

AUGUST 2021

The Bluffs Food & Wine gazette

EVENT REPORT:
A SUMMER PICNIC AT THE
MARTIN LAKE HOUSE



ALSO INSIDE

Recipe: Chef Jared Clarke's Wild Mushroom & Arugula Bruschetta

Recipe: Chef Jared Clarke's Lobster & Tarragon Bruschetta

Recipe: Lillian Burbach's Rhubarb Coffee Cake



courtesy of hugel.com

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Greetings to all;

We Need You!

As we strive to offer interesting and informative events for members, we are always looking for new ideas. And, YOU are an invaluable source of new ideas.

So, if you have an interest in a particular type of wine or wine region or
A venue that you have been wanting to try or
a fun group event, please let us know.

We are looking for your ideas and suggestions. Please feel free to talk with a Board member or myself about your ideas. All good ideas begin with only a small snippet of inspiration. Well, and maybe a good glass of wine.

Be safe and be well.

Connie

Connie Martin

Cover Photo: A glass of Château Guiraud Sauternes at sunset, Martin cabin.
The gold matches! Photo by Bob Kossow

“Wine is life.”
— Petronius, Roman Writer

EDITOR'S

CORNER

Now, have **Connie and Gary Martin** made great improvements to their lakeside /riverside cabin. A brand new metal building with sidewalls high enough for two stories and two living quarters has arisen from nothing. They share the building with their son, Gary Jr. and his wife Kathy. There is tons of room, a huge kitchen and family room, and the furniture and other appointments are gorgeous. We helped inaugurate the new digs with another picnic for the IWFS Council Bluffs Branch. This time the weather was most cooperative. If you recall, last time it got quite windy and threatened rain, so we all moved into the machine shed, where the bad weather proceeded to dissipate.



Chef Jared Clark was our caterer again, and he did a stellar job. Maybe you have to be super busy. If you want to get something done, ask a busy person. The people with nothing particular to do seem to take forever. Chef Clarke just bought out Leo Fascianella's Pasta Amore and they are now learning Leo's secrets to making great Italian cuisine, not to mention running Railcar and Timber Wood, and oh yea, raising children.

Dinner was so good that we asked, and quickly received, three recipes. These will be added at some point to our Branch Cookbook, probably at the end of the year. It takes the graphic artist a good deal of time to keep updating everything, so now we are doing it once a year. I could have eaten half of the **Wild Mushroom & Arugula Bruschetta** myself I enjoyed it so much. But others were asking for the **Lobster & Tarragon Bruschetta**. Finally, **Matt Burbach** generously donated his grandmother's family recipe for the **Lillian Burbach's Rhubarb Coffee Cake**, also requested by popular demand. As editor, I especially appreciate the quick turnaround. Many times I have to keep hounding busy chefs to get a recipe they promised. This one came so quickly. Thanks Jared and Matt!

Oh, and thanks Bob Kossow for sending me the photo of Sauternes at sunset. We had a dramatic sunset that night that later turned orange. I like how the color of the wine matches the setting sun hues while still above the horizon.

Some members have had trouble reading the Gazette on issuu.com, Or, they don't want to sign in, which means you can't even read the Gazette at all. They prefer a PDF since all you have to do is click it open. We have decided to offer it in both formats. In your email, a PDF will be sent along with the issuu.com link. The advantage of issuu.com is that you can see both right and left pages, like a paper magazine. Our PDF only lets you view one page at a time.

You can also access the Branch Recipe file by clicking: https://issuu.com/omaha-publications/docs/iwfs_cb_council_bluffs_recipes.

Cheers! 🍷

Tom Murnan



"IF YOU DON'T PAY
YOUR EXORCIST,
YOU CAN GET
REPOSSESSED."

— IT'S TIME FOR SOME
LEXOPHILES

EVENT

Report

A Summer Picnic at the Martin Lake House

Story and Photos by Tom Murnan

What a perfect summer's day we had for our second event at the Martin lake house. At 93° and somewhat high humidity, I thought it would be hot and muggy, but there was a steady breeze that kept things comfortable. Four years ago, at our first Martin outing, everything had to be moved to the shed because of a high wind storm, but not this time. Plus, a wonderful new residence had been built, a steel building with high ceilings that has become the shared lake residence of Connie and Gary, but also Gary Martin Jr. and his wife Kathy. It was impressive and nicely decorated. Pasta Amore catered the dinner, but Pasta Amore has been sold to Chef Jared Clark and his investors (Railcar Modern American Kitchen and Timber Wood Fire Grille) We had 32 attendees, which included 10 guests: besides the Martin afore mentioned kids, Ron and Pam Feldman, Andrea Clark (Chef Jared's wife), Matt Burbach & his wife, Gayle Forristall from Germany (brother of Gary), Diane Polrecky (Kathy Martin's sister), and the former owner of Pasta Amore, Leo Fascianella and his wife Pat. On the back of our menu cards, there was a tribute to Chef Leo. Enjoy your retirement, Leo! You earned it!

All the wines came from Pasta Amore except for the Flowers Pinot Noir and the Giraud Sauternes, which came from the Branch cellar. Dinner started with our First Course: Bruschetta. These were not just any bruschetta. These were so good that I was endangering my appetite for the rest of the meal by overeating the appetizers. We had three to choose from. Instead of being on a regular baguette, the **Housemade Wild Mushroom & Arugula atop Ricotta** used Toasted Focaccia for extra flavor. The mushrooms were cooked in butter and olive oil and then a roasted chicken demi-glace and were oh, so moist. The ricotta cheese was enhanced with truffle oil. The delicious result found me returning for more. I'm salivating now just thinking of them. Another bruschetta was offered: **Lobster & Tarragon**. Lobster, Celery Root, Frisse, Tomato and Tarragon Aioli comprised our second bruschetta. Talk about high end bruschetta, when was the last time you ever had one topped with lobster? I don't think I have. Then we had a third choice, a **Red Wine Poached Pear with Raw Honey on Stracchiarella** cheese base. This was almost a dessert type bruschetta as it had a touch of sweetness. The

Stracchiarella served to highlight the pear. Chef Jared brought honeycomb to squeeze the raw honey on this dish. Raw honey can enhance most cheeses. Really a fantastic trio of starters. The first course and the palate is assaulted by deliciousness. Bravo.

We had two white wines to compare for our First Course. **Rose Rock Drouhin Oregon Chardonnay Eola-Amity Hills 2016 and Groth Chardonnay Hillview Vineyard Napa 2018**. Matt Burbach was our wine guide for the evening. Perhaps the title of this report should be A Summer Picnic at the Martin Lake house with a French Wine Connection. The French Connection here is that Domaine Drouhin of Burgundy, France, established a presence in Oregon. Groth is famous for being the first 100 point rating given by Robert Parker Jr. to an American wine for their Cabernet Sauvignon. But Groth also makes good Chardonnay. This came from the winery's wine library. The Rose Rock is done in a Burgundian, mineral style, a portion was raised in stainless steel, and the rest in oak barrel. The Groth was a classic Napa style, buttery and oaky. ▶















◀ The **Second Course** was **Spring Lamb Meatballs with Pistachio Rosemary Jus**. Ground lamb was formed into meatballs with the addition of soppressata (similar to salami) and ricotta cheese. These were braised in a pistachio rosemary jus, which served as our sauce. For the two meatballs per plate the jus, or sauce, was a wonderful flavor enhancer and the savory part of the dish. The meatballs were very lamb-y and tender. Our wine was a **Flowers Seaview Ridge Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 2016** from the Branch cellar. The Flowers winery is the highest winegrowing point in Sonoma County, 1880 feet above sea level and also above the cloud line. It is one and a half miles from the Pacific Ocean. Sonoma gets a lot of cloud cover, so this means the vines get more sunlight in a season than lower vineyards, increasing the grapes' flavor. The vineyard is also very steep. It was delicious, with a strong bouquet that persisted even in our outdoor picnic conditions. Being al fresco can easily dissipate a wine's nose unless it has good stuffing.

Coppa Pork Steak Roman Style with Artichoke, Prosciutto, Sage, Basil and Garlic was the **Third Course**. A shoulder cut piece of pork Delmonico Steak, cut small (because the Wagyu course would be filling). Roman style means it has lemon, white wine, prosciutto, sage, basil and garlic. It also had some demi-glace in it to boost it up a bit. The compete dish was wonderfully complex, with flavors of the grille, and very tender. As an added surprise, there was a caper berry, which added some lively flavors and was a bit olive like in flavor.

We had an Italian **Super Tuscan** wine next, which is always a blend, in this case of a French varietal (Petit Verdot), and Italian varietals. This was the **Zingari Toscana 2017**. Besides the French grapes, this property was owned originally by Napoleon Bonaparte's sister, who was the Grand Duchess of Tuscany. To this day, all the wine on this property has been made by a woman. Francesca Maretta is the winemaker today. The wine was smooth, well balanced and vaguely reminiscent of a Zinfandel, and worked very well with the pork. So, this was the Blood of Jove [Sangiovese translated into English] tamed by French varietals Merlot, Syrah and Petit Verdot, and very approachable now.

Our **Fourth Course** was **Contra Fillet à la Toscana**. Snake River Farms (Idaho) Wagyu beef, Rosemary, Lemon. Grilled Vegetables, Potatoes, Red Onion Gremola. The Wagyu was "black label," about 8 tiers above prime grade. This was the flank cut done Tuscan style, meaning it was marinated in garlic and fresh herbs, primarily rosemary.

It was finished off with parsley, rosemary, a little lemon juice, and olive oil. The grilled vegetables were served at room temperature as Chef Jared feels it brings out the flavor better. The steak melted in your mouth, the essence of tender beef. It was a real treat. It picked up the smoky taste of the grille to add additional flavor to the marinade.

Matt Burbach wanted to pair the steak with something special, so he was able to obtain a wine from Paso Robles called **L'Aventure**, their **Optimus 20th Anniversary 2018** bottling. Another French connection, this is a French name that means adventure. Stephen Asseo bought the property in 1998. He was a French winemaker who got very frustrated with the French winemaking rules. He wanted to do some blends that the AOC rules would not allow, so he decided to move to California. This wine is a blend with French roots: 56% Syrah, 32% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 12% Petit Verdot. The wine was aerated early in the afternoon to get it to open up. It was incredibly dense in flavor and still not fully opened up. It needed a lot more aging to fully release and reveal its secrets. A very full flavored, tightly wound wine that stood up to the beefy and garlic flavors of the fillet.

Dessert finished our picnic feast. **Strawberry Rhubarb Crumb Cake with Vanilla Gelato** was a Spring themed dessert (rhubarb and strawberries). The crumb cake had brown sugar and was a neutral contrast to the acidic rhubarb, as were the strawberries. The vanilla gelato was great, but hard to distinguish from a regular high end vanilla ice cream. The last French Connection was the **Château Guiraud Sauternes 2009**, which was a tasty match to the dessert.

Many thanks to **Executive Chef Jared** for an incredible high end picnic, and to **Matt Burbach** who selected most of the wines. Thanks to both men for all the commentary about the food and wine, which makes it educational and more interesting to know what you are consuming. The service and pace of the meal was spot on. Thanks **Robyn**, our server. And of course we thank **Connie and Gary Martin** for hosting us at their superb new lakeside home. It was an evening to remember. 🍷



Recipe

CHEF JARED CLARKE'S WILD MUSHROOM & ARUGULA BRUSCHETTA



BRUSCHETTA

Good quality bread as needed. Focaccia/Ciabatta/Baguette

Olive oil brushed on both sides

Grill or toast in pan until golden brown

Serves 4

WILD MUSHROOMS

2 tbsp Olive oil [Add some butter for more flavor - Editor]

2 cups of your favorite mushrooms, sliced

[Porcinis always add a lot of flavor - Editor]

1 tsp minced garlic

1 tsp fresh thyme

1 oz white wine

Fresh ricotta

Salt and pepper as needed

2 cups Arugula

Balsamic vinaigrette or light vinaigrette as needed

INSTRUCTIONS

Sauté mushrooms in oil, garlic and fresh thyme until soft and golden in color. Deglaze with white wine.

Spread ricotta on toast, season with salt and pepper

Spread mushroom on the ricotta

Toss arugula with vinaigrette and place on top of mushrooms

Shave parmesan on top if desired

Recipe



CHEF JARED CLARKE'S LOBSTER & TARRAGON BRUSCHETTA

BRUSCHETTA

Good quality bread as needed. Focaccia/Ciabatta/Baguette
Olive oil brushed on both sides
Grill or toast in pan until golden brown

Serves 4

WILD MUSHROOMS

1 cup chopped cooked lobster
1 tsp minced garlic
2 Tbsp minced fresh tarragon
½ cup chopped cherry tomato
1 tbsp lemon zest
2 Tbsp good quality mayo
Pinch salt and pepper blend

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix all ingredients together and top on toasted bread



This was a coffee cake my grandmother Lillian Burbach made with fresh, ripe red rhubarb from her garden farm in rural Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. It remains a favorite of mine! Jared said Andrea's grandmother has a similar recipe but used white sugar in the cake rather than brown. Another friend has a recipe that uses buttermilk rather than sour cream or ricotta. On the farm, I know for certain my grandmother would have used whatever sugar or dairy she had available that day!

Recipe

LILLIAN BURBACH'S RHUBARB COFFEE CAKE



CAKE

- 2 cups Flour
- 1 t baking soda
- 1/2 t salt
- 1/2 cup butter, at room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup sour cream (or use fresh homemade ricotta, as I did for the wine dinner)
- 1 t vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 cups fresh ripe rhubarb, cut into 1/2 inch chunks

CRUMB TOPPING

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup flour
- 3 T Butter
- 1 t cinnamon
- 3 T Butter, cut into 12 small cubes

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350. Generously butter a 9 x 13 pan. In a bowl, mix together flour, baking soda and salt and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, cream together butter and brown sugar until fluffy, 5 minutes. Beat egg in. Add half of the flour mixture and half the sour cream and mix well. Add the other half of the flour mixture and remainder of sour cream and mix well. Stir in rhubarb and vanilla. The batter will be very thick. Spread evenly into the buttered pan.

For the topping, using your hands, pinch together the flour, sugar, cinnamon and 3T butter until they form small crumbles. Press a handful of the mixture together and break it up on top of the cake, repeating until all is used, then place the 12 small cubes of butter on top of the crumbs evenly.

Bake for 45-50 minutes or until the topping is golden brown and the cake springs back when touched.

UPCOMING COUNCIL BLUFFS BRANCH EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars!

AUG
22

OAK HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

Wine Pairs that Compliment Flavor Profiles
Producers: Brent Rasmussen & Susan Rauth,
Amanda Harrington & John Matthews

SEP
19

HAPPY HOLLOW CLUB

Riesling vs. Red
Producers: Patti & Steve Hipple

OCT
17

402 EAT + DRINK

A Night of American Indulgence
American Comfort Food Paired with
Classic California Wines
Producers: Tabitha & Dave Thrasher

NOV
13

CHAMPIONS RUN

Russian River Valley vs. Sonoma
Coast Pinot Noirs
Producers: Murnan & Klemkes

DEC
5

PRESIDENT'S HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Au Courant Winter Specialties
Producers: Martins

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 International Wine & Food Society of London, England

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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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