

JANUARY 2018

The Bluffs
Food & Wine
gazette

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A publication of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society

President's Comments

Dear Members,

It looks like you're stuck with me?

Let me start by saying thanks to the club for making me your president. It should be quite an adventure.

As we enter another year, please accept my thanks to everyone for helping to make 2017 an outstanding, and memorable year for the club. Special thanks to Tom Murnan for his tireless efforts over the past two years. Trust me when I say that Tom is the heartbeat of the club. Let us also recognize the entire board. They have put a lot of time and effort into making the Council Bluffs branch one of the very best branches in the country. I am inspired and take great pride in the work and dedication of our current board members.

I would also like to point out that the success of the club is not the result of a few people. We all have a part, that together makes our organization great.

Jill and I joined the club in 2015. Our goal at that time was just to learn something about wine, and how to pair it with different foods. Since that time we have realized the more we learn about wine, the less we know. We have discovered, the best part about joining, and we never thought about it at the time, is that we would end up with so many new friendships inside the club, that would continue on outside of the club. For both of these reasons we feel lucky to have found this branch.

There are four areas I would like to emphasize for this upcoming year. They are unity, support, growth, and fun.

UNITY: Strength is in numbers, and working together to promote the goals of IWFS-CB will result in a stronger club.

SUPPORT: Let us support each other. As we do this our organization will only become stronger.

GROWTH: Let us put an emphasis on steadily growing our membership. Our goal should be to attract future generations of wine enthusiasts, while retaining our present membership.

FUN: When it is fun the people will come. If you have seen Tom Murnan in a jockey outfit you know what I am talking about.

If anyone ever has questions, comments, ideas, or concerns please feel free to contact me. I am always available.

I will leave you with the quote below. This is how I feel after attempting to be serious.

Let's make 2018 another memorable year.

Cheers,

"He may look like an idiot and talk like an idiot but don't let that fool you. He really is an idiot."

-Groucho Marx

Cover photo: Phillips Seafood restaurant iconic Chesapeake Bay, Baltimore, MD.
Crab wall art inside the restaurant. Photo taken by Tom Murnan.



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Editor's Corner

Let's all welcome our new President, Joe Goldstein. Joe kinda grows on you. He has a wry sense of humor, which you noticed in his first President's Comments above. A good example was how he looked up funny details about his and Todd Lemke's birthday at the Birthday Bash event last March. Or when he told us the joke about the blind bank robber who had to ask the teller how to get out after the robbery. Welcome Mr. President.

We returned to the Council Bluffs Country Club in on November 17th to the culinary ministrations of Chef Jeremy Buthe, one of the top chefs in the Council Bluffs area. Being the Fall season, Jeremy crafted an Autumn Harvest Wine Dinner. Our event producers, the Schierbrocks and Forristalls, were able to pull a lot of the wines served from the Branch Cellar.

If you haven't notices, we have some pretty darn good wines aging in our Branch cellar, and we are slowly building it up. Much of the credit for this is due to Patti Hipple, our cellar mistress, who scours the internet looking for great wine at low prices, a time consuming job. The cellar is a great benefit of membership, and so is this Gazette (if I may toot my own horn). Out of the IWFS Americas Inc., most do not boast of a Branch cellar. Not only that, but we have one of the finest newsletters in the country, bringing you a review of our past events as well as some wine education. Many thanks to Omaha Magazine and Todd & Sandy Lemke who generously allow us the use of their graphic artists to make this Gazette look so professional.

With the January issue, I am starting a series on the October 2017 IWFS Great Weekend in Baltimore, Maryland. Just a weekend, it nevertheless had a powerhouse of a wine lineup, featuring a Madeira Tasting, a Burgundy Tasting and a Bordeaux Tasting. If you participated, the series will function as an aide memoire, and if you were unable to attend, you can see what all the fuss was about. If you have never been to an IWFS Festival or Great Weekend, you should definitely attend sometime in the near future.

Tom Murnan

"Men are like a fine wine. They all start out like grapes, and it is our job to stomp on them and keep them in the dark until they mature into something you'd want to have dinner with."

-Female Author Unknown





Event Report

AUTUMN HARVEST WINE DINNER AT THE COUNCIL BLUFFS COUNTRY CLUB

Written By Tom Murnan

YOU CAN ALWAYS COUNT on a quality meal when Chef Jeremy Buthe is heading up the kitchen. Our Autumn themed dinner was no exception, with many autumnal touches, such as having venison during deer season, wild rice with five grains, squash soup, sweet potato pancake and cranberry apple crisp. Our event producers Tom & Jeanette Schierbrock and Diane & Gary Forristall did well to pick the Council Bluffs Country Club, where the Schierbrocks are members. Many of the wines came from our excellent and growing Branch cellar, part of your membership benefit. Patti Hipple helped in the selection of the wines. We had 35 people sign up, which included 6 guests and 2 no-shows.

We started in the alcove by the front door with some interesting hors d'oeuvres. **Belgian Endive, Pear, Prosciutto and Roquefort Cheese** was brought out first. It was a nice accompaniment with the Non Vintage **Roederer Estate Brut** sparkler from the Anderson Valley in Mendocino, CA, always a good tippie. I thought the endive arrangement light and refreshing, and found myself thinking this would be a do-able appetizer for one of my home events. Red and white Belgian endive was used. A relish of pear and prosciutto, some candied walnuts and blue cheese were added. A pair of red wines were also available for quaffing. We had the Gamay based **2015 Duboeuf Fleurie La Madone Beaujolais** and a **2015 Schug Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir**. Georges Duboeuf is the king of Beaujolais, and the offering, Fleurie, is one of the best Village designated Beaujolais. Schug is a winery established in 1980 in the Sonoma portion of the Carneros region and specializes in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Both were nice, user friendly low tannin wines. Next, the **Sweet Potato Pancake with Lobster Crème Fraiche and Chipolte Maple Syrup** was passed around. I was expecting a heavy pancake, but it was in fact a light, albeit a bit sticky since the syrup was drizzled on top,

finger food. The maple syrup flavor tended to dominate over the delicate lobster meat. These were just quibbles because it was a successful and interesting appetizer that went better with the bubbly than the reds due to the sweetness of the syrup that fights the tannins in red wine.

We were called to the dining area and to our assigned seats. Jeanette Schierbrock made the table centerpieces which emphasized our autumn theme with orange and brown colors and colorful leaves. Our soup course presented **Curried Butternut Squash Bisque with Pumpernickel** bread. The pumpernickel was not just a few croutons of that type bread floating on top, but a hollowed out, rounded bowl made of pumpernickel. The squash was simply made by simmering it in chicken stock, with a little curry powder and cream added at the end. The consistency of the soup was quite thick, but it moistened the sides of the bowl to provide for some good eating. The curry was quite mild, as was the squash flavor. This served to enhance the **2013 Gran Moraine Chardonnay Yamhill-Carlton** rather than clash with it. The wine is part of the Jackson Family Wines (JFW) portfolio, and a Spire Collection designation. Yamhill-Carlton is near the Willamette Valley in Oregon. The Spire Collection is the best of the best for the JFW. I immediately noticed the taste of oak and apples, but it was a Burgundian styled, minerally type of wine that I thought was just gorgeous, and I am not a big Chardonnay fan. A delicious match.

Oven Roasted Cornish Game Hen with 5 Grain Wild Rice and Wild Mushroom Supreme Sauce was next. The hen was marinated in a rosemary citrus mix and oven roasted until crispy. This was sitting over a 5 grain blend of quinoa, barley, rice, brown rice and wild rice. My hen was expertly done, moist and supple, barely clinging to the bone. Sauce Suprême is a staple of French sauciers. Traditionally, this sauce is made from a velouté sauce (a roux sauce or flour and butter cooked slowly, made with a meat stock - in

the case of suprême, a chicken stock), then reduced with heavy cream or crème fraîche. Mushrooms were added which made for an inspired match of sauce and fowl. Spaghetti squash topped the bird. Savory and delicious. Our **2014 Tongue & Groove "Cabal Vineyard" Pinot Noir** hails from Waipara Valley, NZ. Besides Sauvignon Blanc, New Zealand is also known for great Pinot Noirs. This one was a good match, nicely balanced with earthy and chalky notes.

Our Main Course was **Beef and Venison Medallions with Orange, Ginger and Carrot Coulis, Burgundy Veal Demi-Glace and Cauliflower Potato Puree**. Tom Schierbrock got up to speak of the course, saying they couldn't decide whether to do beef or venison, so it was decided to try both! Our meats were placed atop what looked like mashed potatoes, but had the addition of cauliflower puree, making for a more interesting starch. The ginger/carrot/orange seemed to go better with the veal, while the rich veal/wine demi-glace was perfect with the beef. Looking at the plate in the afternoon, Chef Buthe thought the presentation needed a bit of green on the plate, so he made a Green Goddess Sauce out of parsley, spinach, chives, water and olive oil. The venison was sourced locally but was not excessively gamey. Low fat as one would expect, it had a lightly earthy flavor. The beef was quite tender and delicious. We had a duo of wines to compare with the duo of meats. A **2012 Andrew Will Winery Two Blondes, Yakima Valley, Bordeaux Red Blend** from Washington State was compared to the 2011 Wine and Soul Douro Pintas Character, Portugal Red Blend. The Bordeaux blend was supple, well balanced with low tannins, made from 50% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 20% Cab Franc. The Portuguese wine I knew was going to be outstanding. Anyone considering going on the IWFS Festival Douro Cruise would be sampling wines as good as what we had here as the quality of Portuguese wines, and especially Douro River wines, has dramatically improved in the past few years. I actually met the winemaker when Mary and I went to Portugal in 2012.

Sandra Tavares da Silva, who owns Wine & Soul (W&S) with her husband **Jorg Serôdio Borges**, and is a wine maker herself, guided us through her wines at Restaurant DOC right on the Douro River. W&S makes a full range of wines, from Branco (white) to Tinto (red) still wines as well as Port. The top wine at W&S is Pintas, and I seem to recall that their first vineyard it was named after their dog, Spot (Pintas). We tried a 2009 Pintas on our trip. Our wine tonight was a 2011 Pintas Character, a secondary (and much cheaper) bottling, like a second label that many wineries utilize. Pintas Character

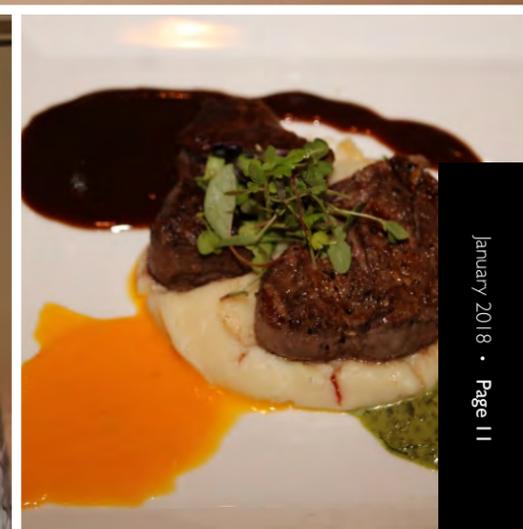


means that it is like Pintas, the primary wine. The wine notes that we were provided on the back of our tableside menu stated there were 30 different varieties in the bottling. We actually discussed this with Sandra at our Portuguese luncheon. The old timers in Portugal would plant numerous varieties in a vineyard as a hedge against disease. If one variety succumbed, there would be others that might not. This old method is not used so much anymore. I thought our Pintas Character wine was a big and bold wine that tamed the venison, but was also great with the steak. My favorite red of the evening.

The Finale was Cranberry Apple Crisp with Oatmeal Walnut Streusel. Basically an apple and cranberry crisp with brown sugar, butter and toasted walnuts, it had a vanilla bean ice cream to the side with a mint leaf stuck like a feather overall. Somebody asked, and Chef Jeremy agreed to provide us with the recipe and he agreed. A **Yalumba Museum Reserve Muscat NV** was our sticky. The color, a dark brown, does not indicate a bad wine if it is as sweet as this wine was. My first impression was raisins. It was like the professionals notes describe: hedonistic.

Many thanks to Jeanette, Tom, Gary and Diane for hosting this event. Thanks as well to Chef Jeremy Buthe and his staff: assistant Chef Joe Kiaaina, Ronnie Ledbetter, Jeremy's wife Kim, and server Kamry.





Recipe:

CRANBERRY APPLE CRISP WITH OATMEAL WALNUT STREUSEL

*Written by Chef Jeremy Buthe, Council
Bluffs Country Club*

For the cranberry apple crisp

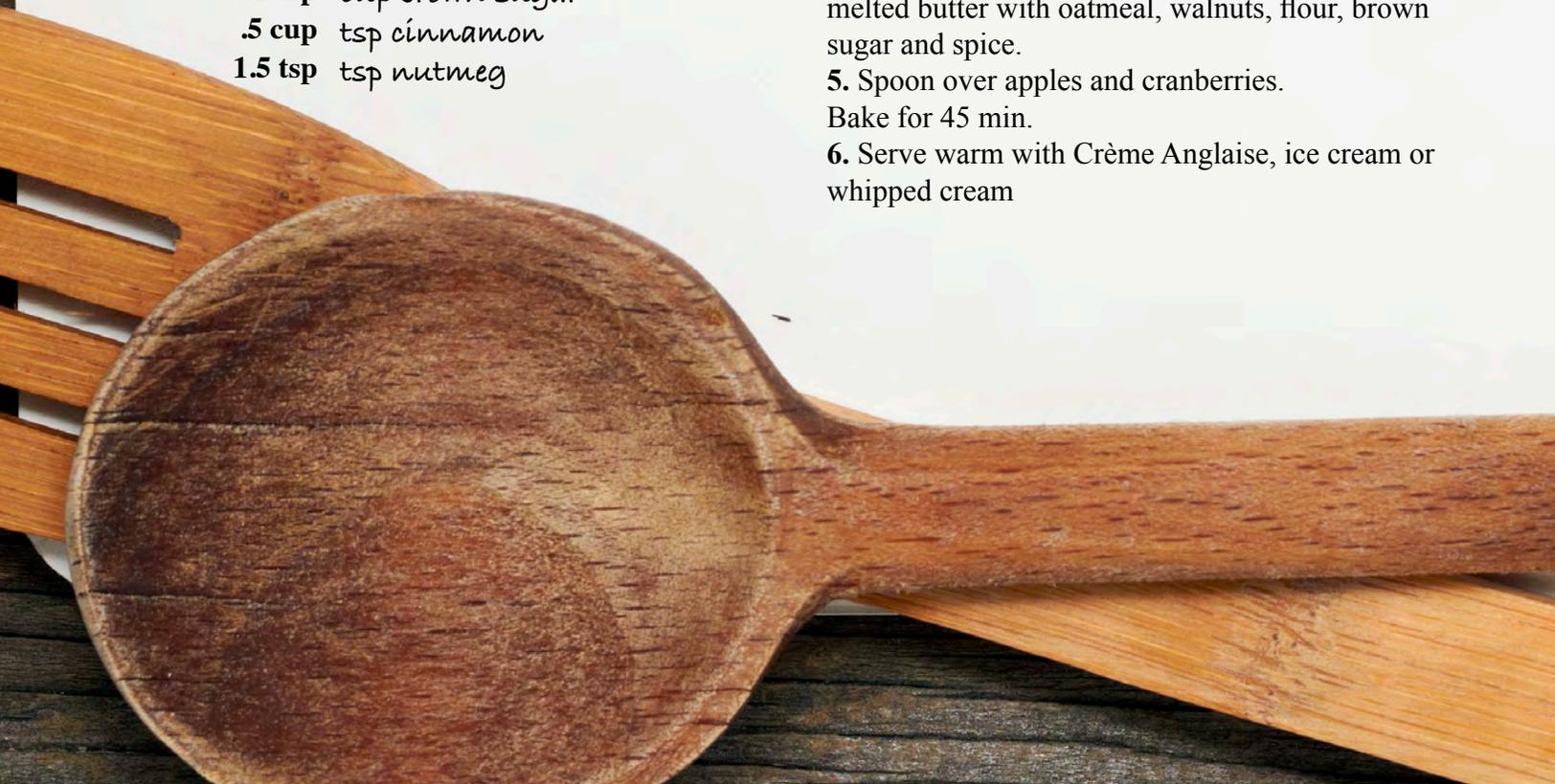
- 1.5 cups red delicious apples, peeled & chopped
- 1.5 cups granny smith apples, peeled & chopped
- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 2 tsp AP flour
- 1 cup sugar
- pinch of cinnamon
- splash of amaretto

For the topping

- .5 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1.5 cups oats
- .75 cup chopped walnuts
- .5 cup AP flour
- 1 tsp cup brown sugar
- .5 cup tsp cinnamon
- 1.5 tsp tsp nutmeg

Procedure

1. Preheat oven to 350°
2. Combine apples, cranberries and flour, toss to coat.
3. Add sugar and mix. Spoon mixture into a 2 quart casserole dish and set aside.
4. Melt butter in a large microwave safe bowl. Mix melted butter with oatmeal, walnuts, flour, brown sugar and spice.
5. Spoon over apples and cranberries. Bake for 45 min.
6. Serve warm with Crème Anglaise, ice cream or whipped cream



IWFS Baltimore Great Wine Weekend:

PHILLIPS SEAFOOD RESTAURANT FRIDAY 10/12/2017

Written by Tom Murnan | Photos by Tom Murnan and Wayne Markus

I WAS EXCITED ABOUT THE IWFS Baltimore Great Wine Weekend. An incredibly strong wine lineup was promoted. There would be an old Madeira tasting featuring some 19th Century wines. A unique wine that can live two hundred years or more, they are incredibly complex and interesting. Then there would be a Burgundy tasting of all Grand Cru wines from Maison Louis Latour. We would end with a vertical line up of Bordeaux from Château Pontet-Canet. With both the Burgundy and Bordeaux dinners, the proprietors would be there. But the icing on the cake would be the appearance of Robert Parker Jr., THE Robert Parker, at the Bordeaux event.

But first, on Friday evening, we were going to have a bit of fun eating world renowned Chesapeake crabs, locally caught, using our bare hands. I arrived at Baltimore Washington International airport noon-ish, and Ubered it to the stylish Four Seasons Hotel right in the historic downtown Baltimore harbor area. The whole downtown has been renovated, repurposing the old factory and industrial areas. It is quite a stylish area now, attracting tourists and visitors. I grabbed a crab sandwich at Loch Bar, around the corner from the hotel, and took off in the drizzle to see the sights. There are about six harbor slots, the majority being used for historic ships, and world class aquarium. There is a Coast Guard Cutter, a submarine, the USS Constellation and more. I opted for the Constellation. In the back of my mind, I was thinking the USS Constitution was the only tall ship left from the original six authorized by Congress in around 1797, but it had a sister frigate named the Constellation that had been decommissioned. Once aboard I discovered this Constellation was the last wooden ship built just before the Civil War in 1854. You wouldn't want to be a tall seaman in those days as you would hit your head on the deck beams at about 6 feet. The most common injury in a sea battle then was to get killed or wounded by slivers.

It was soon time for dinner, and after greeting many of the hundred participants, we boarded a bus for the five block drive. Friday night traffic was so snarled that this took about 20 or more minutes. The Phillips Seafood Restaurant has been a Baltimore Inner Harbor tradition since 1956. Before that, about a century ago, the Phillips family had a seafood processing plant on Hoopers Island, where the family prepared wild crabs, oysters and fish for Baltimore restaurants and fish mongers.

Once in our private room, we started with Maryland wines. We tried a **2016 Boordy Albariño** which has been winning local wine competitions, but received the gold medal at the 2017 San Francisco International Wine Competition. The Albariño grape does well in Maryland, and the Boordy is 100% Albariño. Our other Maryland wine was a red. The **2014 Black Ankle Rolling Hills** consists of 46% Cabernet

Sauvignon, 26% Merlot and other Bordeaux varietals. Interesting and enjoyable.

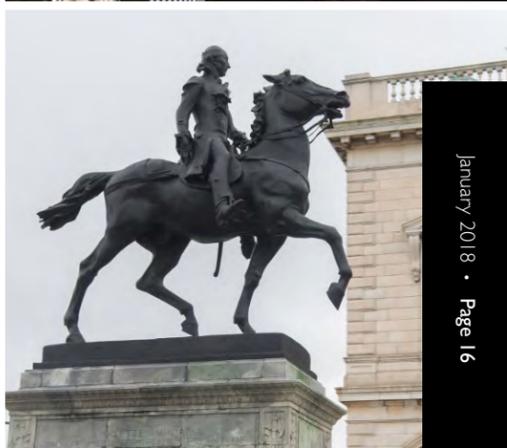
Maryland's geography and mild climate has always been considered as favorable for grape growing, especially Bordeaux varietals, but since colonial times has not made great wine. However, with modern technology, improvements in enology are noticeable and Maryland wines have been steadily improving. The two best areas are around the Chesapeake Bay and in central Maryland, near the Catoctin Mountains. The April 2017 Wine Enthusiast stated that "the Maryland wine industry is ready for prime time."

After munching on a few appetizers, we were free to sit with whomever we chose. Pre-warned in an advanced video *Eatin' Crabs Chesapeake Style* that every attendee received before the event, we all knew this was a messy affair that required the use of hands... and bibs! Most everyone donned a plastic bib to protect from the sure-to-come spatter as they wrestled with the crab to remove its shell. This was not a fancy event with fine china and sterling utensils. Brown paper was rolled out to cover the table top, and a brown paper bag full of cooked crabs was unceremoniously dumped in the center. But first, you grabbed a plate or plates to secure your sides. Served cafeteria style, you had your choice of unlimited cobs of corn, shrimp, baked potato or potato salad and vegetable salad. Small wooden mallets were provided to crack the crab should you need them. Then the wrestling match began, trying to free the meat from its crustacean shell. I was sitting with Brian Findlay and his wife Mary Thomas from Niagra, Ontario. Brian had the drill down pat and taught his table mates Wayne & Karen Markus, and myself, all land lubbers from Omaha, how to crack crabs. No drawn butter was available for these crabs. Instead, a powdered seasoning comprised of paprika, red pepper, salt and other proprietary ingredients (all a closely guarded secret) was available. Fortunately, everyone was allowed just one crab cake where all the work of cracking had been done already.

The Maryland wines were quickly dispatched even before the quaffing was over. Thereafter we had the restaurant's wines, which consisted of Sycamore Lane : Pinot Grigio, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay. Workhorse wines, they were nothing to get excited about.

Dessert was brought table side and consisted of Strawberry Shortcake, but watermelon slices were also available. After this very messy business, we washed up some headed back to the Four Seasons on the bus for a quicker ride home than earlier, while some chose to stroll the five blocks back. Tomorrow was a big wine day: A Madeira tasting of high alcohol wines, and a Burgundy tasting in the evening, and that's not even counting lunch. Many, however, chose to socialize at the hotel bars.







IWFS Baltimore Great Wine Weekend:

CRACKING MARYLAND CRABS FRIDAY 10/12/2017

Written by Tom Murnan | Photos by Tom Murnan

ALL PARTICIPANTS to the Baltimore Great Weekend were mailed a video entitled *Eatin' Crabs Chesapeake Style*. This was an entertaining Maryland Public Television production that served as a good introduction to the local crab industry and spotlighted hard to find crab houses, legendary spice recipes and the Phillips Family memories of starting their iconic crab restaurant. We followed crab connoisseur Whitey Schmidt as he walked us through catching, steaming, eating and how to crack crabs. About all I really knew after watching the video was that you should not pulverize the shell into little pieces with your mallet. Instead, lightly tap on them to just crack the crustacean armor. Other than that, no particular advice was given except to say that everyone does it differently. Luckily, I was sitting with Brian Findlay from the Niagara Branch who knew the exact sequence of what to do.

My impression? Cracking the crabs is akin to removing the shell of a Snow Crab: a lot of work for little, albeit delicious, reward. Perhaps it is heresy to purists, but I'll take crab cakes, thank you, where all the work has been done already, and you are eating pure reward. No muss, no fuss.



1
GRASP THE CRAB AND HOLD HIM UNDERSIDE UP. BREAK OFF CLAWS AND KEEP.



2
REMOVE THE "KEY" WITH A KNIFE POINT.



3
BREAK OFF THE POINT BETWEEN THE LEGS BOTH SIDES. TWIST OFF THE SMALLER MIDDLE LEGS.



4
REMOVE THE SPONGY GILLS (EDIBLE BUT NOT TASTY).



5
BREAK IN HALF LENGTHWISE USING TWO HANDS.



6
REMOVE THE CRAB MEAT. CRACK CLAWS AND REMOVE MEAT. ENJOY!



UPCOMING COUNCIL BLUFFS BRANCH EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars!

JAN. 20  **THE DOWN TOWN CLUB**
 Speak Easy Theme
 Producer: Todd Lemke

MAR. 10  **TIMBER WOOD FIRE BISTRO**
 Producers: Jill & Joe Goldstein, Stacie Matz

FEB. 11  **BLOCK 16**
 Mardi Gras theme
 Producers: Jill Panzer & Michelle Hyder

APRIL 29  **V. MERTZ**
 Producers: Patti & Steve Hipple

HOSTING AN EVENT?

Let us know when, where and a little bit about what's going on!
 We would love to include YOUR event on the calendar!
 email details to:
iwfs.councilbluffs@yahoo.com




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The mission of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society is to develop a profound understanding and appreciation of both wine and the culinary arts and to enjoy this experience in the camaraderie of friends. Our task is to educate our membership about wine and to develop the skill of matching wine with food. We strive to drink high quality wines and to experience an eclectic array of foods prepared by the area's top chefs.

The International Wine & Food Society of London, England **Council Bluffs, Iowa Branch - Executive Committee**

President: Joe Goldstein
 Vice President: Jill Goldstein
 Treasurer/Membership: Diane Forristall
 Secretary: Connie & Gary Martin
 Cellar Master: John Fischer & Patti Hipple
 Gazette & Photos: Tom Murnan

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KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please notify Club Membership Chairman Diane Forristall at DIANE@FORRISTALL.US to let her know if you are interested in hosting an IWFS event.

To access past Gazettes and other features about our Branch, go to the international website following this link:
www.iwfs.org/americas/council-bluffs

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