
THE STOMPER

The Monthly Winemaking Newsletter of grapestompers.com
May, 2003 Issue #34
<http://www.grapestompers.com> 1-800-233-1505
Hours: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM Eastern Monday - Friday

Welcome to the latest issue of "THE STOMPER", a newsletter of winemaking hints and other wine-related articles.

You are receiving this newsletter because you requested it. Instructions to cancel are at the end of this newsletter.

Feel free to pass along this newsletter to your winemaking friends; we only ask that it be sent in its entirety.

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^ Hot Tips are sprinkled throughout the newsletter

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FEATURE ARTICLE: Punch Down Your Cap
By Brant Burgiss, Editor

If you make wine from scratch - and not kits - it's very important to "punch down" your cap during fermentation.

There are many benefits to punching down. Not only does it make your wine taste and look better, but it also can prevent certain types of spoilage from occurring.

Learn why it's important to punch down - and how to do it properly - in our latest online winemaking article:

http://www.grapestompers.com/articles/punch_down_cap.htm

Here's to you... and Happy Winemaking!

You can write to Brant at webmaster@grapestompers.com

BONNIE'S BIN: Of Bugs and Hummingbirds
By Bonnie Brown, Manager

It's a happy time of year when it is warm enough to have the doors open at the house. Just don't forget to shut the screen door! I came home from work yesterday and heard a strange sound. It sounded like the biggest bee I have ever heard. Well, lo and behold, it was a hummingbird! He's a bit early but welcome. Our dog, Clyde, wanted in and out so often my husband left the front door open for him. He said there were no bugs out so why not! It just took a

moment to capture the beautiful creature and release him safely back outside.

Tonight there are June bugs at the back door. I am taking all of this as a sign that summer is arriving early. That might mean that our fruits will ripen early this year.

It is time to check the equipment out: replace tubing, check gaskets, and get the winemaking area ready for production. Clean the freezers so fresh berries can be put aside soon. Perhaps make an early summer wine out of the last bags of last year's fruits. I can imagine the combinations. Raspberry Rhubarb comes to mind first as they are the first fruits I get each year.

If you are going to be anywhere near us on your vacations this year, stop by for a visit. It is always nice to put faces to the names. And nice for you to save on shipping costs by picking things up. Call ahead and place your order so it can be ready for you when you arrive. It is worth the extra few miles out of your way. Plus, you get the benefit of a peaceful respite in the mountains where the pace of life is a bit slower. Sit a spell on the front porch and have a chat over a glass of wine! If you are lucky the house dog, Lucky, will sit with us a bit too. Sounds so good I can't wait for you to arrive!

Let's all have a peaceful and safe May.

"Every time you open a prestigious bottle of wine and share it with friends, it's an extraordinary experience."

-- Drew Nieporent, American restaurateur

See you soon...
Bonnie

Life is too short... to drink bad wine... so make your own!

You can write to Bonnie at bonnie@grapestompers.com

TOM'S CELLAR: Busy, Busy Summertime in the Mountains
by Tom Burgess, Owner

Boy, have we been busy! After several months of planning, designing, and waiting, we have finally received the official approval on our wine labels from the Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division (ALFD) that was recently spun-off from the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms) Agency.

We have our labels, we have aged our wines, we now have modern bottling and corking equipment (after 7 months of waiting for it to arrive) and we are ready to go. It only took two things: Time and a rich wife!

So very soon, you'll be able to purchase wine from our new mountaintop winery called Thistle Meadow Winery!

Our grapestompers showroom and the winery's tasting room will be open 12:00 - 5:00 PM weekdays, Saturdays from 12:00 - 4:00 PM and Sundays from 2:00 - 6:00 PM.

A tasting of wine (which includes a souvenir wine glass) at Thistle Meadow Winery only costs 3 to 4 bucks. For our grapestompers customers there is no charge.

So join us for a glass soon!

To commemorate our winery's grand opening, we now offer the latest updated version of our entertainment schedule:

June 14th, 12:00 - 7:00 PM: a pig picking and a dance at the Burgiss Barn featuring a great band, "White Top Mountain Band"

July 5th, 12:00 - 5:00 PM: a wine tasting, which includes a free wine glass from Thistle Meadow Winery and a home-cooked meal for only \$15.00 per person

July 12th, 12:00 - 7:00 PM: a pig picking and dance at the Burgiss Barn

August 9th, 12:00 - 7:00 PM: a pig picking and dance at the Burgiss Barn

September 13th, 12:00 - 7:00 PM: another pig picking and dance at the Burgiss Barn

October 5th, starting at 2:00 PM: grapestompers' 6th annual WINE FESTIVAL

October 11th, 5:00 - 8:00 PM: Big Country Dance with meal

November 8th, 5:00 - 8:00 PM: Big Country Dance with meal

December 13th, 5:00 - 8:00 PM: Big Country Dance with meal

And don't forget... Starting Mother's Day weekend, our famous Sunday Buffet starts up for another season of great food and good times. The Sunday lunches are served from 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM each week until mid-October. Lunch comes complete with 2 or 3 choices of meat, veggies, and includes drink, dessert, and hot rolls thrown to you! All for \$6.95 per person. Add a salad for a buck more if you like!

-----HOT TIP-----
Need a faster way to fill church communion cups with wine without messy spills?

Try using the wine thief / test jar combo (Item #2598). It'll do the trick!

Your church is saving money by making its own communion wine, right?

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com

-----HOT TIP-----

Our grapestompers.com family is growing again!

Dealerships are now closer by for some of you... Our newest addition is "Old Goat Winery Supply" in Cartersville, GA.

Pete and Marlaine Ciaverra are now selling winemaking supplies from 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM every day. Call Pete's cell phone first at 678-313-3122, or if no answer, call their other number at 770-383-3422.

grapestompers' other dealerships are:

- FineVineWines Supplies in Texas - talk with George Cornelius at 866-417-1114.

- Hamilton Cellar Supply in Winston-Salem, NC - speak with Cindy or Kenny at 336-760-0648 (by the way, you can meet Cindy & Kenny along with all the gang at the 3rd Annual

North Carolina Wine Festival held from 12:00 - 7:00 PM on June 7th at Tanglewood Park near Winston-Salem, NC).

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Also, on May 17th under SUNNY skies (the Chamber of Commerce has promised sunshine), be sure to join us in Elkin, NC for the 2nd Annual Yadkin Valley Wine Festival. Yadkin Valley Wines from several nearby wineries will be offered. grapestompers.com will be there to show folks how much fun it is to make their own wine at home - like so many are doing now from the LARGEST WINEMAKING SUPPLY COMPANY east of the Mississippi at grapestompers.com.

** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## ** ## **

Progress keeps on coming for our customers... Now we can accept American Express and Discover cards in addition to MasterCard and Visa. Folks, believe me - progress (and great wine) comes with both patience and time.

Speaking of patience, don't be surprised if one of these days we will have a virtual pick-up truck for you to load up from our web site. Hey, who needs a little shopping cart?! In the mountains of North Carolina, you cannot get along without a pick-up truck. Which one is your favorite? Chevrolet, Dodge, Ford, etc.???? Help us out here!

Then I will negotiate with that company for the best buy! Oh, speaking of the best buy... Our "complete" kit is the best buy out there on the market today. And, if you have bottles, we can give you credit on the kit price. Later you can return our latest winemaking video for credit on your credit card.

So why do we call our complete kit a best buy? There is not a single extra item that you will need (it is complete) to get started making your own wine and no "funny stuff" that sounds good on paper that you really do not need.

We are SERVICE oriented for YOU! We appreciate your business and we want to continue to EARN your business! Thanks for listening.

Tom

You can write to Tom at tom@grapestompers.com

FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

As you might imagine, our office receives quite a bit of correspondence - mostly through e-mail - here are some comments we've recently received:

Hi Tom --
Just a short note to let you know our order arrived USPS today... all is in order, neat box!

Thanks,

-- Tom and Brenda Zuber
Guys Mills, PA

Bonnie...
What a surprise! We arrived home yesterday and the cool poster was in our mailbox!!! Once again grapestompers outshines itself with prompt response.

Jo and I really enjoyed our visit. We were surprised to find we had spent over 2 hours at what we had anticipated would be a quick stop to purchase a couple of kits. The warmth and willingness to share on the part of both you and Tom made us feel like we were old friends stopping by for yet another visit. You can be assured we will be making more pilgrimages to grapestompers when we visit relatives in NC.

Attached are a couple of pictures. One is of the frame I made for a Michigan Wines poster. The base is wood and all the corks are from Michigan wines. I don't know how many people make the connection, but I enjoy it.

The second photo is of the trellis we talked to you about. The trellis hangs over our game table where we play cards and drink wine :o) It is made of 1x2's and hangs about 5 inches below our suspended ceiling. The trellis has real grapevines harvested from my father-in-law's property in the mountains of North Carolina! plus silk grapevines with leaves and grape clusters. We also put a few white mini-Christmas lights for mood lighting.

A future project will be the construction of storage and a serving surface above our wine chiller. All in all, a quiet comfortable place to enjoy a glass of wine, conversation and good times with friends.

Again, thanks for the hospitality. We look forward to seeing y'all next spring.

Until later... Rod

-- Rod Schmidt

Tom,
This is how I have been lifting my second carboy and it works good for me. I hope this explanation is clear. The first time I just tried to lift the thing and strained my back.

[See Mark's 'how to' article below]

The boys are doing fine and growing like weeds. Ben is trying to figure out how to lay rubber with his tricycle.

My grapes are starting to bud, so they survived the Oklahoma winter. It will still be many years till they produce. Next season I am going to have to make another batch of Raspberry White Zinfandel. That stuff goes really fast.

How To Lift a Six Gallon Carboy Without a Carboy Handle

Place your non-dominant side foot beside the carboy and grasp the neck of the carboy with your non-dominant hand with the thumb and index finger toward the bottom of the carboy. Rock the carboy back and grab the bottom lip of the carboy with your dominant hand. Then bend at the knees and keep your back straight and lift the carboy with your legs. It should come right up to as high as you can lift it. Still it is easier to use a carboy handle.

-- Mark Henderson MD
Oklahoma

My wife and I were on our way back from visiting friends and we were due for a rest stop and we saw a sign on the highway indicating a local winery. Well, one of my favorite things to do is visit wineries and taste wine so we stopped. On sale in the gift shop was a "wine kit". My first thought was that this is something I can do. The more I thought about it, the more logical it seemed. I have the time. I have the space. I drink wine every day and it will cost me half of what I am currently spending on wine. I could not think of a downside. So I bought the "wine kit".

After we got home, I started doing research, on the Internet, and realized that the "kit" that I had purchased was lacking in a lot of equipment that I would need to really begin making wine. I found a supplier in Ohio and ordered the additional equipment necessary to begin my wine making career. During my research, I found that I have been practicing the Art of Oenotherapy: The medicinal use of wine. I have been doing this for years and didn't even know it.

-----HOT TIP-----

Keep your expensive wine glasses from breaking by transporting them in a padded pistol case.

It's less expensive than what you'd pay for a similar custom wine glass case.

Our thanks to Robert Klaus from Houston, TX for providing this tip!

Have a tip you'd like to submit?
Send it to tips@grapestompers.com

-----HOT TIP-----

I started my wine making career on July 11, 2002. I decided to make a Pinot Noir kit because this is my wine of choice. After the primary fermentation it was time to rack to the carboy. Well my frustration was about to begin. I had not practiced the siphoning operation. Well I lost siphon pressure on two different occasions. I finally had to move the primary fermenter to a higher surface to maintain the pressure. Before my next siphoning operation, I did not want to see this problem again. After more research, I found the Fermtech Auto-Siphon (a great tool) and my winemaking career was secured. Having the right equipment, supplier and attitude have really made this hobby a joy.

I discovered a tip when using the Auto-Siphon when transferring wine from the fermentation bucket to a carboy. I use a couple of rubber washers that were left over from a bottling bucket spigot. I slipped a washer over the top and bottom of the Auto-Siphon and then inserted a 5/16" diameter tube under each washer to hold it onto the Auto-Siphon. I then snap a red plastic bucket clip onto the 5/16" tube. This allows me to move the Auto-Siphon up and down the clip on the fermentation bucket. This was a quick fix and it worked pretty well.

Hope this tip works for you!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Frank Joseph is a retired 59-year-old nomad temporarily located in PA with his wife Mary and stepson. Before that, he and his wife lived full time on a boat for 5 years and then full time in a 5th wheel for two years. Last year, they moved into a house in PA.

Frank drinks two glasses of red wine each day for his heart. He says, "Winemaking was a natural hobby for me, but I never had the space to make the decision. I have been producing wine kits (Pinot Noir & Valpolicella) for six months, to drink and take on the road when we resume our nomadic lifestyle in the fall. Somehow, I will continue my new hobby. Winemaking is a great hobby and it's never too late to learn."

You can contact Frank and Mary Joseph at:
proudmmary01@earthlink.net

Like To Be A Guest Columnist For STOMPERS Newsletter?

If you'd like to be our next guest columnist, simply send your three- or four-paragraph article to articles@grapestompers.com. If your article is selected for use in a future STOMPER newsletter, you'll receive the attention of thousands, a coupon good for a discount on your next [grapestompers.com](http://www.grapestompers.com) order, as well as our heartfelt thanks. So what are you waiting for??

CORKY'S WINEMAKING DEFINITION

Cap

- The solid mass of grape skins, stems, and pips (seeds) that floats to the top of the fermenting vessel during fermentation.

Look for other wine-related definitions by clicking on the 'Glossary' button from our home page at <http://www.grapestompers.com>

NEW PRODUCTS

Here is a list of products recently added to our catalog:

- Item #4734 Stackable Clay Tiles - store your bottles of wine in style! Each clay tile has two holes to hold your wine bottles. Just lay these interlocking tiles on the floor and start stacking!

1 - 49: \$6.00 each
50 - 99: \$5.50 each
100 or more: \$5.00 each
- Item #3244 CC Bella Bianco, \$73.24
- Item #3702 BH Honey Blonde Ale, Reg: \$31.02 Sale: \$26.90
- Item #3168 OB Cranberry Chianti, \$45.60 - ON ORDER
- Item #3289 OB Strawberry Riesling, \$38.39 - ON ORDER
- Item #3169 WA Cranberry Shiraz, \$45.60 - ON ORDER

OB stands for Orchard Breezin' (which replaces the line of wine kits formerly known as Cellar Master Mist), which make light refreshing wines containing 8-9% alcohol.

Learn more about this line of wine kits from RJ Spagnols:
http://www.rjspagnols.com/wine_orchard_breezin.asp

You can find out about the Wine-Art Country Mist kits here:
<http://www.wineart.com/store/countrymistkits.html>

THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS

grapestompers' specials for the month of May 2003 are:

Save up to 12% on assorted winemaking kits

AND

Save up to 37% on our carboy dryer

AND

Save over 14% on Orange Soda Pop extract (including yeast)

AND

Save over 14% on our 1.5 gallon bucket with lid

AND

Save up to 20% on Champagne bottling supplies

AND

Save over 13% on our Honey Blond Ale kit

AND FINALLY

Save over \$70 on the purchase of a
Complete Winemaking Starter Kit
which includes a RED or WHITE Concentrate
(see wine kit selection below)

Item #	Description	Reg. Price	SPECIAL
2250	Carboy Dryer (1 or 2)	8.72	8.25
	(3 to 9)	8.72	6.00
	(10 or more)	8.72	5.50
3277	GC Zinfandel Blush	47.63	41.90
3165	GC Malbec	52.25	46.90
2215	1.5 Gallon Fermenter Bucket w/lid	3.96	3.40
2331	Champagne Wire	0.10	0.08
2330	Champagne Stopper	0.12	0.10
2329	Champagne Foil (Gold)	0.12	0.10
2780	Orange Soda Pop extract, w/yeast	4.10	3.50
3245	CC Ruisseau Blanc	65.95	58.90
3280	CM Peach Chardonnay	38.41	33.90
3702	BH Honey Blonde Ale Kit	31.02	26.90
3700	Complete Beermaking Kit	191.82	169.99
3200	Complete White Wine Starter Kit	246.68	175.00
3100	Complete Red Wine Starter Kit	259.79	185.00

The GC and CM wine kits are designed to make about 30 750 ml bottles of great wine in as little as 28 days. The Ruisseau Blanc wine kit comes off in as few as 45 days, and also makes about 30 bottles. The Peach Chardonnay is refreshingly sweet with plenty of fruit flavor, with an alcohol content from 6.5% to 7%.

Wine and beer kit abbreviations explained:

BH = Brew House beer kit
CC = Cellar Classic wine kit
GC = Grand Cru wine kit
WA = Wine-Art wine kit
MM = Mosti Mondiale wine kit
CM = Cellar Master wine kit
OB = Orchard Breezin' wine kit (new name for CM)
VDV = Vino del Vida wine kit
CSP = Cru Select Platinum wine kit
CSG = Cru Select Gold wine kit

Here's what you get with the COMPLETE Starter Kit:

If choosing the Complete WHITE Kit, your choice of either:
Fume Blanc, Pinot Noir, or Chenin Blanc VDV concentrate

If choosing the Complete RED Kit, your choice of either:
Valpolicella, Shiraz, or Cabernet/Merlot VDV concentrate

PLUS ALL THESE GOODIES:

Tom's Winemaking Video	Bottle Rinser
Fermenter Bucket with lid	Three-Piece Airlock
6-Gallon Glass Carboy	Carboy Brush
Bung (stopper)	Bottle Filler
Five feet of vinyl tubing	C-Brite Sanitizer (8)
Portuguese Hand Corker	FermTech AutoSiphon
2 Cases of 750-ml Bottles	Long Handled Spoon
Bottle Washer Adapter	Brass Bottle Washer
Bottle Drainer, 45 station	Adhesive Thermometer

AND YOU GET THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FREE (\$16.79 value):

- Free Wine Labels (text of your choice)
- Free triple scale hydrometer
- Free Corks (30 corks, enough for one batch)

Just think: This complete kit offers EVERYTHING a brand-new hobbyist would need to begin making his or her own wine. All you need to decide is which wine kit you want!

And don't forget... you can always return your winemaking video and receive a credit for \$19.95 on your credit card... that's like getting the video for free! All we ask is that you return it in good condition.

This is the best deal we've ever offered on a complete kit, so don't miss out... order one for yourself or a friend today. Ask for RED Complete Kit # 3100 or WHITE Kit # 3200 and be sure to let us know which wine concentrate you want, as well as the text you want on your free wine labels.

If you prefer, you can "personalize" your Complete Kit - Let's say you don't need or want some of the items that normally come with the Complete Kit... just give us a call at 1-800-233-1505 and let us know which items you don't need, and we will adjust the price of the equipment kit accordingly. Likewise, if you'd like a different wine kit, just let us know and we can adjust the price.

NEXT MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS

- More Winemaking Stories from Tom's Cellar
- Another Surprise from Brant
- More Specials
- The next article from Bonnie's Bin
- More Customer Testimonials
- Another Guest Article - Submit yours today!
- New Winemaking Products

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<http://www.grapestompers.com/newsletter/archives>

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