The Tasting Room Revolution 2017

If you have visited our Tasting Room (TR) in the past few months on a weekend or possibly a busy Holiday you may have noticed me helping out our hostess. After harvest ended, I decided to spend some time working in the TR because we had been seeing a lot of turnover in our staff and I wanted to understand at ground level what was going on. I enjoyed working with everyone so much that I plan on continuing to put in some time every month hosting and working the floor. I also learned a LOT about how hard our servers and kitchen staff work and all the challenges they face working in the Page Springs TR. In the past couple months I also interviewed every employee who works in our TR and Kitchen (except one who was out with an injury) to get their perspective on what is working and what needed improvement. The goal, of course, was to create a better, more supportive work environment for our employees and thus an even better Tasting Room experience for our guests and Wine Club Members.

So what did I learn? First, the general issue leading to turnover was certainly burnout. What is burnout and what was creating it? For starters, our staff had normal sized sections for servers, but on average they were visiting tables two-to-three times more than your typical restaurant worker (because they serve wine and do tastings). Additionally, they were bussing their own tables, sharing in side work (polishing glasses, wrapping silverware, doing laundry, refilling water coolers etc.) and even helping out by doing dishes in the kitchen when the back-of-the-house staff got behind. Another significant issue here is that people were being scheduled for eight hour shifts rather than the traditional four to six hours a server usually works.

Another very significant issue at Page Springs is the Feng shui of our Tasting Room and Kitchen. The reality is that our business has grown organically. I never knew that Chef Bryan would come along and kick our food program up several notches, I never knew we’d end up using beepers on busy weekends, I never even conceived that parking would become an issue for us…! Within the context of all the amazing advances we have made in wine and food quality, we organically added so many new pieces of equipment (ovens, wine coolers, library wine coolers) and displays (art, jewelry, glasses, books) that our service pathways both in the front and back of the house became very cluttered. I was absolutely amazed at what a small area we had to work in when dropping off our bussed materials from a table we just cleared: We’re talking about opening a 24” wide door and standing in a two foot square area and holding a tray (if you’re lucky and aren’t just holding a big pile of dishes) while juggling napkins, trash, glasses and dishes into each of their proper receptacles. Meanwhile, you are also dealing with cross traffic in that same small space from people picking up food… When I interviewed our staff, not one person failed to mention what a challenge
Lowering myself slowly into the open manhole cover, my feet could barely reach the mud below. With a high pitched squeal, I let go and allowed myself to be completely consumed by the darkness. Not sure what I had just gotten myself into (literally), I turned on my headlamp and looked around at 8 of my fellow outdoors club members, ready to explore the cave system in the heart of Kentucky.

This was my first experience caving in Kentucky, and I was nearly overwhelmed by the excitement, fear of the unknown (and the dark), exploration and adventure of the whole thing. Of course I was afraid of getting stuck down there, and never seeing the light at the end of the tunnel; but I took a leap of faith, tightened my boot laces and forged forward. This was real personal progress. I was 19 years old, and had barely left my hometown, let alone the state of PA or the above ground, sunlit world.

Later in my twenties, I had a similar experience when I decided to study wine and become a sommelier. I had an unrelated college degree, and had been travelling and climbing for the majority of my post-college years. It was the perfect time to start a new career, and get serious.

This time, I moved closer to home and my family, hunkered down in a small apartment in Philadelphia, took a job in a fine dining restaurant and immersed myself in the world of wine. All of a sudden, I found myself smelling everything around me — someone cooking bacon in the house across the street; roses in my neighbor’s garden; my wet dog after a summer swim. I couldn’t stop smelling. The world was illuminated in a whole new way, and it was mine to explore!

Each time we enter into some new adventure or change, it is always a little scary. You never know if the risk will end in reward. Change is uncomfortable. But every time we come out the other side, whether it is a cave or a new business venture, we are stronger, wiser and more educated.

After hours of discovering stalactites and underground rivers, having mud fights and slipping through tiny crevices to reveal massive new rooms and pathways, the other end of the cave opened up and I could see the light creeping in around the next corner. Tired, hungry, and covered in cave mud, I emerged into the autumn daylight. The person who entered through the manhole earlier in the day, afraid and unsure had become a pioneer for change, embracing the newly acquired hunger to explore.

Likewise, after years of study and hard work, I had passed both level 1 and level 2 of the Court of Master Sommeliers examinations, developed a successful career and inspired a passion for wine that would eventually lead me to Page Springs Cellars. This place embodies that spirit of progress, always forging ahead and changing to accommodate its growth. The greatest rewards come from hard work, embracing change and often committing to some level of risk. Our adaptability is what allows us to look ahead and see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Page Springs Yoga & Massage
By Gayle Glomski, Owner Page Springs Yoga & Massage

I was very fortunate during my recent trip to Thailand to be present during the Loi Krathong Festival. The light festival is held each year during the full moon in November for three days with different traditional celebrations each night. The second night lanterns are lit and lifted to the heavens while Krathongs (small floating flowers with candles) are placed in the flowing river. Some believe the Krathongs pay respect to the river spirits, some believe the candle represents the Buddha with light and the floating symbolizes letting go of one’s hatred, anger and corruption.

What does this have to do with massage? Everything! A person giving a massage might relate to being a river, a conduit for assisting the massage receiver to find their internal light/fire. The massage receiver should be invited to feel at peace, moving hate, anger and judgment down river.

Instead of wanting, and struggling to get to the light at the end of the tunnel, I think of releasing a Krathong into a flowing river under the tunnel, watching it illuminate the entire tunnel and not needing the light to come because it’s already here.
Finding the Balance in the Vineyard

Farming a vineyard is repetitious. It is taking one task like pruning, shoot thinning, leaf pulling, netting, harvesting and doing it over and over 1000s of times. If you can imagine in our Northern vineyards we have 4 hard working farmers that interact with over 16,000 vines multiple times in a year in the goal to shape these vines to be healthy and to produce delicious fruit. We may spend up to an accumulated 10 minutes with each individual vine through a season with all the tasks that need accomplishing. Think of that. Interacting and spending energy thousands of times with so many vines.

A good farmer will begin to get a feel for their plants. Get to know them. Their quirks, personalities and growing traits. What they love and what stresses them out. Hard to imagine with all these vines but working with them season after season they begin to find places in our memory and consciousness. We learn how their environment shapes them. We learn their needs. We unearth knowledge that each time we interact or neglect them, we shape them. There is also an understanding that there are only so many hours in a day and we still want make sure we harvest this fruit at a reasonable cost but we also want to give as many vines possible a chance to grow strong and create awesome fruit.

So how to you make it all happen in a year? How does it all get accomplished? I am imagining a single working parent raising multiple children and somehow they all turn out alright. The things that come to mind are balance and innovation. Balance is probably the most important thing when farming grapevines.

Finding that place where everything and everyone is good. It’s the sweet spot. With weak vines it means pruning them back heavy to balance the vines energy with its canopy. You want that vine to push strong growth in the spring. If you leave to much wood on the vine the stored energy, known as carbon reserves will push poor growth during the growing season and you will be again left with weak growth. So the weaker vines need more love. Their energy needs to be maximized and nutrition optimized. Also it’s really important to pay attention to their environment to see if it is a factor of poor shoot development. We look at the soil, nutrition and watering. If the vine is too vigorous the woody material is cut back less in the winter allowing for more growth, hoping to devigor the vine. Nutrition, watering and soil also must be adjusted to slow down excessive growth. Too much vegetative growth produces poor quality fruit and more work during the growing season.

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A good year for the roses

George Jones sang a country tearjerker decades ago about the quality of his roses but he might as well been referring to our past year’s crop of rose bushes here around the estate. We had an extended season of beautiful and fragrant blooms that perpetually refreshed themselves, and if anything else wasn’t going according to plan at any given time, I could always take a peek at the roses and take some solace in their success.

One of the ways I mark time is by the certain tasks I’m compelled to do at any given moment during the year, and trimming back the roses and putting them to bed is something I reserve for the first couple months of each New Year. Rose pruning foretells a steadily approaching upcoming change, and usually it means that the coldest nights have passed us by, and that it won’t be long before signs of spring begin to reveal themselves. Such a change seems particularly welcoming this January, as we have been experiencing a fairly unusual weather pattern of limited sunlight and regular doses of rain, conditions strangely similar to those who reside in the Pacific Northwest, inhabitants of the actual “City of Roses.”

Obviously – roses being the thorny creatures they are – attempting to interfere with their life cycle is not a bloodless task. Though we don’t usually associate roses with the desert landscape here, they definitely share a particular trait common to so many indigenous desert plants: a defensive prickliness. The act of cutting back rose canes is akin to giving an ocotillo a haircut, and a short one at that. But like most difficult things worth doing, the trouble is justified, and all of the temporary wounds of the flesh I sustain while cutting the rose bushes down to size will be long forgotten by the time they start to push out blooms months from now. Envisioning such a vibrantly colorful and aromatically rich scenario is a healthy mental exercise during these waning, dreary days of winter, and, thankfully, comes free of thorns.
JUST NOW / WHEN THE DARKNESS
GROWS DEEPER
IN ITS DARKNESS
AND SEEMS / TO HOLD US / IN ITS EMBRACE
TO SWALLOW
ALL THE LIGHT THERE IS
IN THAT SPACE / OF THE DARKEST / OF ALL DARKNESSES
THEN IN ONE
PRECIOUS PRESENT / GOLDEN MOMENT
SPONTANEOUSLY / AUSPICIOUSLY
A TINY
BUT
OH SO BRILLIANT
RAINBOW LIGHT / APPEARS

WE SEE IT
RIGHT THERE
IN THE CENTER
OF OUR AWARENESS

IN THE CENTER
OF OUR COMPASSION
IN THE CENTER
OF OUR LOVE
IN THE CENTER
OF OUR PEACE
IN THE CENTER
OF OUR JOY

RIGHT THERE
IN THE CENTER
OF YOUR HEART

IN THE CENTER
OF EVERYONE’S HEART
A SHARING / A CARING / A GROWING CLOSER
A COMMUNITY
OF HAPPINESS AND GRATITUDE
NOW
THAT BRILLIANT, LITTLE / RAINBOW LIGHT
IT IS GROWING, GROWING
AND GROWING / IN ITS LUMINOUS LIVING LIFE / LIGHT
EMBRACE IT NOW
IN THIS PRECIOUS / PRESENT MOMENT
AS WE SEE IT / HEAR IT / FEEL IT

RIGHT HERE
AT THE END OF THAT / SPIRALING TUNNEL
OF DARKNESS AND SORROW

RIGHT THERE
RIGHT THERE IS LOVE / SHINNING ITS
BRILLIANT RAINBOW / HEALING LIGHT
AS AN INFINITE / SHOWER OF STARLIGHT
STREAMING FROM / THE DARKNESS / OF ENDLEE SPACE
INTO THE HEART / OF EVERY HEART

-Honshin
It is well understood in an industry as deeply connected to Mother Nature as winemaking that we are at the mercy of the season. Carried within the burden of risk, there is the intrinsic magic of potential… the promise held in the vintage ahead.

We are often asked during harvest how a vintage is shaping up, or how one year compares to the last. We note trends and make predictions which turn out to be correct as often as they aren’t. The only real option we have as winemakers is to make the best decision possible with the information at hand, moving forward and hopefully learning something along the way. Many moons ago, a friend and mentor assured me that I would know I was ready to be a winemaker, when I could make decisions on the fly, and live with the consequences. This experience is a regular part of my reality now and I balance the weight of these decisions with knowledge that there will be other wines and other vintages.

Early in my winemaking career, I had the opportunity to talk to Pam Starr, one of the most accomplished women winemakers in the U.S. I asked her what she loved about winemaking and what had kept her devoted to the craft for over 30 years. She responded that she loved having a fresh chance to make incredible wine each new vintage. At the time I thought this was a beautiful sentiment, but now that I have over 10 harvests under my belt, I understand the depth and wisdom of her statement.

Just as we can count on the seasons to change, so too, can we count on change in our daily lives. As some of you may have heard, Matt Rollin is transitioning out of his winemaking position at PSC and heading over to Arizona Stronghold. Our beloved cellar mule (the inspiration behind the first Mule’s Mistake) Bill Fanning, has retired after 12 years, and I am steering production solo for a few months. I’m excited to announce that in March Corey Turnbull, founder and winemaker for Burning Tree Cellars, will join me as Co-Assistant Winemaker at PSC. Some of you may remember him, as he managed our Tasting Room for years, before he went to Arizona Stronghold to learn the ins and outs of production. While I’m sad to see such longtime members of our production team go, I’m really looking forward to the wines Corey and I create together.

Whether it’s surviving crush, getting through a particularly grueling bottling season, or doing the job of several people through transition, there is a knowing that whatever hand the season deals, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. When the going gets tough, I find comfort in the impending approach of the next season. Winemaking is an ever-changing arena in which to learn, grow and evolve. I find it to be a metaphor for life and draw strength from the spiritual parallels.

Glomski Grapevine Continued from P1

our kitchen was for them. On top of this, the kitchen service doorway is an old closet door right in our main hallways which is also where people wait in line for the bathroom and new guests pass through.

In the time that has passed since harvest, I have worked intensively with our TR management team to address these issues to reduce stress for our staff and to create an environment that is better for everyone within those busy walls. From a physical perspective, the first thing we did was remove a couple of the classic choke points for our staff— we removed the wine cooler in the corner behind the main indoor bar and we got rid of the ice coolers behind the outdoor bar that we were using to keep member’s wines and deck wines cool. All of these units were replaced with slim, upright wine coolers that take up one-quarter of the amount of space. This now allows much freer movement and less bumping into one another. The next thing we tackled was building a large side-work counter in the back room that created space to fold napkins, wrap silverware and polish glasses. (All this work was previously done on the TR indoor bar which was nearly impossible when we got really busy.)

While improving the flow behind our bars, we began a process to hire support staff. In a few short weeks, our Tasting Room Manager hired a second hostess for busy days, a busser/food expeditor/side worker, a dishwasher and a wine room (Club Pickup, bottle pickup etc.) attendant. We also galvanized our commitment to having parking lot attendants on busy days for greeting our guests and managing parking and traffic. In the end, this whole effort aims at one thing: freeing up our servers to do what they do best – taking care of our guests. It also aims at reducing their overall work load and thus stress.

Now, there are several other things that we are doing right now (a new employee break room was just created, Chef Bryan stocks the break room with food for employees, we have developed staff training, wine service and education programs, etc.) and we are analyzing issues such as shortening shifts. I have to mention the biggest one of all, though - new construction! We are talking new bathrooms, a waiting room and a new kitchen. The plan is to double the size of the kitchen by removing the main hallway bathroom while making the stairs that lead to the cellar the service entrance for food and bussing. This gets rid of the waiting line for the hallway bathroom and removes food and bussing service from our most congested area. But wait! Now we are down a bathroom…! Don’t fret, because we are building two new bathrooms (that’s a net gain of one bathroom) in the old Club area just to the left of the entrance door. There will also be a much larger waiting area for Members to pick up their shipments and to chat while waiting for a table.

What does this all mean? Making great wine and sharing beautiful, delicious food doesn’t mean much if it isn’t served by happy people who enjoy coming to work every day. I (we) want Page Springs to be the greatest place to work in our valley and we know that by achieving that goal we will also succeed in accomplishing our other most important goal: Making sure our guests have a great time! Happy Employees = Happy Guests = Happy Eric! Cheers!!
Throughout this newsletter you have read all about the many changes happening here at PSC and whew... it’s a lot! This article’s theme is “light at the end of the tunnel”. We are all working together to streamline the process and looking ahead at the end goal of an overall better experience for you - our guests.

A really cool new feature with our tablet system is that we can upload photos to memberships. I would love for our Tasting Room staff to get to know our members better. A picture is worth a thousand words, right? So, I am asking you to “shine your light” on us. Simply email me a picture you would like to have on file and I will upload it to your membership.

Look forward to seeing you smiling faces!

P.S. reservations can still be made for Wine School 101. You can email me or make your reservations online at shop.pagespringscellars.com.

Cheers!
- Julia

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Page Springs Cellars Word Search

b e t g f s e t y r b u r c l y v c
s u b s y s i f e l u m d a y h b
c h r y c c o m a y e c o l e a c a
c s e r r o r g l o d m a n f f o t
h d r a a h l l a c u b m l a l r e
a s r h t t u b a r b c u l e o b r
r y l e s y a u b u a g n c h r r r
c h e h y s y a l e r l n n i a a t
u e f l r t a n i b r u t t r l o a
t e l e es o m g l i s e t c f o n
e c h r i o s t u c k d o n u l g
r l b a r l e a m c l i o n n l l b
i a a g c o r n l e t a n a b d e a
e d r g l o m s k i c y l t a n s r
t a n y y u u y y i i i s o f t p r e
d g c b b h t u m a b a r r a u b c
c u y t a r r m p j s a n l n d n n
a s e t a r r t r g j a g n s k i
b a s d g h j n e s e i o b n a c v

Charcuterie  Tannin  Barrio  Floral
Lees  Syrah  Mule  Tartrates
Glomski  Burrata  Cordon  Club
There is a secret new wine in the depths of our barrel room. ...well I guess it’s not a secret anymore. This wine hides until the right time: when it glows in such a beautiful way. The 2014 Atolla is a new PSC production that is showing tons of poise and promise. The Atolla project is proudly my first time developing a wine within our cellar and I am very proud to present it. Want to sample it? Well, you may just happen to find your self in the right place at the right time, and in that case enjoy! Want to make it happen?! The 2014 Atolla is now an exclusive offering of our Tours program. We siphon this wine directly from barrel for touring guests. This wine is also available by the bottle via Tours. Come enjoy one of our weekend winery tours or set something private up with our team!

Come taste the…

2014 Atolla

47% Malbec 23% Sangiovese 22% Syrah 8% Cabernet Sauvignon

‘Also know as the Coronate Medusa, the Atolla Jellyfish lives in the darkest depths of the oceans. This abyss-dwelling creature is bioluminescent and produces brilliant bright red light when approached by potential predators. The Atolla’s amazing ability of emitting light is used to attract other species in an attempt to deter confrontation. This vintage was barrel aged in the dark depths of our cellar for an extended period of time. The Atolla is a barrel that we love to showcase, as its bright style and deep structure always invokes a crowd and shines within our dark, damp barrel room.’

PSC offers winery tours at 12pm, 2pm & 4pm on Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays. Reservations can be made by calling our Tasting Room @ 928 639 3004 or emailing us tours@pagespringscellars.com

IN THE KITCHEN

By Bryan Nowicki, Chef de Cuisine

So another year is upon us bringing new and exciting things here at Page Springs Cellars. In our constant pursuit of culinary excellence we are taking some steps to up our game a bit. We have instituted new programs, menu items and expanded our space a bit to be more accommodating to your experience here at PSC. You can look forward to a new bathroom expansion in the Tasting Room which will free up some space in the kitchen, allowing us to start making all of our own dough for pizza, bread, more cottage goods (jams, pickles, etc.) and of course charcuterie.

I have developed a bread starter with wine yeast. Along with Page Springs water, the starter will be used in all of our pizza and focaccia bread. We are finding this starter makes for unique yeasty dough and certainly is delicious. Sliders and bruschetta’s will be now be served on the fresh baked bread. The pizza dough is made daily then double fermented for what we think is a great pizza. We are also working on an all organic produce program this year and outsourcing our meat from local purveyors. Rillettes (smoked salmon, fois gras and roasted vegetable to name a few) are now on the menu for your enjoyment in the Tasting Room or on a picnic.

We are also in the beginning stages of a food member club here at Page Springs Cellars; the “Cottage Club” will be an opportunity for guests to interact within our world of culinary arts. Members will have direct access to Chef Bryan for questions, receive a monthly blog and be able to join discussions. The club will host its own food driven events with cooking instruction, education, and of course eating and drinking PSC wines. Members will also receive direct offers for Tasting Room food specials, web and cottage goods sales. We are still working out the details but expect a discount for current members to join the Chef Bryan Cottage Club and exciting events to come.

Our Private Events department is rolling along full steam with the new deck in place and is ready for your catering needs. Book your party and enjoy wonderful food pairing options for your wine. Office parties, educational events, or maybe you and 7 friends taking in the view off the Crow's Nest upper deck, while feasting on a four course pairing menu. What ever your event, we can custom build and cater to your needs.

We also are expanding our Cottage Goods program this year. Jams, mustard and other Chef Bryan accoutrements will be available not only in the Tasting Room but online. During certain times of the year and at members events we will be putting together gift baskets for sale as well.

Come out this year and see what all the excitement is about!
IN INNER CIRCLE
2015 Colibri Vineyards Grenache
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 Page Springs Vineyards Grenache
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 Fort Bowie Vineyards Merlot
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Colibri Vineyards Mourvedre Hilltop
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Colibri Vineyards Verdot
Suggested Cellaring 5-7 years
2015 Pillsbury Vineyards Shiraz
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years

FAMILY
2015 Super Arizona
Suggested Cellaring 3-7 years
2015 Highlands
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Dragoon Vineyards Arinarnoa
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 Colibri Vineyards Grenache
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years

FRIENDS
2015 Cochise County Grenache
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 Colibri Vineyards Mourvedre
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 House Mountain Vineyards Petite Sirah
Suggested Cellaring 5-8 years

PRIMA
2015 Dos Padres Vineyards Vermentino
2015 Dos Padres Vineyards Roussanne
2015 Dragoon Vineyards Marsanne

CELLAR DOOR
2015 Highlands
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Colibri Vineyards Counoise
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Alba Vineyards Graciano
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 House Mountain Vineyards Grenache
Suggested Cellaring 2-4 years
2015 Deep Sky Vineyards Malbec
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years
2015 Fort Bowie Vineyards Merlot
Suggested Cellaring 3-5 years

Q2 Preview:
Last Day to Make Changes: March 31
Charge Day: April 4
Ship Window: April 10 – April 12
Pickup Window: April 7 – May 1
Ship Pickups: May 2 – May 4
Wine School 101: 6 Sessions to Choose From!
When: April 22 & 23, at 11-12:30, 1:30-3 or 4-5:30 pm

Private EVENTS
It’s All About The Experience
By Lisa Russell, Private Events Coordinator

Looking for the ideal setting for your next special event?
Consider our Estate Vineyard Deck that’s nestled within our grape vines providing the perfect venue for a range of special gatherings. From corporate outings, luncheons and wine socials to birthday celebrations and rehearsal dinners. Let us host your next event at our winery which offers extraordinary scenery with breath taking views of vineyards and sky.

For rates and more information, contact our Private Events Team at 928-639-3004 x 106 or email your inquiry to Private-Events@PageSpringsCellars.com

WWW.PAGESPRINGSCELLARS.COM