Another Crossroad for the Arizona Wine Industry

While I consider myself an Arizonan, I certainly recognize that my views regarding our industry have been shaped by my time working in vineyards and wineries in California. This also goes for my views on free commerce and the importance of small business—especially agricultural business. Although I am not a native to nor am I a resident of California (anymore), you might consider me an entrepreneurial transplant from the Golden State. California is notorious for its bureaucratic ways, but its wine industry didn't become a 34 billion dollar industry by severely limiting their vineyards and wineries ability to get their goods to market. (Many Californian restrictions these days actually deal with regulating the wine industry because it has become so successful and congested—for instance restrictive hillside planting ordinances in Napa.) I am digging my roots in as deeply as possible here in Arizona, but I have continually found the legal and business "soils" to be somewhat poor and inhospitable. Over the last decade I have twice taken part in trying to improve legal fertility in Arizona in order to attract new investment and to support the growth of our existing industry. Unfortunately, we still don't exist in a free wine market in Arizona. We are now flat-lining with regard to industry growth and may even see a contraction in our winery numbers if the current legal climate, and more importantly, the enforcement attitudes don't change.

In my opinion, from a philosophic and practical perspective, there are two ways to look at the law: 1.) As restrictive in nature or 2.) As permissive by design. The distinction between the two is very important. Viewing the law as restrictive, to me, means that if the law doesn’t tell you that you can do something then you can’t do it. For instance, the law doesn’t specifically say I can make cherry wine so I had better run out and try to pass a law that says I can. Otherwise it is not legal… On the other hand, a permissive interpretation of the law would suggest that if you aren’t told you can’t do something, then it is ok to do it. In this case, unless the law says I can’t make cherry wines then I am free to do so. Why is this important?

For years (and maybe because the stakes were too low to concern anyone), our Arizona industry has, more-or-less, been operating in a permissive system. The director of the Arizona Department of Liquor Licensing and Control (ADLLC) prior to the current appointment wanted to see the industry grow and therefore also took this approach. It is also likely that previous Directors did not pay much attention because the industry was small and didn’t warrant a lot of attention or a related enforcement budget. This is no longer the case. What’s more, it is also worth noting that this restrictive versus permissive schism also plays out in the enforcement climate.

In 2015, Governor Ducey appointed a new ADLLC Director whose last three decades were spent in law enforcement. This new Director also brought on a new field officer from the world of law enforcement that is now responsible for investigating and auditing Arizona wineries. In and of itself, if winery owners are blatantly breaking the law, then something should be done about it. The challenge, though, is that our wine laws are still very fetal in nature and need a LOT of work to support the amazing potential of this industry.

As if this were not enough, there are other serious complicating factors here. One is that there is a very small contingency (1-2 business owners) in the wine industry who would like to see the laws changed just to benefit their own
Libby Grutza, Tasting Room Supervisor, Sommelier

We came for adventure and it became a completely wonderful and different adventure all together. When I first convinced my husband Josh to move to Sedona it didn’t take a lot of convincing, I showed him a picture of Cathedral Rock and said, “This is across the street from the house we can live in! (The house was purchased by my grandparents in the late 1970’s and I would come to visit Red Rock Crossing as a child a few times a year),” his response was something along the lines of “Okay, sounds good!” And then that was that.

Not unlike our amazing Syrah clones which originate in France, transplanted to California and now we have planted them here in Arizona, I have been transplanted a few other times too. This hasn’t been my first wild adventure! With the wanderlust and gypsy soul of mine, the moment I was able to, I left the Midwest; Minneapolis-Saint Paul is where I originate and headed out to California just like those clones. I attended California College of the Arts in the Bay Area, spent a spell in Reno, Nevada and popped back to the Twin Cities here and there. In 2010, I studied abroad in Europe through the University of Wisconsin, where I was finishing my Art and International Studies degree. While in Europe, I backpacked for months and managed to travel clear around most of the world renowned “wine country” of the old world... Yes, you read that correctly, I didn’t even drink the wine when I was there... I didn’t know at that time that wine would become my work, my passion and my life.

Fast forward a few more moons and I am here in the Verde Valley. I moved here in June of 2015 and found a job pouring wine in Uptown Sedona, I should tell you that when my neighbor told me Arizona grew grapes and made wine my reaction was “Yeah, yeah... Minnesota makes wine too...” I had no idea what was happening here in AZ and all the amazing wine being made. In the short 2.5 years I have lived here, my husband and I got married and we had a beautiful baby boy named Chuck (yes, we named a baby Chuck, short for Charles of course) who is now a PSC and tasting rooms regular at a year and a half. I remember trying PSC wines and thinking I am going to work there some day! Luckily, I knew our lovely Lauren Rankin in the vineyards and I was in! I have become completely dedicated to learning everything wine and found my true passion here at PSC. I can’t wait to see what else this wild adventure has to offer, I would have never thought this would be our adventure in the first place! ❖

Laura Borden, Tasting Room Associate since June 2015

After living in Sacramento while teaching and earning my Masters degree in Educational Technology, I was looking to relocate. I ended up planting my roots in Phoenix where my brother had lived for years. Fast forward a couple years and I started to hear whispers of wine in Arizona! I heard of this place called Page Springs Cellars and took a trip to check it out. One visit turned into many return trips and a growing love for Arizona wines, El Serrano being an early favorite. Within the year I told my brother that if I could find teaching position in the Verde Valley that I would move to the area. He quickly agreed and decided to follow me north. We both pulled up our roots and transplanted to the town of Clarkdale. I blame Eric and the amazing wine to this day, anyone want to talk him into paying my moving expenses?

After a few years in the area, I volunteered to work at Tilted Earth and fell into a position in the Tasting Room based on a suggestion from Andy. Now over two years later, I continue to teach in Cornville, working as a Reading Specialist during the week and pouring wine on the weekends. I love the balance of education in both positions along with the chance to talk to adults rather than always working with kids where I discuss the merits of keeping shoes tied and why we need to learn to read (to understand wine labels of course). The crossover between my two jobs is something that even benefits my students, just last month I was able to bring the eighth grade class to visit the vineyard and learn about careers in the industry with Luke.

I believe my roots have grown deep in the Verde Valley and I plan on continuing both teaching and pouring wine for the foreseeable future, I found the balance I have been seeking. Now, does anyone want to discuss my U-Haul bill with Eric.... ❖
By Jason Krug, Vineyard Manager

The last few weeks I have been researching new varieties of grapes to plant in our Northern vineyards to replace some of our underperforming blocks. All wine grapes grown in Arizona are a transplant from somewhere else. So it is important to select varieties that have the best chance of thriving here and producing fruit worthy of making delicious wine. Take for example Syrah with origins of northern Rhone or Grenache with ties to Spain. These varieties do great in Arizona and produce some very palatable wines.

Trying to find what grapes are the best fit for our northern vineyards takes some investigation and a little luck. Each vineyard location offers its own unique challenges which can be overcome through selection of the right grape variety and its characteristics. Let’s look at the page Springs Cellars Estate Vineyard where we are considering replacing the Petite Syrah and Syrah. The Estate is the lowest lying vineyard out of our northern vineyards. It’s close to a body of water and accumulates moisture from the air during veraison (the onset of ripening) and is more likely to get hit with frost during the spring season. At the estate we want to consider planting varieties with loose clusters that are known for budding out late and who tolerate hot summer days. Montepulciano and Marselan make for great choices.

Dos Padres vineyard is just on the other side of the creek from the estate but varies completely with different soil structure, terrain and micro climate. We need to select grape varieties that are known for growing in regions with calcareous soils (rocky limestone beds). These sloping vineyards offer wind and plenty of sunshine. So we look to varieties known for growing in these conditions. Carignan, Aligianico, Grenache Blanc and the lesser known Bourboulenc all seem like good potential matches for Dos Padres but it will still be mystery on what characteristics the site yields to the fruit.

The last step to when selecting which variety to plant to decide on a rootstock. Grape vines can be planted as “own rooted” like our Traminette at the estate is. This means that the trunk of the vine is growing from its own roots. Alternatively, a species of wine grape (mostly vitis vinifera) can be grafted on to the roots of another species of grape with origins in North America. Rootstocks are selected for their characteristics to be resistant to various insects and diseases and to be more adapted to the soils and climatic conditions of various North American regions. For example a more common rootstock used in Arizona is 1103P. All of House Mountain Vineyard and Dos Padres Vineyard grapes are grafted onto 1103P because of its reliability to grow in high pH calcareous soils, be drought tolerant, and grow well on hillsides. But 140RU and Freedom rootstock also show potential for good fits in our Northern vineyards.

We’re excited to continue experimenting and with a little luck (and a lot of hard work) our transplantations will lead to some very special wines! ☄

Yoga Transplants

I think most people who haven’t tried to practice Yoga believe that you must be skinny, flexible and Buddhist to join in on the fun. Standing on your head and tying yourself into knots are prerequisites. What I have learned about Yoga is that the practice is really a transplanting/transference of ‘Energy’. Sugar, power drinks, caffeine or (I apologize) wine cannot give us the same high as mindful Breathing. The Sanskrit word ‘Prana’ is now a word on bumper stickers, the name of an apparel line and tossed around in interesting ways. The original definition in simplistic terms is ‘Life’s Energy’. Breathing in, Breathing out, Breathing through your upper body, Breathing through your lower body, letting the Breathe circulate within is what gives us ‘Life’s Energy’ or ‘Prana’. Try to set a reoccurring alarm on your phone and every time you hear the alarm, take 10 deep breaths, noticing when you Breathe in and when you Breathe out to transplant/transfer energy to your entire physical system. Check out our series of yoga classes starting this spring at Page Springs Cellars and see if it transplants your Prana.

Massage Transplants

As we know, when someone walks into a room, their moods affect our moods. Our feelings are transferred/transplanted to each other. Massage at Page Springs Cellars is offered to individuals, couples, groups and in these scenarios, each massage ‘receiver’ is paired with one of our expert massage practitioners. The person giving the massage has been practicing techniques to put their own tensions and stresses on the back burner so any negativity does not transplant into their ‘receiver’. The massage practitioner has also learned and practiced techniques so any stress released by the ‘receiver’ does not transfer into their own body. As our wine making team has the challenging job of constantly tasting our wines, I have the challenging job to receive ‘demo’ massages from massage practitioners that want to join our team. I can say that as I stand behind the quality and craftsmanship of our wines, I can say that our massage practitioners are highly qualified and will provide a safe and relaxing experience. Be on the lookout for our upcoming specialty couples massage packages throughout 2018!
Mike & Ilene Pavon

For a guy who wasn’t born or raised in Northern Arizona, Eric Glomski honors and is committed to our region just as if he was born here. I can write this because, as a native Southern Californian, I first visited the Verde Valley with my family in 1966 (I was 11 years old). For reference, Pink Jeep Tours only had 2 pink jeeps, Tlaquepaque was 3 years from breaking ground, the Rondeee Hotel (current “Orchards”) was the only upscale Best Western property, with the “Turtle” restaurant. The Oak Creek Owl (current Exposures art gallery) was a restaurant that had Phoenix residents as regular customers. It was an exceptional culinary experience for its time.

West Sedona literally did not exist.

As it turned out, my family moved to Flagstaff in August, 1971, and my mom and dad bought the Flagstaff Beauty College on Birch Street, near Emerson Elementary School. Dad opened Hair Unlimited in Sedona’s new La Pasada Shopping Center in 1974. Looking west from his salon, there was the Al Bayless market, the Flicker Shack (Sedona’s first movie theater) the Lemon Peel Bar, the C Motel, and way out on the edge of town, the Rainbow’s End bar. That was all there was to West Sedona (which was actually called Grasshopper Flats in 1974). The Oak Creek Tavern (the place where the Western Artists of America group would meet, including Joe Beeler...Sarah Beeler used to have her hair done at my dad’s salon) would serve underage patrons, like myself, because we had fake IDs. Rowdy kids passing an afternoon, ditching class from Conino High could play a game of pool and look at the enormous stuffed polar bear while pretending to be adults.

All the local celebrities of the time passed through my dad’s hair salon: Barry Goldwater’s daughter, Joanne, local developer John De Poe and his wife, Tlaquepaque developer Abe Miller’s family, and of course all of the Hollywood transplants such as Orson Wells and Jane Russell.

Page Springs was known only for its steakhouse, and it was overshadowed by other steakhouses of the era: the Mormon Lake Steakhouse, and Flagstaff’s Cowboy Country Club and Horsemens Lodge. Also in Flagstaff was The Steak House, The Gables, and in 1974, Granny’s Closet.

In the Verde Valley, besides the Oak Creek Owl, there was my favorite restaurant, The House of Joy. Formerly a location where, in its early 20th century heyday, a copper miner could enjoy horizontal refreshment, owners John and Mary Dempsey quietly created one of Conde Naste Magazine’s top 100 restaurant’s in America. Think of that. Top 100 in Jerome, Arizona over 40 years ago. I would take my high school girlfriend there on special occasions to eat Crab Imperial in the private booth for two (it had curtains!). I drove an hour and a half, one-way, to eat at this restaurant.

What I’m trying to convey, is that I am of this area. My wife Ilene and I live in Tucson and have raised our 3 kids there for the past 20 years. We have always had a certain pride and a commitment to Arizona winemakers, and have been enjoying Arizona wines since 1998. Kent Callaghan, Todd & Kelly Bostock, Ron & Ann Roncone, and the other dedicated vintners out of Wilcox, Pierce, Elgin, and all of the others from Sonora and the Verde Valley. Eric once told me that Kent Callaghan was the “Iron Man” of Arizona wine makers. Again, Eric tipped his hat to the traditions of our region.

Eric and his PSC crew have been committed to producing great wines from our state since 2003. Our first bottles from PSC were 2003, all made from California grapes, while the first Syrah plantings at the Page Springs property were taking root.

Eric and Gayle are great philanthropists as well. It’s not all just about grapes and fortune (uh huh). In 2010, my wife and I had a Tucson fundraiser to benefit public schools and PSC staff (I think it was Corey) enthusiastically drove 400 miles round-trip to pour PSC wines. PSC and several Southern Arizona wine makers, participated for 3 straight years, and $85,000.00 was raised to put computers in Tucson classrooms which had none.

So, when we visit Page Springs Cellars it is with the knowledge that Eric, Gayle, Corey, and all of the PSC staff are of the Verde Valley. They are of Arizona. They are one of us. And, when we drink their wine it is with pride that we know we are part of it and it is part of us.

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Glomski Grapevine Continued from P1

business and not those of the industry as a whole. This minority takes no issue with erroneously throwing their colleagues under the bus for even the most questionable infractions. Strangely, this vocal minority has somehow grabbed the ear of the ADLLC and the Governor’s office. While the reality of lobbying and manipulating the law is always present and is an inherent right in the system, it is surprising that these two State institutions have not done their homework in order to discern whether any true form of representation exists here for our wine industry. The track records and ethics of these individuals have not been scrutinized and should be.

Furthermore, much effort is being made in restrictively enforcing a law that is not fully understood by those enforcing it. Combine conceptual restrictive-ism with gray laws, a lack of legal education and the willingness to be led around by a vocal minority that purports to know the law and you have one big, anti-business mess.

In the end, the fault is our own (the AZ Wine Industry) – it is my own (Page Springs and Arizona Stronghold). We obviously need to dedicate more time to staying on top of these issues and the political climate associated with them. It is unfortunate, though, that we have to devote so much time to scratching out a legal and political existence in our market rather than developing our businesses, making better wines or planning for the future.

The Arizona Wine Industry will need your support again, sometime soon. So...stay tuned, like before, we can’t do this without you!
The subject we were asked to write about was "Transplant" or as the dictionary defines as… "To move or transfer (something) to another place or situation, typically with some effort or upheaval." I chose to write about all the movements I have personally gone through over the last decade in the wine business and how these collective changes have culminated in countless opportunities and are the best investments I have ever made.

I started coming out to Page Springs in 2006 as a friend of Eric and the crew, helping during harvest, driving trucks to California to pick up fruit, etc. Immediately, I fell in love with the camaraderie, appreciation for hard work and the common goal shared by all to make not only wine, but a legacy. I threw my hat in the ring by making 3 barrels of wine for myself in the fall of 2007, dubbed the Lotus. I was part of this crazy creative team and idea. This was and continues to be the coolest thing in the world… especially for a kid who grew up in Sedona.

In 2008, Eric brought me on as the new Tasting Room manager at Page Springs Cellars. I left a relatively lucrative position in the restaurant business in Sedona to help stake my claim in the pioneering wine industry. After much success with expanding the tasting room and setting a foundation for growth, I was moved once again, to head up the Arizona Stronghold Tasting Room project, which was a blast getting off the ground and running. I learned so much about budgets, construction, regulations, permitting etc. In actuality, I knew nothing of these things going into it, but a pattern has emerged over the years. I have a tendency to be resolute and learn as I go.

After passing the torch on to Kevin Grubb over there, I returned to Page Springs to continue operating the Tasting Room. Not soon after I took the helm of organizing and running our annual fall Harvest Festival at the winery. Once again, though I had no previous experience promoting concerts, Eric trusted in me an opportunity to learn and be part of a team once again working hard for a common goal. After a couple years of Harvest Festivals, I became the team lead on a new endeavor, a summer concert series to be held in Cottonwood, called Tilted Earth, another large project with many months of planning and hard work.

While I had a blast doing and learning all these things, my true love and goal was to get to the cellar and make wine. During this time from 2007 through 2013, I had been establishing my own wine brand called Burning Tree Cellars, growing from those 3 barrels in 2007 to over 80 barrels from the 2012 harvest. I built my own tasting room in Cottonwood and the started to get some recognition within the industry and the market. In early 2014, I approached Eric about transplanting again, this time to Production.

Production is another beast entirely. I was not going to learn on the run. I had to immerse myself fully. I started as a cellar hand at Arizona Stronghold Vineyards. At the time though, there was a vacuum of responsibility and leadership there and I took this opportunity to dive in head first into the process. Over the next three vintages, I not only sharpened and honed my winemaking skills but also familiarized my self with all the processes involved such as TTB submittals (not fun), logistics planning such as bottling, and systems management. In my opinion, we made some of the best wines to come out of that facility and it wasn’t because we were crazy geniuses. We just had the will to work our asses off, be clean and ask ourselves at every decision… “Is this the best thing for the wine?”

I then moved into grape logistics with Eric in the vineyards for the majority of the 2016 Harvest. I learned another facet of the industry, understanding grape physiology, trucking logistics and calling picks, etc. Once again movement afforded me this.

After 2016, Eric asked me to join the winemaking team at Page Springs Cellars. I felt this was another example of how working hard and caring opens doors. In addition, it was an opportunity to return to where it all started for me. No matter what I have done or where I went previously, PSC always felt like home.

This last harvest was a blast. I believe that Eric, Marissa, our team and I made some awesome wines while also pushing the boundaries of wine making styles such as cold soak protocols, whole cluster fermentations, co-ferments, dessert wines, etc… I also hopefully left an impression of hard work and cleanliness while creating an atmosphere of accomplishment through it.

The next move for me is to hopefully build my own winemaking facility in the next year. Over these last 11 years, I have gained the knowledge that I will not be able to do this without the friendship and trust afforded to me, the hard work and sacrifice of myself and family, and the willingness to be transplanted. One of my simple principles in my career and I believe the main reason I have been afforded all these opportunities is that I strive to leave a place better than I found it and to passionately care about the wine.
Transplant: move or transfer (something) to another place or situation, typically with some effort or upheaval.

I feel like home chefs and professionals share many common traits and work towards many of the same goals, most of which pertain to the care, production and representation of the food. But let’s get real here, the art of cooking is, for the most part, taking a classic recipe that has been around for centuries and putting your own signature or twist on it. This constant struggle is what keeps our food and pallets transforming not only on a professional level but at home as well. So after establishing the need for transformation how do we accomplish this task? Does every meal or dish require more grueling work or time? Certainly with some dishes this is the case but many times it is just a touch of herbs, the flavor of a different salt or mild influences from a creamy or acidic cheese.

For many of my twists or “transplants” I use cheese. The wide versatility and varying flavor profiles of cheese now available in our global marketplace make the possibilities endless. Cheese is like wine, an age old process found all around the world in different forms and varieties. I have found, like wine each cheese and region has a unique story and history. Often times the story directly correlates to a significant wine of the region as well. If you do your research you can turn cheese into a conversation piece, pick your cheeses wisely and look up the story and profile, this shared information with your guests is what it is all about. This, in its self is a transformation.

Cheese is not cheap, use a reputable source, and ask questions you will often find an eager cheese monger ready and willing to tell you more about the cheese than you even wanted to know. As far as I am concerned the two best places to buy online cheese are Murray’s cheese NYC and Cowgirl Creamery/Tomales Bay, California. Since I am on the West Coast I primarily use Tomales Bay. Both have outstanding selections and collections from the US and abroad and both are ready and willing to give information and make suggestions. So whether it is a bit of fresh, local tangy goat cheese on a summer salad or a crumbly aged 2 year Gouda bursting with butterscotch standing on it own, take a little time get familiar with a few cheeses and wow your guests.

PAGE SPRINGS CELLARS WORD SEARCH

Find these words which all come from the newsletter

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A A B A Z E G A T O N D E T P A D A
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I've lived in so many places, I feel like a terminal "transplant". Growing up, my family didn't live in one place for any length of time. I have no idea what it would have been like to grow up in the same house or neighborhood. There are times when this makes me pause and wonder about what could have been but more times than not I'm grateful that I've connected with so many amazing places and people.

Each move was an opportunity to reset, to learn about a new place, to have new adventures and to immerse myself in new situations. I learned at a very young age that the one constant thing that we can depend on in life is change. Nothing stays static - always shifting, moving and resetting itself naturally.

When you are a terminal transplant, you often wonder about what and who you left behind and if you made an imprint on a person or place by the simple act of being there. Every time we transplant ourselves, we're hoping to make connections that last a lifetime. I think moving around as much as I have, you begin to crystalize the concept of home and what it truly means. For me, it's a place to build memories and a sense of community with friends and family and the natural landscape. The Glomski family has done this with Page Springs Cellars. It's a place where you can connect whether you're a transplant like me or someone who has grown up in this area. It's a place that enables you to settle-in and appreciate the simple things that we can easily take for granted in our ever-changing, fast-paced lives. Let us help you create new memories that you can take with you no matter where your adventures may take you next.

Contact our Private Events Team at private-events@pagespringscellars.com or call 928-639-3004 x106

Private Events

By Lisa Russell, Private Events Coordinator

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Dear Wine Club

Q: How many guests can I bring for tastings?
A: Members can bring up to 4 guests to use complimentary tastings. The max number of free tastes that can be done in one day under a membership is 6 (this is 2 members + 4 guests). Any additional guests can do tastings at 50% discount. For larger groups our Members can reserve the gas grill next to the Oak Creek deck for a picnic (please contact Julia to reserve) or you can plan a private event through our Private Events Department.

Q: Do I make a reservation for the Tasting Room?
A: We are a first come first served establishment. On certain days there can be a wait but we strive to get our Members in just as soon as possible.

Q: How do I get my quarterly releases?
A: You select to pick up or have the wine shipped. Release pickup window is thirty days. All remaining releases will automatically ship out to the address on file after the pick up window ends. Shipping members will receive their release one week from charge day. * Temperature permitting.

Q: Can I bring my dog to the Winery?
A: Yes, absolutely. Our Estate is pet friendly. We only ask that you pick up after your furry guest. * Please note we can only accept service animals into the Tasting Room due to Department of Health regulations.

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