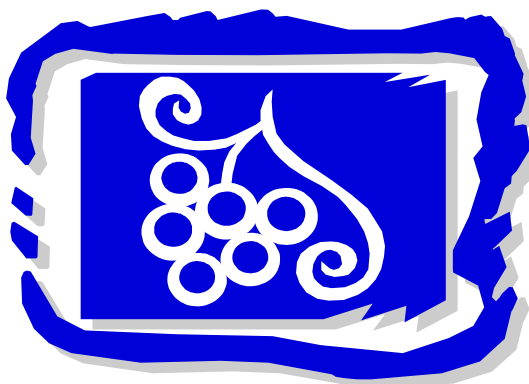
___**Communication and Coordination:**
Improve intra-industry communications,
coordination and information resources

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

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ENDNOTE: Ask what *YOU* can do for WineVision....

WineVision: American Wine in the 21st Century is more process than product. It is an invitation to rise above the confines of our present and past, to look for new horizons amid a world that is changing at an ever-accelerating pace. It is an invitation to leap frog over the short-term problems that sometimes divide the wine community. Perhaps most important, we feel the WineVision strategic planning process offers us a chance to recreate and re-shape one of America's greatest success stories to assure that we can enjoy an increasingly relevant and personal connection to our society's ever-evolving culture. WineVision offers us a huge opportunity to be as big and powerful as we want it to be...



The scope of projects that we expect will be undertaken by WineVision over the next year are truly inspiring. In reality, our wine community has yet to realize the full potential of its vision for the future. Amory Lovins' tales of what forward-thinking businesses can do

to lead the world into its new, sustainable future should become a blueprint of how the American community can respond to the challenges of the 21st Century.

Join us today!

WineVision Steering Committee

Bill Turrentine, Turrentine Wine Brokerage

Paul Dolan, Fetzer Vineyards

Jerry Lohr, J. Lohr Winery

David Freed, UCC Vineyards