

# HAWK WATCH



WINE CLUB

FEBRUARY 2015

What a crazy winter we have had so far! From a snowstorm that dumped snow on Southern California down to elevations below 1,000 feet with temperatures in the mountains dipping to 22 degrees (yes, we had some burst pipes...) to temperatures well into the 90's a few weeks later, we've had a pretty wild ride so far. Fortunately the grapevines themselves are smarter than we give them credit for. Vines at our altitude (3,200+ feet) remained dormant through the warm weather, and now that we have returned to more reasonable temperatures they are back on schedule for Spring bud break. While we are hearing stories of vines beginning to leaf out in Temecula, we (for now) are cautiously optimistic that our vines will stay asleep for a little while longer. This comes with its share of stress though as a late Spring frost could cause considerable damage and crop loss. And so goes the life of a farmer... As my Iowa-born and raised mother would say, "That's farming. Get over it!" So as we anxiously await bud break with one eye firstly affixed on the thermometer, we are very much looking forward to a terrific 2015 growing season. Lots to do in the vineyard in the coming months including pruning the vines, weeding, fixing trellising and irrigation lines, replacing missing or weak vines, and oh yes, making wine! Speaking of wine, this quarter's wine club selections include our brand new 2012 Syrah and 2011 Cabernet Franc. Both wines are tasting really nice right now and they both will continue to evolve in bottle over the next 5-7 years. We are also including a bottle of our 2010 Merlot in each wine club. We took the Merlot off of our tasting menu last year because we felt it needed a little more time in bottle to really soften and start showing off its fruit. It appears that was a good decision! The Merlot has really shaped up and is a very lovely bottle of wine. We hope that you enjoy your wine club selections this quarter and that you have a healthy, prosperous, and delicious 2015! - Mike & Lisa

## Pic of the Quarter

*Even snowmen enjoy Hawk Watch wine! Thanks Diane Chain for the photo!*



## Living Free Animal Sancturay Update

Your donations are making a difference!! We received this letter from Living Free this month thanking us (and you!) for the donations made to their

## Zena & Zoro's Mouser Blog



*Zena and I would like to introduce everyone to the latest addition to our cat family, "Squeaky".*

*Squeaky is a Living Free Animal Sancturay rescue and lives in the house. We get to see him occasionally, but when we do we usually just hiss at him. He apparently spends a vast majority of his time playing with strings and feathers. That's fine for now, but eventually he will need to earn his keep catching mice!*



organization through the sale of our wine "Sequoia" and through the generous monetary donations left by our patrons at the tasting bar. Remember, all "tips" go directly to Living Free and 82% of every dollar donated is used to fund improvements to their facilities, to buy beds, blankets, collapsible emergency carriers, food, collars, medical supplies and other critical items that support their noble cause. In 2014 your contributions helped fund "Give Life Park", a new addition to their cattery building, and a remodeling of an existing building that now accommodates puppies and their mothers. What Living Free Animal Sancturay does is truly magical and Lisa and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your donations and support.



# Wine Club Selections

## Mixed Club



2013 Viognier  
2012 Syrah  
2010 Merlot

## Reds Only

2012 Syrah  
2011 Cabernet Franc  
2010 Merlot

## 2011 Cabernet Franc

For the first time we've been able to achieve a level of softness, roundness and palate weight in our Cab Franc that is difficult to achieve consistently with the varietal. Using just the right blend of French, American and Hungarian oak for barrel aging, and selecting the right toast levels for each was critical. Our new 2011 Cabernet Franc is soft, silky and elegant on the palate with hints of eucalyptus, bell pepper, green olive and spice on the nose. The palate shows lovely, rich notes of cranberry and dark cherry with a hint of cinnamon and black licorice. Limited production - only 48 cases produced

## 2010 Merlot

After taking a hard hit following Miles' line "...I'm not drinking any \*!%&@ Merlot!" in the movie "Sideways" (2004), Merlot is finally on the comeback trail. People are starting to revisit this wonderfully versatile, aromatic, fruit forward variety and rightfully so! Merlot is the winemaker's workhorse adding ripe fruit and soft tannins to most anything it's bended with. That being said, Merlot by itself can be beautiful. Last year we set aside just enough of our 2010 Merlot to offer to our wine club members exclusively this year. After 2 full years in bottle, the wine is really coming into its own. Hefty fruit aromas of red, ripe Bing cherry and mint arrive first followed by a full palate of boysenberry and blackberry, with a subtle hint of coriander and allspice on the finish. - 119 cases produced

## 2013 Viognier

After being in bottle for over a year, our 2013 Viognier has improved dramatically. The fruit has really stepped to the foreground and some of the early edginess of the acidity has mellowed considerably. The flavors and aromas have reached a harmonious balance and the wine is really starting to show its true colors. The nose offers notes of stone fruit, particularly pears with a hint of citrus, fresh herbs and minerals. The palate follows with just the right amount of acid to accentuate the ripe fruit notes of grapefruit, lemon and key lime. - 51 cases produced.

## 2012 Syrah

As many of you know, when we started our winery in 2008 we vowed to focus on Syrah, and to make it our goal to do it better than anyone else. Each year we get closer to that goal and our 2012 Syrah is absolutely a step in the right direction. I have found that in order to really shine, Syrah needs an unusual "cocktail" of oak, and must be aged a little longer than some other varietals. I won't divulge what our oak selections are specifically, but will tell you the extended maturation in neutral barrels allows the Syrah tannins to soften a little and for the wine to become more round, supple and creamy on the palate. The nose displays aromatic notes of black raspberry, dark cherry and brown sugar while the palate follows with silky elements of vanilla, ripe blueberry and a hint of nutmeg. - 122 cases produced

## Valentines Day

### Dark Chocolate Raspberry Mousse



#### Ingredients

1 2/3 cups dark chocolate chips  
2 cups heavy whipping cream  
2 tablespoons powdered sugar  
2 tablespoons raspberry liqueur  
1 gallon-sized food storage bag  
20 2-ounce mini plastic cups  
Fresh berries



Microwave chocolate chips and 1 cup cream in large uncovered, microwave-safe bowl on medium-high for 1 minute or until chips melt. Stir until smooth. Allow to cool to room temperature. Beat remaining 1 cup cream and powdered sugar in a chilled medium bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold whipped cream into chocolate mixture until blended. Fold in liqueur. Fill plastic bag with mousse; seal. Cut 1/2 from corner of bag. Squeeze bag to pipe mousse into cups. Refrigerate 1 hour or until firm. Top with fresh berries. Enjoy with a glass of 2012 Hawk Watch Syrah!