

President's Letter

My goal during three years as president of the association was for us to go on doing well what we've done for so many years, and to form stronger links with our community and other local groups with similar aims. Thanks to the dedication of the various board members and Diana Stockton and Jane Burger, our annual tasting for members continues to be a favorite of members and wineries alike, our two annual seminars earn rave reviews, and the beautiful REPORTs are unique and in-depth pictures of the association's activities and the local wine industry and its people.

We have made new local friends by contributing our precious Barney's Backyard magnums for events raising money for a wide variety of educational purposes, and have enjoyed working with our Bob Lamborn Scholars to serve and attract tasting room and tour guide employees of our wineries. We are part of a task force engaged in convincing the City of St. Helena not to sacrifice Barney's Backyard and the spectacular view out the library window in the inevitable development of the adjacent parcel.

A major challenge for the association is to make our incomparable collection attractive and accessible to scholars,

winery employees and wine buffs everywhere as we move into the 21st century. Our library director, Larry Hlavsa, has the vision and the expertise to move us toward providing substantial portions of our material to users of the Internet. I am particularly pleased that we have taken initial steps to preserve and transcribe our large collection of oral history tapes, containing original information heretofore unavailable to historians, researchers, and anyone else interested in the stories of industry pioneers. Similarly, we have begun the process of providing the content of our more than twenty years of REPORTs, properly indexed, on line.

We are also examining ways to raise funds to complete these and other projects relative to the collection. Without joining all the local organizations putting on events specifically to raise money, we have been blessed with several grants and generous memorial donations. The Reginald B. Oliver Fund will underwrite the first phase of oral history transcription. We ask you all to consider making a contribution in addition to your annual dues. The life member fee (each life member receives two badges for each annual tasting) has been raised to \$1,000 and we are considering ways to recognize our life members and others who accept the invitation on the renewal form to make an additional contribution.

I look forward to many more years of our tastings and other events. I'll continue to be among the other board members in a "Staff" apron, serving this quirky and historic association that has earned the devotion of the likes of Dick Lyon (who just retired from the board this year) and the late Reg Oliver. Please join us in keeping this wonderful, unsung organization up and running!

Julie Dickson, President

