

THE WINE PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 17 No. 7

Ledgewood Creek Winery & Vineyards Edition B

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"With Gold Medal Wine Club,
The Road to Great Wine
Begins at Your Door."

www.goldmedalwine.com

SUISUN VALLEY WINE EMERGING FROM NEIGHBORING NAPA VALLEY'S SHADOW

When Dean Frisbie left his home state of Kansas and headed to California forty years ago, he had little inkling that his future would one day be tied to the California wine industry.

After receiving a pair of degrees from Kansas University (Engineering and Law), Frisbie came west as an assignment for his then employer Chevron Oil. He settled in Northern California's Bay Area and soon met another transplant, his future wife Bunny, who was originally from Massachusetts.

The couple married in 1969 and set about raising a family. During the time, Dean changed professions and ultimately wound up selling commercial real estate developments.

Nearly twenty years later, Dean Frisbie acquired the family's first piece of agricultural land, a massive 145-acre plot in Suisun Valley that was planted in pears. When the prices for pears plummeted two years later, a neighbor who managed vineyards offered to help Frisbie replant his existing groves.

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Ledgewood Creek Winery & Vineyard, just eight miles west of Napa, is where the dreams of Dean and Bunny Frisbie came true.

Gold Medal Wine Club features two wines each month from only the best small wineries of California. Featured wines include those which have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by a respected national wine publication. On occasion we feature a wine which is of high medal-quality, but due to its very limited availability or by preference of the wine producer, may not be submitted to these venues for review. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with limited distribution. There are over 2,000 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



2005 RESERVE CHARDONNAY

The year 2005 was hailed as an exceptionally fine vintage in Northern California. The 2005 Reserve Chardonnay from Ledgewood Creek is a testimonial to that hallmark harvest. Comprised of fruit from three exceptional chardonnay clones; Dijon, Robert Young and Clone 4, winemaker Larry Langbehn crafted the estate Reserve Chardonnay for richness, depth and mouth filling flavors. A **Silver Medal** was awarded to this wine at the *New World International Wine Competition* immediately after it's initial release. The 2005 Ledgewood Creek Reserve Chardonnay displays a crisp golden hue. The nose immediately opens to a burst of cantaloupe, grapefruit aromas with a nice undertone of vanilla. Delicately ageing in primarily French oak enabled true varietal characteristics and luscious fruit flavors to announce their presence. A smooth, well-balanced and well-rounded body leads to the generous and long lasting refined finish. Pairs well with fresh butter nut lettuce salad with herb and olive oil dressing, a creamy brie, and grilled fish entrees. 100% Estate Chardonnay. Enjoy now until 2010.



2005 GSM RED RHONE

A Gold Medal Wine Club Special Selection! The Ledgewood Creek 2005 GSM is the winery's first bottling of this Rhone style wine. Winemaker Larry Langbehn has created an absolutely terrific, flavorful, very approachable, crowd-pleasing wine. "When I started working with Ledgewood Creek in 2002, I discovered a ranch with the highest diversity of unusually excellent quality grapes that I've seen in the last 15 years...the results have been stunning," says Langbehn. A crimson red, with a full bouquet combining ripe Bing cherries and sun ripened plums. The unique character of the Grenache and lush flavors of Syrah are balanced by the straight-forward Mourvedre fruit. The wine is has very distinct flavors of berry and plum. Medium acidity with soft, balanced tannins lead to a very pleasing, soft, lingering finish. This is a wine that can pair well with virtually all foods and appetizers. Aged 15 months in oak. 60% Mourvedre, 20% Grenache, 20% Syrah. Enjoy now until 2012.

WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2005 VINTAGE: **Silver Medal**, *Jerry Mead's New World International Wine Competition*. Recently released and entered in numerous late summer wine competitions, additional awards to follow.

LEGACY: Ledgewood Creek's award-winning Chardonnays have won Gold, Double Gold, and Best of Class, since the first release in 2002.

Just the facts:

pH.	3.67
Alcohol	14.6%
Total Acid	0.61 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak	9 Months
Cases Produced	1,023
Drink Now or Up to Year.	2010

2005 VINTAGE: *A Gold Medal Wine Club Special Selection!* The long-awaited inaugural release of GSM is offered for the first time through Gold Medal Wine Club. Not yet reviewed, accolades, and awards to follow.

LEGACY: The winery's previous small production Rhone blends have garnered multiple awards and have sold out quickly at the winery tasting room.

Just the facts:

pH.	3.68
Alcohol	14.2%
Total Acid	0.59 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak	15 Months
Cases Produced	1,682
Drink Now or Up to Year.	2012

GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

James Frisbie

James Frisbie was a recent graduate of Pepperdine University in Southern California in 1993, working on the staff of California's Senator Diane Feinstein. Even though he has majored in Political Science and Spanish, he decided to try a career as a securities broker after a year on Senator's Feinstein's staff.

"Everything was going great until the securities company I was joining decided to merge with another firm," James Frisbie, now 35, recently recalled. "When the announcements were made, a number of us were told our jobs were being abolished even before we got started. I wasn't at all prepared for such a happening and didn't know what I was going to do."

James immediately called his father Dean, who accepted the news in a most positive manner. He invited his son to come home and join his efforts to expand the family's growing base of vineyards.

"It all seemed a little weird to me," James Frisbie continued. "I had never studied oenology or anything remotely connected to it. What happened was truly fortunate. At that precise time, my Dad was at a point in the evolution of our business where he wanted to change the method of selling our grapes. Up to that time, we had sold everything to Sebastiani. Dad wanted us to find

new wineries and spread our base of supply. It was a really natural fit and for the next couple of years I was able to attract a number of top wineries to sign long term contracts for our fruit."

An incredibly modest James Frisbie went on to explain that his association with his family's business continued to develop over the next twelve years until today he fills dual positions within the business's structure.

He serves as the company's sales and marketing leader as well as the all-important harvest manager each and every vintage.

"We're not too keen on titles around here," he confided. "Since none of our family was trained professionally in the wine business, it was critical that we find some real professionals to help us achieve our goals. Our team here is really first rate and capable of future growth."

James also admits that he wasn't completely sold on the prospects of building a new winery when the project was first proposed. He felt that he had his hands full with his duties as vineyards and harvest manager and that he really didn't have the specific knowledge to make

the proposed winery successful.

"What my Dad was trying to do was quite simple," James Frisbie further explained. "He was simply trying to protect what we had built up over the years. Our ten-year contracts with some of our grape customers were coming to an end and the wine business was going through one of its softer periods. In the end it was ultimately

Dad's decision. In retrospect, the decision to build Ledgewood Creek Winery was one of the best business decisions that could be made."

James Frisbie is atypical of many modern winery executives in that he is completely self-taught. He has learned the wine business from the grass roots up and is proud of his family's accomplishments thus far.

"When you consider that Suisun Valley is a real newcomer to the wine industry, I think we have really come a long way," he added. "When we started here, the Suisun Valley Appellation was brand new, and we were only the second winery to be built. Today, there are a dozen or so wineries located in our valley and consumers have begun to take notice. Our wines have done quite



James Frisbie

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**WINE
WIZARD**

- 1) How was wine first stored?
- 2) What country first used corks to seal wine bottles?
- 3) Who invented the corkscrew for opening wine bottles?

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Suisun Valley's near by location to Napa Valley (due east eight miles) made the move seem plausible and the transition was begun.



Larry Langbehn has been Ledgewood Creek's consulting winemaker since day-one.

Since that time, additional parcels of land have been added to the Frisbie fold. The family's acreage presently totals around 400, with some 335 presently under vine. All their early fruit was sold to Sebastiani Vineyards, but just over a decade ago new contracts were signed with Clos du Bois, Ravenswood and others.



Dean and Bunny Frisbie.

As these long-term contracts neared fruition, Dean Frisbie sought another business outlet to hedge his family's position in the industry. The wine industry was at a peak and the idea of opening a family winery was advanced. After much consideration, Ledgewood Creek was founded and its first wines were released in 2001.

"I looked around at what was happening," remarked Frisbie, "and saw a great deal of growth in just about every region. My family was basically growers and we were really successful at what we did. Since Suisun Valley wasn't on everyone's must have list, I guess I was taking a chance starting the winery. I liked the fact that

Suisun Valley had its own appellation (since 1981) and I thought the new winery gave us a really good hedge against future problems. I felt I needed to create a permanent home for our grapes and the winery seemed like the right thing to do."

Since the family sold around 90% of its grape production, Ledgewood Creek's initial release of 2200 cases was literally a drop in its proverbial wine bucket. Added to the fact that the new winery was only the second winery in Suisun Valley, it was gratifying to everyone that Ledgewood Creek's wines began drawing support from around the area and elsewhere in the state.

Production has grown steadily and will hit between 14,000 and 15,000 cases in 2007. The winery and visitor's center have also been completed and the complex now produces an amazing number (11) of varietals. A second Frisbie Family label, cleverly entitled Picnique, accounts for a sizeable amount of the winery's total production.

Dean Frisbie is now a very spry 76, and continues day-to-day activities at the winery. He has assembled a first class team to take Ledgewood Creek to its next projected level, that being the 30,000 case mark. Frisbie figures that will take some 5 to 7 years to achieve, but is in no real hurry. He has watched the wine business stretch to its peak in the late 1990s and return to more normal levels for the next half-decade.

The Ledgewood Creek staff includes two of Frisbie's sons, Tom and James, and an outstanding outside cast. Consulting winemaker Larry Langbehn brings with him



Harvesting the Chardonnay for the Estate Reserve.

some imposing credentials including a stint with heralded Napa icon winery Freemark Abbey. Even Dean's wife Bunny gets into the act

and is a frequent helper at the tasting room.

The future certainly looks bright for Ledgewood Creek and its family of fine wines. Dean Frisbie's dream of a producing winery in Suisun Valley is a reality and also a critical success.

We predict you will hear a great deal more from Ledgewood Creek in the future.



ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) Early wine was stored first in terracotta amphoras (large ceramic vessels) and later in wooden barrels. Wine was never aged; it was briefly stored or transported and served before it had a chance to spoil. Invented around 7000 B.C. in Georgia, these terracotta amphoras were sealed with oak and buried in the earth. Georgia (nestled between Russia and Turkey) has an ancient wine producing history and for years was accredited as birthplace of wine. Grape seeds have been found dating back to 7000 BC and 3000 year-old huge clay amphora jugs have been found during excavations from ancient settlements. Some historians even consider that a generic word for "wine" stems from the Georgian word "gvino."

2) It was during the early part of the 18th century during England's industrial revolution when the production of glass wine bottles with small bottlenecks were designed and manufactured, making airtight wine storage possible for the first time in history. The English were the first to seal these small-necked wine bottles using cork imported from Spain and Portugal. Spanish cork comes from the bark of the *Quercus Suber* or cork tree, a species of Oak native to Spain.

3) The first corkscrew appeared around 1676 and was used for opening perfume, medicine, and cosmetic bottles. Corkscrew inventors were inspired by a tool called the gun worm or bullet screw, a device that pulled stuck bullets from long rifle barrels. With the advent of the small-necked wine bottles being sealed with cork for the English lords and ladies, the necessity of a wine-specific corkscrew was born. All of this led to the design and patent of the wine corkscrews we use today.

The first wine corkscrew patent was No. 2061, granted to Samuel Henshall, Princes Street, Parish of Christchurch, Middlesex, England on August 24, 1795.





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

BRAISED BEEF WITH RED WINE

(Beouf Bourguignon)

Pair with LedgeWood Creek 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon

Serves 6-8

- | | |
|--|---|
| 10 Peppercorns, whole | 3 Tablespoons Herbes de Provence |
| 2 Tablespoons course Sea Salt | 2 Tablespoons fresh Rosemary leaves |
| 2 Tablespoons packed fresh Sage leaves | 1 Tablespoon fresh Thyme leaves |
| 1/4 Cup extra-virgin Olive Oil | 4 - 4 1/2 Pounds of boneless Beef roast, 4" cubes |
| 1 Cup Beef broth | 4 Tablespoons extra-virgin Olive Oil (extra) |
| 2 Garlic Cloves, crushed | 2 Cups Onion, chopped |
| 1-1 1/2 Carrots, finely chopped | 1-1 1/2 Celery, finely chopped |
| 1/3 Cup Tomato paste | 1 Bottle Red Wine for Pot |
| 1 Bottle for the chef | 8 large Carrots cut into 1" pieces |
| 1/2 Stick of Butter | 4 Tablespoons Flour |
| 2/3 Cup Beef broth | 1/3 Cup Orange Brandy |
| 4 Tablespoons Balsamic Vinegar | 1 Pound Crimini Mushrooms, thick slices |
| 1/3 Cup Italian Parsley, chopped | Zest of 1/2 of a Lemon and Orange |

Grind first six ingredients in spice mill. Sprinkle beef with spice mixture; pat down. Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in large heavy pot over medium heat. Working in batches, add beef cubes and brown well, turning occasionally, about 8 minutes per batch. Using tongs, transfer beef to large bowl. Pour off any excess fat from pot. Add 1 cup broth to drippings in pot and bring to a boil, scraping up any browned bits. Reduce broth by a least one half; pour deglazed juices into small bowl. Heat 4 tablespoons olive oil in same pot over medium high heat. Add crushed garlic and cook 1 minute. Add chopped onion, carrots, and celery; sauté until browned about 12 minutes. Add tomato paste and sauté for 2 more minutes. Add deglazed pan juices and simmer. Return beef to pot along with any accumulated juices. Add 1/2 bottle of wine and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Season generously with salt and pepper. Cover and cook until tender, at least two hours. When the meat is nearly done, add carrots and cook until tender. Using tongs, transfer beef to a large bowl. Tilt pot and spoon off fat from surface of sauce. In another saucepan, melt 1/2 stick of butter; add 4 tablespoons of flour and cook, making a roux. Add remaining wine, 2/3 cup beef broth, additional sage, and thyme to taste and bring to a boil. When thickened, add orange brandy and balsamic vinegar. Cook 2 more minutes, add to pot with meat. Return meat to pot add mushrooms and cook on medium low heat until mushrooms are tender. Prior to serving, add citrus zest and chopped parsley. Serve with boiled potatoes or egg noodles.

EMBASSY CASSEROLE

The dish was served at the American Embassy in Rome, Italy in the 1920s and 30s

Enjoy with LedgeWood Creek 2005 Reserve Chardonnay

Serves 4 - 6

- 1 1/2 Cups of long grain White Rice, uncooked
- 1/2 lb. Bay Shrimp, cooked
- 1/2 lb. Crab meat, cooked
- 10 ounce box of frozen Peas
- 1/2 Cup Green Bell Pepper, finely diced
- 1 Cup Mayonnaise
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bring 4 cups of water to rolling boil in a sauce pan. Add rice, and cook until tender and fluffy. (Do Not Use Rice Cooker.) Let cool 30 minutes. Place rice in mixing bowl and add shrimp, crab, peas, and bell pepper. Stir to mix well. Stir in mayonnaise so that the rice mixture is completely moistened. Add salt and pepper to taste. Place in casserole dish that has been treated with no-stick cooking spray; cover with foil and bake until heated completely, about 30 minutes.

GRILLED CORN ON THE COB

Pair with LedgeWood Creek's 2005 GSM Estate Red Rhone Blend

One ear of corn per person, two for the pot

Husk and clean corn. Using olive oil, lightly brush each cob with oil, then sprinkle with seasoned salt/pepper like Emeril's or Morton's Steak Rub. Place corn directly on the heated grill until kernels roast and start to turn a little brown. Remove and enjoy the smoky, zesty taste of fresh summer corn!

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well in competitions against some of the finest wineries in the state, and that speaks well as to our quality achievements.”

James Frisbie is also very excited about his family's entry into the Rhone varietals arena through its Picnique label of wines. He sees

this label as a vehicle to help the winery achieve its growth through the next decade.

JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scorecards which are provided in each delivery of wine and mailed back in by Club members. We believe it is fun as well as educational to think about and record the different characteristics of the wines you sample. No matter how acute you think your palate is, the person next to you will probably have a different thought or opinion about a certain characteristic of the wine you are sampling. It can also prove beneficial to record your impressions of the wine for reference at a later date.

Below are the most recent tallies of the Scorecards returned. Gold Medal Wine Club specializes in featuring small-sized wineries and small-production wines. Depending on availability from the winery, all members may not receive every wine that is listed below. The Scorecard results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

2006 San Simeon Pinot Gris

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	5%	4

2001 San Simeon Opaque Red

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	94%	5%	1%

2006 Brutocao Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

2005 Brutocao Quadriga Red

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	95%	3%	2%

2006 Summerland Sauvignon Blanc

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	5%	5%

2005 Summerland Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	7%	3%

2005 Mission Trail Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	88%	7%	5%

2004 Mission Trail Merlot

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	89%	7%	4%

The above wines were recently featured. Due to space limitations, the entire list of available wines is not listed.

To see our entire inventory and reorder online, go to: www.goldmedalwine.com/member

■ Indicates wine is still available

Frisbie has come a long way since his days as an intern on a US senator's staff. He appreciates his position within his family's growing business and realizes there is much work ahead to continue LedgeWood Creek Winery's continued expansion.

There's no doubt that James Frisbie and the LedgeWood Creek staff are more than up to the job. Enjoy!



"My dear, I love you, and I love this wine, and I don't care who knows."

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THE GRAPEVINE

Comments from us and Club members

Just over a year ago, we introduced the *PLUS!* program to our comprehensive, yet still growing, menu of wine club options. As you may know, the *PLUS!* program is a way for a limited number of members to receive an extra bottle of exceptional, rare wine along with their regular scheduled monthly shipment. Initially, we offered a *PLUS!* selection six to eight times a year. But due to surging popularity, we are pleased to announce that *PLUS!* selections are now offered every single month for *Gold Series* and *Platinum Series* members!

PLUS! selections that meet our stingy criteria are produced in very small quantities and are hard-to-get. We keep a close eye on many wineries in order to quickly secure these special wines before they disappear. It is very unlikely you'll find *PLUS!* wine selections outside of California.

If you want to discover even more California gems, and be one a select few to taste some of California's hardest-to-find wines, the *PLUS!* program is the way to go! The price for *PLUS!* bottles is comparable to the per bottle price in the regular monthly shipments. A very limited quantity may be available for reorder but naturally, on a first come first served basis.

For more information and to add your name to the list of *PLUS!* program recipients
Visit: www.goldmedalwine.com/plus or call us at 1-800-266-8888.

Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scorecards are eligible to receive a bonus half-case of any *Gold Medal Series* wine that is in stock if your name is drawn. Drawings are held each month. (Maximum of one Scorecard per wine per membership)...GMWC

R E O R D E R

Ledgewood Creek Winery and Vineyard is located just 8 miles from city of Napa as the crow flies. These two terrific wines, the 2005 Reserve Chardonnay and the 2005 GSM Red Rhone blend showcase the superiority of the hallmark harvest experienced in the Napa and Suisun Valleys for this vintage. The prices below are at huge savings for the quality of the wine in the bottle.

LEDGEWOOD CREEK WINERY & VINEYARDS	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members
2005 Reserve Chardonnay* Suisun Valley Estate	Half Case-6 \$96 Full Case-12 \$192	\$75 (\$12.50) Save 22% \$138 (\$11.50) Save 28%	\$69 (\$11.50) Save 28% \$126 (\$10.50) Save 34%
2005 GSM Red Rhone* Suisun Valley	Half Case-6 \$96 Full Case-12 \$192	\$75 (\$12.50) Save 22% \$138 (\$11.50) Save 28%	\$69 (\$15.33) Save 28% \$126 (\$10.50) Save 34%

Reorder Hotline: 1-800-266-8888 • www.goldmedalwine.com/member

Reorder Faxline: 1-800-266-8889

*Availability is very limited

Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.