

HOMETOWN

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Section B

Savoring life's pleasures

Clark County Food and Wine Society enhances minds and palates through food and wine events

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Photos by LD Torres Design

Pairing the pleasures of good food and high-quality wine and the altruistic ventures of supporting education and scholarship was the vision of two Camas men.

This concept was uncorked from the minds of Sanford Jones and Dan Foster, and was incorporated as a public charity in September 2006—dubbed the Clark County Food and Wine Society.

From a group of two, the society has grown to nearly 60 strong.

"We've got all these people who want to enhance their minds and palates with like-minded people," Foster said.

Through wine and food seminars, dining events and day trips, the charity raises funds that are distributed to the community in the form of grants and scholarships with the mission to support excellence and innovation in the culinary and viticulture arts.

Clark College's Culinary Arts Program was the first ever recipient of one of the organization's grants.

Students in the program were treated to a wine appreciation course taught by wine expert Kaye Shattuck. During the course, the aspiring culinary professionals study the nature of wine, frame of reference and exposure to wine.

The mission of the charity is to connect its "members and the general public with the value, creativity and craftsmanship inherently present in the culinary and viticulture arts."

According to Jones, food and wine seemed like a natural fit for the focus of the charity.

"Food is very much a sensual kind of experience," Jones said. "One does not just eat to live. It's something that is of an infinite variety. There are times when you enjoy a good meal without wine. But it turns out, when you combine the two, it enhances the experience for both."

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The First Annual Wine Auction to benefit the scholarship program is slated for Saturday, April 21, from 6 to 9 p.m., at the Pike Art Gallery, in Camas.

Tickets for the event are \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members, plus a bottle of wine for the auction block.

On the food side, chef Peter Eschavario will prepare a decadent spread that will include crab with avocado and vermouth, duck confit with huckleberries, sirloin bruschetta, Walla Walla onion tarts and bleu cheese polenta with honey.

The items will be paired with appropriate wines.

Grammy Award-winning guitarist Doug Smith will perform, with his wife Judy Koch Smith accompanying on the flute.

Miss Clark County 2007 and Miss Greater Vancouver will help host the event, and the Camas High School baseball club will help set up for the live auction, which starts promptly at 7 p.m.

Items on the auction block include such wines as Opus One, Caymus, Chateau Duhart-Milon, Rothschild and Silver Oak, as well as private barrel tastings for groups of 10 at renowned wineries, cooking classes, a Skamania Lodge gift certificate, handcrafted artwork, custom facials, symphony and performing arts tickets.

In addition to donation her advertising expertise and gallery as a location, Liz Pike will donate to the auction a six course lamb dinner personally cooked and served in her home.

Pike said she fancies herself a gourmet chef, poring over recipe collections in Bon Appetit Magazine and Epicurious.com, and frequently throwing dinner parties with four



Members of the Clark County Food and Wine Society do lunch at Cuneo Cellars in Carlton, Ore. Through wine and food seminars, dining events and day trips, the charity raises funds that are distributed to the community in the form of grants and scholarships with the mission to support excellence and innovation in the culinary and viticulture arts.

and six-course meals for her friends.

"What a good organization to belong to," Pike said. "Not only can you enjoy good food and all the social aspects around that, but all the money goes to scholarships for people that are going into viticulture and culinary arts."

Pike attended one of the group's wine tastings in February at the Salut! Camas Bistro. She said she had such a great time that she would join as a dues-paying member.

The number of attendees at the event is limited to 75, and Pike said they are hoping for a sell-out crowd with the added goal of raising at least \$5,000.

Tickets can be obtained at Pike's gallery at 411 N.E. Dallas St., or by calling Foster at 883-2632.

For more information or to make donations to the auction, e-mail auktion@clarkcountyfoodandwine.org.

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Jones and Foster agreed they have marveled at and been overwhelmed by how quickly the club has become its own force. It has grown from their humble concept to a group replete with various committees and a growing need for social events more than once a month to serve the many members.

"We just happen to be the catalyst," Jones said. "The driving thing is the membership and the fact that we're using the money for charity."

All donations to the 501 (c)(3) are tax deductible.

The group's next event is slated for Sunday, May 20—a dinner at Camas Meadows Golf Club. Representatives from Maryhill Winery, of Goldendale, Wash., will present wines for tasting.

For more information about the society or its events, log on to www.clarkcountyfoodandwine.org.



A table during the Clark County Food and Wine Society's holiday party is stocked for the tasting event.



Left: Members of the Clark County Food and Wine Society engage in a wine and food pairing education event at Salut! in downtown Camas. The mission of the charity is to connect its "members and the general public with the value, creativity and craftsmanship inherently present in the culinary and viticulture arts."

Below: During a tour of Cuneo Cellars, visitors learn about the wine-making process.

