



# *Newsletter of the Wine Specialty Group Association of American Geographers*

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## ***Officers 2004-2005***

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**Vice President:** George F. McCleary, Jr., University of Kansas  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Richard Crooker, Kutztown University  
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## ***Welcome to the Newest AAG Specialty Group***

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the ***Newsletter of the Wine Specialty Group*** (WSG) of the Association of American Geographers, officially known as the Geography of Viticulture and Oenology Specialty Group. Raise a glass of Champagne to toast this auspicious occasion. It has taken a long time, but there is finally a Wine Specialty Group as a result of the AAG Council decision at the 2004 Philadelphia Annual Meeting.



The first official meeting of the specialty group started with a bang with an all star cast of presenters at the 2004 AAG Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. See the article about the convention below. One successful convention does not guarantee a strong specialty group or assure it will continue to exist.

Make sure your friends, interested staff, and students are members. A membership list is at the end of this newsletter, so please look for missing names and send them to the Editor.

## ***Call for Nomination of Officers for 2005***

If you are interested in being an officer of the WSG, please send an email to the Editor indicating the office in which you are interested. Refer to the list above for the available positions.

A Nominations Committee is needed, so if you are not interested in running for office, you can by serving on this important committee.

Please contact the Editor if you are interested in serving. The new officers will take over at the 2005 Denver AAG Annual Meeting and serve for the following year. Broad geographic coverage is



needed and someone from the Chicago area should serve on the Board because Chicago is the site of the 2006 AAG Annual Meeting.

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## **Call for Submissions for the Denver AAG—April 5-9, 2005**

The 2005 AAG Annual Meeting will be held at the Adams Mark Hotel in downtown Denver on April 5-9, 2005. Information and submission details can be found at [www.aag.org](http://www.aag.org).



Abstracts can be submitted online now.

Plan to submit an abstract for a paper session on the geography of wine. If you know of anyone doing research on the topic, please ask them to submit an abstract also.

Workshops, panel session, field trips or any other wine related activities are encouraged. Please register under the Wine Specialty Group and send your confirmation number to the Editor to be included in the WSG program.

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## **Possible Denver AAG Activities**

Several papers sessions are planned, but there are some other exciting possibilities. **Mark Chandler** of the Lodi Grape Growers Association has offered to run a workshop on **Wines from Lodi** with an emphasis on how the terroir of that area produces unique wines.

**George F. McCleary, Jr.** has an idea of holding a **Workshop on French Hybrid grapes** and the resulting wines. These grapes grow in cool and continental locations and are not generally known or appreciated by the general public. Please encourage him to go forward with the idea by telling him how many of you are interested in attending.

Another interesting idea being pursued is a **Wine Tasting Dinner**. This could be the location of the Annual Business Meeting. **How many of you are interested?** Buffalo could be one of the choices for an entrée, but I am leery about Rocky Mountain oysters. **Let's get a list of interested people so we can book a**

**location.** Those of you familiar with Denver should suggest a venue for the event.

It may be overly ambitious, but a pre-convention **Field Trip to the Grape and Wine Region of Colorado** near Grand Junction could be educational and fun. The scenery on the way is outstanding and possibly one of our physical members (any volunteers?) could give a commentary on the geomorphology of the Rocky Mountains on the way. It can be done in one day if we leave at 7 AM and return late at night; but, it would be a better two day trip—let me know your preference, one day or two day. The one day would be much cheaper.

**PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHICH OF THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES INTEREST YOU SO WE CAN PROGRESS WITH THE PLNNING. SEND AN E-MAIL to [doughert@kutztown.edu](mailto:doughert@kutztown.edu).**

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## **Recognition of the WSG in the Science News**

Check the May 29, 2004 issue of **Science News** for information from the WSG session at the 2004 AAG Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Those attending the sessions noticed a guy assiduously taking notes. He is Sid Perkins who wrote an article **Global Vineyard: Can technology take on a warming climate?**



The article recognizes geography as a prime ingredient in the taste of wine—"geography in a bottle." Perkins quotes WSG members

Artimus Keiffer, Percy Dougherty and Greg Jones.

To see the full text of the article, go to <http://www.sciencenews.org/articles/20040529/to.c.asp>. This is good publicity for geography and the WSG.

## **Summary of WSG Activities at the 2004 Philadelphia AAG.**

For those of you who were unfortunate enough to miss the **2004 AAG Wine Symposium on Terroir**, here is a summary of the happenings. Wine and grapes were on the minds and the palates of geographers attending the Association of American Geographers 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA on March 14-19, 2004. Nearly two hundred geographers participated in a Symposium on the importance of "terroir" in wine production.



Terroir is a French term explaining the complex procedure by which a wine gets its aroma, taste, and special traits from the physical geography of the place in which the grapes are grown. Variables such as soil, geology, slope, solar prospect, drainage, and micro-climate have a profound impact on the wine produced from the same grape in different geographic locations.

The concept of terroir includes the belief that an area can produce a certain grape variety much better than other locations, hence the belief by many that Burgundy has the best conditions for growing Pinot Noir. Even if one fails to accept this premise, one can surely agree that Pinot Noir wine from Oregon or the Central Coast of California tastes differently than those produced in Burgundy or up-state New York. Those differences epitomize the concept of terroir.

### **PANEL DISCUSSION**

Is that due to the physical geography or is it caused by other cultural factors? To test this hypothesis, a panel session on **Terroir:**

**Geographical Imprint on Wine or a Marketing Myth?** was organized by **Percy Dougherty**, Kutztown University, to debate the importance of terroir. The participants included **Harm deBlij**, Michigan State University, the author of the popular college text, **The Geography of Wine**; **William Crowley**, Sonoma State University; **Tim Unwin**, Editor, **Journal of Wine Research** and Royal Holloway, London; **Barbara Carmichael**, Wilfrid Laurier University; **Gregory Jones**, Southern Oregon University; and **Wade Currier**, Rowan College.

Harm deBlij opened the panel with a historical account of the concept of terroir and discussed how terroir has been applied regionally in order to defend the concept. William Crowley, on the other hand, argued that terroir is overdone and that modern wine making techniques make environmental factors less important.

Tim Unwin, an avid believer in the concept of terroir, used differences in Burgundian wine to prove the importance of terroir by explaining how wines from different parts of the same vineyard can differ because of the site's physical characteristics. Barbara Carmichael counter argued that terroir is primarily a marketing tool used by wineries to sell their goods, although she agrees that regional differences do exist in wine.

Gregory Jones used research in GIS and climatology to defend the concept of terroir, using examples from the Northwest United States to back up his argument. In addition, Wade Currier, Rowan University, argued that terroir is more important in causing differences in better wines because mass marketed wines often have their terroir distinctiveness erased by blending.

After a spirited discussion, and input from the audience, the tide appeared to be on the side of the environmentalists and favoring the concept of terroir, although most agreed that further research is in order.

### **WORKSHOP ON THE INFLUENCE OF TERROIR ON SIX GRAPE VARIETIES.**

In order to further test the concept of terroir, a workshop titled **A Comparative Tasting of the Influence of "Terroir" on Wine Characteristics** delved deeper into the topic. Six grape varieties were tested. For each grape variety, five wines from different areas of the world were



tasted to determine if participants could pick out regional differences.

Discussion leaders included: **Percy H. Dougherty** (Kutztown University of PA), Chardonnay; **Artimus Keiffer** (Wittenberg University), Sauvignon Blanc; **Robert Sechrist** (Indiana University of PA), Riesling; **George F. McCleary, Jr.**, (University of Kansas), Merlot; **Robert Hutton** (Independent Wine Educator), Cabernet Sauvignon; and, **Greg Jones** (Southern Oregon University), Pinot Noir.

Each presenter introduced the wine variety and described the regional characteristics of each wine. This was followed by a discussion with the fifty people in the seminar. As to be expected, there were die-hard believers in terroir and people who did not believe in the concept. The physical geographers were more prone to be believers, and the cultural geographers less likely, unless the definition of terroir is expanded to include cultural aspects of the wine production. There were probably as many definitions of terroir as there were people in the room.



*Vineyard in Chataneuf du Pape showing terroir*

### **MONTALCINO TERROIR WORKSHOP**

Another workshop investigated the importance of terroir in Super Tuscan wines. Long time American Wine Society participant, Sharron McCarthy of Banfi Vintners, presented a workshop on the Italian equivalent of terroir,

**zonacione**. Sharron served barrel samples from Banfi and described the environment in which the grapes were grown and how the soil, geology and microclimate influences the clones used and the final blend of Banfi wines. How could even the die-hard disbelievers doubt the importance of terroir after such a convincing presentation?



### **PAPER SESSIONS**

Eleven scientific papers on the geography of wine were also presented. Five of the presentations were specifically related to the Symposium theme of terroir. Presentations included: **Percy Dougherty**, Kutztown University of PA, and **Thomas Pennachetti**, Cave Spring Cellars, Ontario, *Importance of Terroir in Riesling Wine Production on the Beamsville Bench of the Niagara Escarpment*; **Tony Shaw**, Brock University, *Developing Sub-appellations for Ontario Vitacultural Regions*; **Gregory Jones**, Southern Oregon University, *Using GIS to Assess the Terroir of an Oregon Vitacultural Region*; and, Robert Hutton, Independent Wine Educator, *Terroir and Botrytis in Producing Sauternes and Tokaji Wines*.

In the general session on the geography of wine, papers included: **Christopher Brown** and **Robert Czerniak**, New Mexico State University, *Wine, Regional Geography, and Student Learning: Where Art Meets Science*; **William Crowley**, Sonoma State University, *Environmental and Land Use Issues for the California Wine Industry*; **Greig Guthey**, University of California-Berkeley, *Wine, Terroir, and Agro-industry in Napa and Sonoma*; **Robert Sechrist**, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, *Pennsylvania Retail Wine Sales, 2000-2002: A Geographic Assessment*; and **George F. McCleary, Jr.**, University of Kansas, *Searching for the Syllabus: Teaching about Wine in Kansas*.

Two other wine papers in another session were **Astrid S. Warhenau**, Western Michigan University, *Wine Tourism Route Development*

and Marketing Strategies in Southwest Michigan; and, **Robert W. Gwynne**, University of Birmingham, *Governance and Agro-industrial Commodity Chains: A Comparison of New Zealand and Chilean Wine Industries*.

For further information on the AAG Wine Specialty Group or to become a member or associate member, please contact [doughert@kutztown.edu](mailto:doughert@kutztown.edu).

## **AWS Convention, Penn State, November 11-13, 2004**

The American Wine Society is having its annual convention at the Penn Stater Hotel in State College, PA on November 11-13<sup>th</sup>. Several geographers are involved in the AWS. Great tastings and fantastic workshops. Contact [www.americanwinesociety.com](http://www.americanwinesociety.com).

## **2004 MEMBERSHIP LIST—POST AAG MEETING**

Please check the following list to make sure you are listed as a member. In addition, look for names of geographers who are missing but who are involved in grape or wine related research or activities. Send their names to the Editor so they can be added to the membership.

|                       |                      |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Andelman, Robert      | Feddema, Johannes    | Marston, Richard      | Scott, Leo                |
| Beach, Sheryl         | Frank, Erica         | Martis, Kenneth       | Scott, Richard            |
| Beach, Tim            | Gade, Daniel         | Martyn, Wade          | Sechrist, Gail            |
| Belbin, Stephen       | Gade, Ole            | Mason, Willard        | Sechrist, Robert          |
| Boyer, John           | Gossette, Frank      | Matthews, Olen Paul   | Senese, Donna             |
| Broom, Karl           | Gritzner, Charles    | Mayda, Chris          | Shambauch-Miller, Michael |
| Brown, Christopher    | Grossman, Joanna     | McCleary, George      | Shaw, Denis               |
| Brown, J. Christopher | Guthy, Greig         | McNeill, Gerald       | Shaw, Tony                |
| Bulman, Teresa        | Gwynne, Robert       | Meyer, Gary           | Shein, Karsten            |
| Butler, Sean          | Hamm, Christina      | Mires, Peter          | Silberfein, Marilyn       |
| Carmichael, Barbara   | Harris, Dan          | Morrison, Joel        | Singh, Harbans            |
| Cox, Jennifer         | Hartmann, Rudi       | Muller, Luke          | Solomon, Madeline         |
| Crooker, Richard      | Hasse, John          | Natunewicz, Ann       | Sommers, Brian            |
| Crowley, Bill         | Heidkamp, C. Patrick | Nellis, M Duane       | Stansfield, Charles       |
| Currier, Wade         | Holtgrieve, Donald   | Newman, James         | Sternberg, Frances        |
| Czerniak, Robert      | Hobbs, Gail          | Okuno, Shii           | Sternberg, Rolf           |
| Davis, David          | Hordon, Robert       | Oldfield, Jonathan    | Unwin, Tim                |
| Davis, Robert         | Huffman, F. Tyler    | Osborn, James         | Viertel, David            |
| Dawson, Andrew        | Hutton, Robert       | Paluzzi, Michael      | Waltman, Bill             |
| Deakin, Ann           | Ibanez, Juana        | Park, Siyoung         | Watson, John              |
| Deaton, Thomas        | Jones, David         | Pavlovic, Zoran "Zok" | Wright, Richard           |
| deBlij, Harm          | Jones, Gregory       | Peake, Jeffrey        | Xu, Jun                   |
| Dempewolf, Jan        | Kaplan, Samantha     | Petersen, Phyllis     | Ye, Yanlin                |
| Denike, Ken           | Keiffer, Artimus     | Pope, Gregory         | Yow, Don                  |
| DeVivo, Michael       | Kelly, Maggi         | Ramspott, Matthew     | Yow, Sonja                |
| Dickenson, John       | Kumler, Mark         | Rees, Peter           | Ziegenfus, Robert         |
| Dougherty, Percy      | LaDochy, Steve       | Richardson, Doug      | Zimolzak, Chet            |
| Eder, Herbert         | Larson, Oscar        | Salisbury, Neil       |                           |
| Edwards, Sandra       | Lash, R Ryan         | Schmidlin, Thomas     |                           |
| Elliott-Fisk, Deborah | Lemaire, Denyse      | Schnell, Steven       |                           |
| Fannun, Janet         | Marion, Bernadette   | Schwarz, David        |                           |

**REMINDER—Send any news items, upcoming meetings, and articles for the NEWSLETTER to the Editor at [doughert@kutztown.edu](mailto:doughert@kutztown.edu). Thanks.**