



CHEESE WRAP

Newsletter of the California Artisan Cheese Guild
VOL 3, ISSUE 3 - FALL 2009



By Sara Vivencio

The Cheese School of San Francisco raised over \$2,000 for the Guild at the second annual 'Meet the Cheesemaker' fundraiser on September 25th. More than 80 enthusiasts mingled and enjoyed samples from Redwood Hill Farm, Bellwether Farms, Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese, Fiscalini Farms, Marin French Cheese Company, Barinaga Ranch, Cowgirl Creamery, Cypress Grove Chevre, Laura Chenel,

Delice de la Vallee, Fra'Mani, and Rustic Bakery.

In addition to our Cheesemaker members who donated their time and delightful cheeses, the following companies provided donations of beer, wine, and luscious accompaniments: 21st Amendment; Bi-Rite Market; Cheese Plus; The Cheese School of San Francisco; City Beer; Duvel; Fra'Mani; Harley Farms; JC Cellars; Rogue Ale; Rustic Bakery; and Speakeasy.

Editor's Note: This event is one

of the Guild's primary fundraising opportunities that makes our fabulous Education programs possible. Thank you Sara!



Photos by Guild Events Chair Lenny Rice

Master Cheese Making with Margaret Morris

By Simon Darling & Krysta Irmiter



Margaret Morris Stirring the Curd, Photo Courtesy of Sue Conley

We had the good fortune to attend day one of Margaret Morris' two day seminar in cheesemaking technique. Brought to town by our own California Cheese Guild and hosted by Cowgirl Creamery, the event kicked off with a tribute to the hard work and recent successes of our local producers. Looking to build upon those successes, the aim of Margaret's course was to provide a comprehensive understanding of milk possibilities among aficionados, producers and retailers

alike. This was a crash course in beginning cheesemaking, providing practical instruction for the amateur cheesemakers, including selection of cultures, recipes and tools. Margaret's easy manner and clear depth of knowledge resonated with the eclectic group. The course was a blast and a great inspiration to delve ever deeper into the intricacies of cheese production.

As a group, we made six varieties of

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GREAT NEWS! ACS AWARD RESULTS

Once again California cheesemakers made an excellent showing at the annual **American Cheese Society** competition with our own **Cowgirl Creamery's Red Hawk** taking second place in Best of Show after placing First in the Washed Rind, Open Cow's Milk category. In alphabetical order by creamery, here are the winning California Artisan Cheese Guild cheeses:

Beehive

Barely Buzzed, 1st Place (Cheddars with Sweet Flavorings)

Bellwether Farms

Pepato, 1st Place (Flavored Cheeses/Open Category/ Sheep's Milk)

San Andreas, 1st Place (Aged Sheep's Milk/Open Category)

Crème Fraiche, 3rd Place (Cultured Milk Products/ Crème Fraiche/Cow's Milk)

Cowgirl Creamery

Red Hawk, Best in Show, Second Place

Red Hawk, 1st Place (Washed Rind/Open Category/ Cow's Milk)

Cypress Grove

Fresh Herb Chevre, 1st Place (Fresh Goat's Milk Cheeses/Flavored with Herbs, Extracts, Truffles and Truffle Oil)

Truffle Tremor, 1st Place (Soft Ripened/Flavor Added)

Fog Lights, 3rd Place (Soft Ripened Cheese/Goat's Milk)

Fresh Dill Chevre, 3rd Place

Fromage Blanc, 3rd Place (Cultured Milk Products/ Goat's Milk)

Humboldt Fog Grande, 3rd Place (American Originals/Open Category/Goat's Milk)

Fiscalini Farms

Purple Moon, 3rd Place (Marinated Cheeses/Open Category/Cow's Milk)

Harley Farms

Chevre, 1st Place (Fresh Goat's Milk Cheeses)

Fromage Blanc, 2nd Place (Cultured Milk Products/ Goat's Milk)



Marin French

Petite Chevre Dejeuner, 1st Place (Fresh Unripened/ Goat's Milk)

Chevre Quark, 2nd Place (Low Fat/Low Salt/Goat, Sheep, Water Buffalo Milk)

Melange Camembert, 3rd Place (Soft Ripened/Sheep's Milk or Mixed Milk)

Melange Dejeuner, 3rd Place (Fresh Unripened/ Sheep's Milk or Mixed Milk)

Peppercorn Brie, 3rd Place (Soft Ripened/Flavor Added)

Rouge et Noir-Traditional Brie, 3rd Place (Soft Ripened/Cow's Milk Brie)

Schloss, 3rd Place (Washed Rind Cheeses/Open Category/Cow's Milk)

Meyenberg

European Style Goat Butter, 1st Place (Butters Made from Goat's Milk)

Jalapeno Goat Jack, 1st Place (Flavored Cheeses/Goat's Milk)

Crème de Chevre, 2nd Place (Fresh Unripened/Goat's Milk)

Goat Jack, 2nd Place (American Originals/Open Category/Goat's Milk)

Valley Goat Aged Cheddar, 2nd Place (Cheddars/ Goat's Milk/Aged less than 12 Months)

Crème de Chevre, Garlic & Chives, 3rd Place (Fresh Goat's Milk Cheeses/Flavored with Herbs, Extracts, Truffles and Truffle Oil)

Redwood Hill

Traditional Plain Kefir, 1st Place (Cultured Milk Products/Goat's Milk)

Blueberry Yogurt, 3rd Place (Cultured Milk Products/ Flavor Added)

Spring Hill Jersey

Old World Portuguese, 3rd Place (Hispanic- & Portuguese-Style/Ripened)

Winchester

Habanero Gouda, 2nd Place (American-Made/ International Style/Flavor-Added Dutch Style)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

- * After 16 years in its historic creamery, **Laura Chenel's Chèvre** announces plans to build a new 30,000 sq ft Sonoma Valley creamery. The facility, scheduled to begin operation by early 2011, will allow the company to add new artisan goat's milk cheeses to the existing Laura Chenel line. "We want to build the right environment for developing new products and this new plant will give us room to innovate and be creative," said Marie Lesoudier, general manager.
- * **Delice de la Vallee**, is proud to announce distribution by Tomales Bay Foods for both retail and restaurant from San Francisco to Washington DC. And, Sheana Davis of **The Epicurean Connection** is opening a specialty cheese shop in Sonoma California, in October 2009. The shop will be located at 18816 #C Sonoma Highway, Sonoma Ca. 95476. The Epicurean Connection will feature cheeses, pastas, ice creams and unique artisan products.
- * Check out **Maggie Foard's** new book, [Goat Cheese](#), published by Gibbs-Smith Publishing in 2008. A cookbook for goat cheese enthusiasts, you can find it for sale through **Harley Farms** and **Redwood Hill Farms**. Maggie has also started a blog, www.goatcheeseplease.com with recipes and cheese news.
- * **Gail Bickett**, of Pope Valley, CA, a self described "West Virginia goat lady in the 70's" is stretching out from her current work as a wine educator at Trinchero Family Estates to explore cheesemaking again. She recommends classes at The Cheese School of San Francisco and Cal Poly's Dairy Science and Technology Basics for the Artisan/Farmstead Cheesemaker in San Luis Obispo.
- * **Harley Farms** is delighted to announce a national first place win for our fresh goat milk chevre this summer, but behind the cheese there's a farm, and it is the growth of our farm in our community that really makes us want to pop the champagne! Sixteen years ago we held our first tour. The local pre-kindergarten class visited our handful of baby goats. Now there are a couple of hundred baby goats each spring, and thousands of visitors, many of whom come back again and again to be part of what we have here in our farming community on the coast. We were recently featured on NPR as a farm thriving on diversification: our Farm Dinners are sold out this year, and our tours fully booked. But this is no theme park. We give a candid tour of pasture, herd, milking parlor and dairy, and we hope that visitors taste the vibrancy of our town, Pescadero, in all our cheese. We also hope they leave with a renewed understanding of the words "sustainable", "green" and "artisanal", but most of all with a renewed relationship with their food!
- * **Erika Scharfen**, former Head Cheesemaker at Redwood Hills and college friend **Sarah Bennet** (Navarro Vineyards), are collaborating to create **Penny Royal**, a farmstead goat creamery and winery with 75 goats, in Mendocino.
- * The 2009 Los Angeles International Dairy Competition awarded a Gold Medal to **Sierra Nevada Cheese Company's Caprae Monterrey Jacques**, which is an ultra-creamy, mild yet flavorful semi-soft cheese handcrafted from single origin local goat milk. Additionally, our authentically *vat-cultured Organic European-style Butter* received a Silver Medal.

Master Cheese Making, cont 'd

cheese, from fresh mozzarella to feta and gouda. As Margaret flew from one station to the next, demonstrating curd cutting technique and explaining acid development curves, we all got to roll up our sleeves and experience first hand the subtle differences in recipe from one cheese style to the next. At the end of the day, mozzarella was the big hit. There is nothing like stretching that piping hot curd and serving it right up for immediate gratification.



Margaret Morris on a Milk Stool

(Photo Courtesy of Sue Conley)



Guild Education Committee Co-Chairs Maureen Cunnie and Lynn Giacomini-Stray (Photo Courtesy of Sue Conley)

2009-2010 Seminar Program:

Advances in Cheese Microbiology with Professor Moshe Rosenberg (September 23, 2009 – To be covered in the next Cheese Wrap)

Secondary Ripening Cultures with Dave Potter

(To be scheduled – January 2010)

Spanish Cheesemaking 201 with Dr. Jimenez

(To be scheduled – Spring 2010)

Barinaga Ranch Beginnings

By Marcia Barinaga



father, who grew up on a sheep ranch in Idaho, and by my Basque cousins still in Spain who milk sheep and make cheese. My education included a trip to the Basque country with my father and husband. We visited and made cheese with shepherds in their stone txabolos high in the mountains.

We got our first sheep in the summer of 2007, had our first lambing in 2008, and in the spring of 2009 finished building our milking parlor and creamery, in time to begin milking in May of this year. It was a mad dash to get everything up and running in time, but we succeeded, and I have been making cheese since late May. This year we milked 30 ewes and I made about 600 pounds of cheese, and also sold some milk to Bohemian Creamery and to Bleating Heart cheese. Next year I will be

It has been a busy two years at the Barinaga Ranch, culminating this August with the release of our first cheese, *Baserri*, a Pyrenees-style sheep milk tomme, and *Txiki*, a tomlette made from the same recipe. The cheeses have been very well received, and are available through Cowgirl Creamery, and also at Oliver's Market in Santa Rosa.

My first cheese went on sale just two years from the day that we began construction on our first barn on the ranch. It has been quite a journey. My husband Corey Goodman and I bought our ranch in 2001, 800 acres of hilly pastures in Marshall, overlooking Tomales Bay. By 2004, we had decided to start a sheep dairy, inspired by my Basque



milking 50 ewes and making all their milk into *Baserri* (which is Basque for "farmhouse") and *Txiki* (Basque for "little").



Barinaga Ranch Basserri

Website

The Guild's Website is just getting better. Check it out for the latest in opportunities, upcoming events, past issues of **Cheese Wrap**, and new members! www.cacheeseguild.org

Opportunities

The first-ever **Arizona Cheese Festival**, hosted by Chevront's Restaurant in Phoenix on November 13-15, 2009, extends an invitation to CACG member cheesemakers to participate. This promises to be a valuable opportunity to introduce Guild cheeses to foodservice, retailers and consumers in the Phoenix area. Contact Lindsey Ashmore at (610) 307-0022 or cell (480) 789-3096.

Cheesemaker Exchange

Seeking Creamery and/or dairy work, with potential for long-term position: Lindsay Klaunig (317) 531-2832/lklaunig@gmail.com. Available Jan 2010. Experience: Two years making cheese from cow's and ewe's milk. Assisted development of fresh, blue-veined and surface-ripened styles. Managed creamery production with crew of interns and part-timers. Also experienced in milking, fencing, pasture management, and markets. Based in the Midwest, willing to relocate. Resume and references available upon request.

Upcoming Events—Mark Your Calendar

- * **Redwood Hill Creamery** will offer "**Cheesemaking: The Art, Technology, and Science,**" a three-day class with Moshe Rosenberg from UC Davis with "hands on" at Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery. The class is designed for cheesemakers, retailers, and enthusiasts who want to understand the cheesemaking process with special emphasis on trouble shooting skills. January 29, 30, & 31, 2010. Contact Jennifer Bice for a brochure and to sign up: Jennifer@redwoodhill.com.
- * The 8th annual **Sonoma Valley Cheese Conference** on February 20-23, 2010, is hosted by Sheana Davis of The Epicurean Connection. The theme is "The Crafting of Better Cheese in America" and features speakers Max McCalman, Ari Weinzweig and Mateo Kehler and other cheese experts in seminars and panels. www.sheanadavis.com
- * The 4th annual 2010 **Artisan Cheese Festival** will be held on March 26-29, 2010. Featuring Guild cheesemakers, tastings, seminars, and loads of fun. www.artisancheesefestival.com



Opportunities for Guild Members to participate in events and marketing are regularly posted on our website: www.cacheeseguild.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS, Cont' d

- * The recent **Sonoma County Showcase** hosted 6 Sonoma County Artisan Cheesemakers on Saturday, September 5th, for over 2000 guests at the MacMurray Ranch including **Marin French Cheese Company** serving Melange, **Redwood Hill Farms** serving Camellia, **Valley Ford Cheese Company** serving Estero Gold, **Bellwether Farms** serving Pepato, **The Epicurean Connection** serving Delice de la Vallee and **Clover Stornetta** serving Organic Cheddar. Each cheese company was included in an Artisan Cheese Seminar hosted by cheese expert and author **Laura Werlin**. The Sonoma County Cheese Tent was created and organized by Sheana Davis, **The Epicurean Connection**.



“I would love to see twice as many Guild Members there so that for every person dishing out a tasty bite, another person could talk about cheese, the Guild, the mission, and where to find products on our guest’s home turf.”



NOTES ON SUNSET CELEBRATION WEEKEND

By Diana Solari

Editors’ Note: The Sunset Magazine Celebration Weekend was June 6-7, 2009. The Guild has participated for three years and each year we have attracted a steady line of customers that lasts the entire two days of the event. It’s one of the best opportunities we offer our members to reach new customers.

The only thing wrong with the Sunset Event was there weren’t more of us there. This event was a stellar opportunity to promote our cheese and our organization and most likely had great potential for networking with other like-minded folk. Unfortunately, all we were able to do was feed lots of good folk lot’s of good cheese! Which is not such a bad thing....

I volunteered on Sunday, when things were more under control due to a tactical change in line management by the Sunset staff. We continued to have long lines, but all the folks knew they were waiting for cheese and were well disposed to wait. They were met at the head of our tables by Nan Haynes, from Cowgirl Creamery, who wowed them with her good cheer, great stories and Mt Tam cheese. Everyone sold a lot of cheese but golden opportunities were lost due to a lack of manpower: many of the people who waited in line were really interested in our industry beyond tasting and given extra hands on deck I believe we could have done a lot to advance the education of people who are obviously cheese fans if not down right cheese geeks. It was a flat out head’s down no messin’ around day without a moment to peep.

Next year I would love to see twice as many Guild members there so that for every person dishing out a tasty bite, another person could talk about cheese, the Guild, the mission, and where to find our products on our guests’ home turf. Additionally, time spent cruising the event may well have garnered opportunities to network with other organizations or businesses such as ours as well as being mighty fun in and of itself.

I would highly recommend participating in this event next year. Just be sure to bring an associate so you can catch a break, a list of places where your cheese can be purchased in the South Bay and an eagle eye for networking opportunities.

Board of Directors

Wondering who to contact? Our Board of Directors and Officers are listed below, along with their emails and committee responsibilities:

2009 CALIFORNIA ARTISAN CHEESE GUILD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Lynn Bice – jennifer@redwoodhill.com, President

Jill Giacomini Basch - jill@pointreyescheese.com, Vice President

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Laura Martinez – laura@theartisanpalate.com, Co-Chair Communications, Website & Publicity

Debbie Peterson, Member Events



OUR MISSION

The California Artisan Cheese Guild is an organization designed to support and encourage the California cheesemaking community. This is accomplished by supporting the on-going education of cheesemakers and consumers, sharing resources, and celebrating the art and dedication to quality cheese. Membership is open to any individual with an interest in California cheese, including farmstead, artisan and specialty cheesemakers, small dairy producers, retailers, suppliers, chefs, and cheese enthusiasts.