

The TRELLIS WIRE

A Botham Vineyards annual publication • Spring 2010

PULLING OUT THE CORKS: SPRING OPEN HOUSE IS MAY 8-9 NEW VINTAGE, BILL ROCK SCULPTURES, LIVE MUSIC & MORE

As winter began to release its grip on our shovel-weary souls this year, we were already thick in the planning for a Spring Open House that promises to be our most entertaining to date. While this event has always been about welcoming spring and celebrating the release of our new wines, we work hard each year to bring something a little something extra to the mix. This year that something extra is, well, really something. We're proud to be hosting the worldwide debut of *Lit Action*, an outdoor sculpture exhibit designed by our friend, world-renowned artist and Madison native, Bill Rock. The sculptures, which resemble bollards on a shipyard pier, are lit from within and serve also as vessels for exhibiting art. Rock has created a series of new illustrations just for the vineyard show that will be displayed within the sculptures. *Lit Action* also has an audio component that delivers exhibit-specific music composed by former Madisonian Steve Marker, of the band, Garbage. And if one Bill Rock exhibit isn't enough to make your spring eyes wide with delight, a second will also open in the tasting room gallery. But a party isn't a party without a little live music ... So, we've invited the O'Bros to bring their mix of original pop and 70s-era tunes to the terrace stage from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, and Hanson Family Jazz will delight our spring souls with a special Mother's Day show on Sunday from noon - 4p.m. Fill a basket with your favorite picnic foods, fill your car with friends and family and come dance away the last of the winter cobwebs with a good glass of wine in the spring sunshine. And if by chance the weather is less than favorable, we'll move the music and the party to the back part of the barn. Make plans now to join us May 8-9, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Of course we'll release select wines from the new vintage paired with the best in Wisconsin cheese and open the winery doors for tours at 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. both days. Adult admission is \$5, children under 12 are free. There's plenty of parking and good, clean country air. Breathe deeply, drink it in and exhale slowly. No stress here. Just fun.

2010 VINTAGE CELEBRATION FEATURES ALFA ROMEO

We're not sure where the years have gone, but it appears we've hit a Vintage Celebration milestone. Yes, Sunday, August 8 is the date for the 15th annual Vintage Celebration, a day when the vineyard grounds are transformed to paddocks overflowing with vintage sports cars, race cars, trucks and touring sedans of every make and era. And, as Alfa Romeo celebrates 100 years of production in 2010, we thought featuring it would be a fitting tribute.

Entries began arriving in late January (a record) and we're expecting an enthusiastic response so if you're interested in registering a pre-1991 vintage beauty in this year's show, please do so well ahead of the July 27 pre-registration deadline. Day-of-show entries, while accepted, are limited by time and space availability. Details and entry forms can be found at bothamvineyards.com or by calling 888.GR8.WINE (478-9463). If you've taken part in the competition previously you'll also receive an entry via the U.S. mail in early May. Primitive Culture will take the terrace stage at noon, there'll be outdoor wine service (the best around), yummy picnic food and more visual entertainment than any one pair of eyes can digest in a summer Sunday afternoon.

We've committed 100 percent of the competition vehicle entry fees and a portion of the day's proceeds to the Iowa County Humane Society. A no-kill shelter located just down the road in Dodgeville, Wisconsin, this compassionate group provides incredible care for hundreds of our animal friends each year.

Please make a point to add this one-of-a-kind summer celebration to your calendar now and join us on Sunday, August 8, 10:30a.m. - 5p.m. It's a great day for making memories.

AND THEN CAME AUGUST

Having cared for this vineyard (it's a love/hate relationship, you know) for more than two decades now it seems like there should be few remaining surprises, but the 2009 growing season proved me wrong. Midway through the summer, I was certain that the crop would be something less than fabulous; mediocre at best. Cool and wet for weeks, it was not exactly the kind of growing season we dream about.

And then came August, and with it some of the most perfect end-of-season growing weather we've ever had. A warm and sunny second week of the month extended six more weeks right through to harvest. The crop was extraordinary and I'm more than thrilled with (and a little astounded by) the resulting wines. Not only is the 2009 Uplands Reserve a bright, outstanding wine, our Millot crop was of the quality we reserve for one thing only; Field III. Yes, Field III has returned (more about that on page 2). And while neither of these wines are yet ready for release, you will be able to sneak a sample of each if you take in a tour during the Spring Open House. We released 2009 Big Stuff Red and Riesling a few weeks ago.

Each is excellent and will be available for sampling and pairing with wonderful selections of Wisconsin cheese at the Open House. Looking to the growing season ahead, the vineyard seems to have wintered well and is in good shape, though I expect a smaller than normal crop due to some pruning adjustments made this spring. Here's to a warm and sunny summer.



GOING SOCIAL

On the subject of social media: Sarah, our resident marketing authority says it's the medium of the present (and the future), so we've jumped on board the social media train and intend to ride as well as we can to technology's next destination. That said, please become a Facebook fan at Botham Vineyards Wines and follow our discussion on Twitter: we're bothamvineyards. We promise engaging conversation, first-to-know news briefs, an occasional video, event updates and bits and peices of whatever else seems relevant. Weigh in if you'd like, or not if you don't and we'll see where the conversation takes us. And while we're on the subject, if you prefer to save a few trees and receive this newsletter electronically, please log on to bothamvineyards.com and opt in. There's a registration link at the bottom of the homepage. We promise not to flood your inbox with clutter; just an occasional engaging email with news you can use.

RICH AND SMOOTH WITH A HINT OF ATTITUDE

In spite of all of our predictions to the contrary, Field III is making a valiant return sometime in 2010, likely late fall. True to form, it was produced in limited quantities and will be available for purchase *only* in the vineyard tasting room. It has finished fermenting and will soon be bottled in a lovely new package that suits its character; rich and smooth with a hint of sedate-but-certain attitude. We'll update its progress and release dates via our social media channels (there's the first good reason to climb on board that social media choo choo) and do our best to shout it from the mountaintops as the big day approaches. Stay tuned.

WHAT COMES NEXT

As I write, the sun sinks beyond the west ridge of the vineyard with a last flash of brilliant orange-and-plum-colored fire and I am struck by this simple gift of peaceful grace in an oh-so-hectic world. It is as a great sigh might be for a battle-weary earth, struggling to be fabulous before surrendering for the night.

And fabulous it is.

Spring has emerged more beautifully this year than in any I can remember. Hues of brand-new green and crisp yellow paint the landscape in combinations only nature could imagine and only at this time of year; here in this precious place. Its affirmations are everywhere. There is new life and a familiar, bittersweet twinge of hope for an extraordinary growing season. From the kitchen window binoculars reveal the downy heads of twin owlets peeking above the rim of the nest. They grow at a bewildering pace, daily testing the readiness of their wings. Soon they will leap from the height of their perch to unfettered freedom. We hold our collective breath and wait for a chance to see it happen.

And so it is with most of what goes on here; the anticipation of what comes next is ever present. If we are lucky enough to find that the future will in some way mimic the past, then the days ahead are sure to be good ones. This life is not without frustration and certainly not without challenge, but its rewards are many, its gifts extraordinary and its potential for goodness beyond measure.

Thank you for supporting this endeavor; for sharing our products and the vineyard experience with friends, and most of all for wanting to be part of what comes next.

-- Peter, Sarah & Mills

APRIL 23
PLEASE DELIVER BY
POST OFFICE:

Local Flavor; National Acclaim.™

est. 1989
BOTHAM VINEYARDS
8180 LANGBERRY RD.
BARNEVELD,
WISCONSIN
53507
BOTHAM VINEYARDS

PRSRRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MADISON, WI
PERMIT NO. 2783