## Cuvée Grand Tasting celebrates Ontario VQA Wine

ore than 750 wine and food lovers came to the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls on Friday, March 24 to celebrate excellence in Ontario VQA winemaking.

Guests at the 29th annual Cuvée Grand Tasting savoured the finest wines from 48 different wineries, along with fine cuisine prepared fresh by 11 culinary partners.

At the awards ceremony held before the Grand Tasting, two individuals were recognized for their invaluable contributions to the industry and the VQA Promoters Awards were also announced (see page 3 for winners).

This year's prestigious Cuvée Vineyard of Excellence Award went to Gerald Klose, whose Niagara-on-the-Lake vineyard has some of Ontario's oldest vines. Sponsored by BASF Canada Inc., the award recognizes a grape grower who promotes excellence in vineyard practices. Klose was chosen by an expert panel for maintaining a high level of quality in his Chardonnay vineyard.

The Tony Aspler Cuvée Award of Excellence, given to the individual or institution that best furthers the aims and aspirations of Ontario's wine industry, was presented to



Gerald Klose receives the Cuvée Vineyard of Excellence Award from BASF's Leta Larush.



Cuvée manager Barb Tatarnic; Graduate Scholarship winner Jennifer Kelly; Academic Excellence in OEVC winner Hannah Lee; Academic Excellence in OEVI winner Stephanie Van Dyk, Hosting Award for Academic Excellence winner Jacob Johnsson-Werner and CCOVI Director Debbie Inglis.

internationally known wine journalist Ian D'Agata. Canadian-born but now living in Italy, D'Agata has twice been named Italy's best wine journalist. He was recognized as being a "great ambassador for Ontario wines on the world stage."

Cuvée also celebrated the next generation of winemakers and grape growers by providing scholarships to Brock University Oenology and Viticulture students through the Cuvée Legacy Fund. More than \$60,000 in scholarships and research identified by the grape and wine industry has been supported by the event to date. The winners are: Jennifer Kelly (Graduate Scholarship), Hannah Lee (Excellence in OEVC), Stephanie Van Dyk (Academic Excellence in OEVI), and Jacob Johnsson-Werner (Hosting Award for Academic Excellence).

"Cuvée continuously champions the local wine industry by showcasing the finest VQA wines from across the region,"

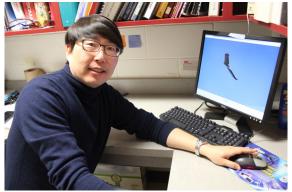
said Cuvée manager Barb Tatarnic. "Cuvée also helps the future of the grape and wine industry by supporting research and scholarships through its proceeds."

The celebration continued on March 25-26 with the ever-popular Cuvée en Route program. Guests visited more than 35 local wineries and sampled exclusive flights from the wineries' collections.



lan D'Agata, Tony Aspler Cuvée Award of Excellence winner

### Hyun-Suk (Leeko) Lee travels to Italy to represent CCOVI at SIVE conference



Hyun-Suk (Leeko) Lee studying the drone flight data.

CCOVI research technician and MSc candidate Hyun-Suk (Leeko) Lee will be travelling to Italy in May to present his ongoing work into the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs, also known as drones) for mapping variability in vineyards.

Lee was selected by the Italian Society for Viticulture and Enology (SIVE) to present at the Enoforum in Vincenza. He is also the only North American researcher to have been selected as a candidate for the SIVE Oenoppia Award, awarded to scientists who are conducting research on modern viticulture with a global reach.

"It's really exciting," said Lee, who is completing the three-year research project alongside CCOVI researcher Andrew Reynolds

and master's student Briann Dorin. "It's pretty unique and they think it is innovative and there is a lot of potential for the application of drones, business-wise."

The research assesses the usefulness of UAVs in determining unique zones in

the vineyards. They take remote data attained from the drones and compare the results to thermal data and the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), which determines the density of green vegetation on a patch of land, to determine whether relationships between these zones and things such as winter hardiness, soil moisture, yield components, berry composition, high and low water status and vine size can be observed.

"You might also be able to use it for precision viticulture so you can designate higher quality versus lower quality wine, which has a global, long-term impact," Reynolds added.

There is also potential that this research could help to observe grapevine leaf roll virus from the air using UAVs.

"Using a drone to look for viruses like grapevine leaf roll and red blotch is fairly cutting-edge," Reynolds said.

### Sparkling wine and bottling seminars draw crowds

CCOVI hosted two successful seminars in March.

The first was a one-day prebottling seminar (presented and organized by Vines to Vintages) on March 21 with Laffort USA, Hunter Bottling and Cork Supply USA, that attracted more 70 attendees.

CCOVI technologist Shufen Xu also highlighted the pre-bottling tests for wine and microbial stability, that the institute provides in its analytical services department, in a presentation at the event.

"It made the industry aware of what Brock and CCOVI has to offer," said Vines to Vintages' Natalie Spytkowsky. "It's a small industry, so it's in our best interest to bring people information on many different levels to help the industry move forward."

CCOVI also welcomed two international speakers at the 'Shaping Bubbles' seminar, which was sponsored and organized by Nuance Winery Supplies, on March 28. More than 50 people were in attendance for this hands-on workshop and tasting.

Marcello Galetti, a freelance winemaker and consultant from Italy, and Denis Bunner, Deputy Cellar Manager at Champagne Bollinger in France, spoke about Champagne, Prosecco, Pet Nat and other production methods of sparkling wine at the seminar.

CCOVI's senior oenologist, Belinda Kemp, provided expertise on the development of Ontario sparkling wines by preparing a presentation for the seminar.



Dennis Bunner, left, and Marcello Galetti, freelance winemaker, at the Shaping Bubbles seminar.

Nuance's Thierry Lemaire said CCOVI was the ideal venue for hosting the international speakers and providing a unique educational opportunity for the wine industry, welcoming the partnership with the institute and being able to bring the seminar to fruition.

# BASF Canada Inc. sponsorship sends top OEVI students to Cuvée



Front row (from left): Hannah Lee, Shannon Daust, Andréanne Hébert-Haché, Alex Gunn, BASF representatives Leta Larush and Judah Campbell, Heather Bouwhuis and Catharine Cahill

Back row (from left): Patrick Kelly, Marnie Crombleholme, Emilie Jobin and Katrina Kastelic

#### **CCOVI Welcomes French Intern**

CCOVI is pleased to welcome Charles Bénard, a second-year student from AgroSup Dijon in France, who is interning alongside Belinda Kemp for the next five months.

Bénard is studying food science and said his time working on cutting-edge research at CCOVI will be beneficial to his career goal of working in the grape and wine industry back in Champagne, France.

# VQA promoters recognized at 28th annual Experts Tasting

Sommeliers, wine writers and industry professionals gathered at Brock University on April 19 for the 28th annual Experts Tasting. Organized by CCOVI, the event promotes Ontario VQA wine and celebrates individuals who have made contributions to growing and promoting the



Attendees raised their glasses to applaud VQA Lifetime Achievement winner Roberto Martella.

province's grape and wine industry.

This year's blind tasting

featured four flights of rosé wines including sparkling varieties—



The panel samples the rosé selection.

currently enjoying an increase in consumer acceptance. The LCBO reported that sparkling VQA wines are up 25 per cent while VQA rosé has seen a 6.4 per cent increase.

The 2017 VQA Promoter Award winners were announced at the Cuvée Grand Tasting and were then presented to the recipients at the Experts Tasting. The awards acknowledge individuals who celebrate through promotion and/

or education the Ontario VQA wine industry with unselfish enthusiasm, constructive input and unsolicited promotion. CCOVI's Barb Tatarnic was among the winners, recognized for her decades of bringing unique educational experiences to the industry. She was humbled by the recognition and applauded the collaborative efforts of everyone in who promotes Ontario wine.



2017 Winners, from left:
John W. Maxwell (accepting Lifetime
Achievement on behalf of Roberto
Martella);
LCBO: Melissa McFadden;
Education: CCOVI's Barb Tatarnic;

Education: CCOVI's Barb Tatarnic; Hospitality: Mike Fish; Media: Angela Aiello; Retail: Brian Hanna (not pictured).

## 2017 Lecture Series wraps-up

CCOVI's annual lecture series wrapped up its 2017 season April 26, capping another year of providing timely research with the grape and wine industry from CCOVI researchers, fellows, scientists and professional affiliates. CCOVI also welcomed Dr. Sudarsana Poojari, of

the AAFC Summerland Research and Development Centre in B.C., for a special lecture presentation about virus testing of grapevine plant material on March 16. To watch the lecture series videos, visit brocku.ca/ccovi/outreach-services

## Andréanne Hébert-Haché's Three Minute Thesis claims second place



Andréanne Hébert-Haché, an MSc candidate in biological sciences, claimed second prize in Brock's Three Minute Thesis challenge in April.

"It was an amazing experience, I really loved it," she said. "It helped me

to summarize my research and explain it to a variety of different crowds — getting to the basics of what matters — and really helped me with public speaking."

Her thesis is working to determine which grapevine cultivars are more cold tolerant than others. As extreme weather patterns put vines at greater risk of cold damage, she said this research will directly help growers protect their vines.

She said the research has been able to uncover differences in cold hardiness, so far.

"We're seeing positive preliminary results," she said, "but there is still work to be done. We need to go deeper to really understand what we're seeing."

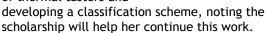
She also enjoyed hearing about all of the other research projects underway at Brock.

"All grad students should take part in the contest," she added.

# Margaret Thibodeau awarded prestigious Scholarship

Brock MSc candidate
Margaret Thibodeau, who
works under Gary Pickering,
was honoured for her
achievements this year with
the Donald Ziraldo and
Laura McCain CCOVI
Directors Award of \$1,525.

Thibodeau is currently studying the classifications of thermal tasters and



"I always want to thank the donors because while these are financial rewards that can keep you afloat, they are also a vote of confidence," she said of winning the scholarship. "Every time I get an award, it's always a mental boost that allows me to push forward. That's quite rewarding."



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