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VINEYARD HONORS



Three leaders in the Virginia wine industry were recognized at annual events this winter: From left, Bill Tonkins was named Grower of the Year by the Virginia Vineyards Association; Chris Hill received the VVA's Lifetime Achievement Award; and Lucie Morton was the recipient of the Virginia Wineries Association's Virginia Wine Lifetime Achievement Award. For more on all three, see Page 10.

Spotted Lanternfly Pest Finds Its Way to Virginia

By Douglas G. Pfeiffer
Department of Entomology, Virginia Tech

At our 2018 winter grower meetings, there was discussion of a new invasive species, spotted lanternfly (SLF), *Lycorma delicatula*. This fulgorid planthopper was introduced into Pennsylvania in 2014 and has been expanding its range since.

The native range is in Asia, where the SLF has been reported to be an important pest of grape, peach and forests. It was introduced into South Korea in 2006, where it was generally distributed by 2009. We have been expecting this species since its appearance in Berks County, Pa. (first occurrence outside of Asia), and so there



have been some comments about SLF over the last few years.

In 2017, the quarantine zone in Pennsylvania expanded from six to 13 counties; also in 2017, SLF became a multi-state problem, since it was found in single counties in each of three additional states: Delaware, New York and Virginia.

One host plant in particular, tree of heaven, is linked to the life cycle of SLF, but it will feed on about 70 other host plants. These plants include several that are of great economic importance to us, and SLF will likely be an important pest in vineyards, orchards and forests.

In Pennsylvania, it has been a major issue

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President's Corner

Pruning Is a Chance to Start Anew

By Nate Walsh
Walsh Family Wine

"What I dream of is an art of balance." — Henri Matisse

Each winter and early spring finds most winegrowers trekking through the peaceful marathon of pruning. This is an opportunity to evaluate a vineyard in a unique way — lacking foliage and fruit, the vine shows itself through unadorned structure: cane size and uniformity, internode spacing, dieback, trunk size, lateral growth, and so forth.

It is a unique opportunity to make adjustments to the overall balance of a vine, and hopefully move a vineyard, or a vineyard block, toward more overall uniformity and a more ideal yield. I find that pruning has more impact, both in terms of balance and in terms

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Smart Spray Schedule

When you know your vineyard, you can do more with less.

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Winter Tech Roundup

A look at the VVA's three-day annual event in Charlottesville.

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Douglas G. Pfeiffer,

Dean Triplett



PRESIDENT'S CORNER (cont.)

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of labor costs, than any canopy management that follows.

I have always started with the “weird” vines. I do a pass myself to prune anything we have flagged for concerns over decline or potential viral issues. I prune through the recent replacements, the weak vines, vines with large gaps in cordons, or areas of the vineyard that aren't playing by our rules.

I do this myself because I like to see the problem children. They are what will hold a site back. Then, the vineyard crew can breeze through without getting bogged down on vines requiring more intuitive decision making.

Balance in a vineyard is epistemological. We think we know it when we see it, but it is by no means a factually identifiable thing. I've toyed with many objective approaches — assessing exposed canopy area (“vineyard scoring”), point quadrant analysis, the Ravaz index (yield

divided by pruning weight), pounds per foot, and buds divided by cane size.

When I read about a new method, I will always try it. Each of these is informative but none have ever been answers or goals in themselves. They push us further in what we hope are the right directions.

Looking back at pruning notes from even just four or five years ago, I am struck by how much my approach has changed. I imagine, then, that five years from now I will be equally as struck by how far we have shifted from our current practices. This is both frustrating and stimulating. It makes me excited for the future, and a bit anxious to get there faster.

Pruning is generally a cold, windy, long haul, but I have always loved it. When timed properly, it is the only vineyard activity where we are not rushing to keep up. It is always peaceful and quiet.

While it is the least photogenic season in a vineyard, it is still somehow the most beautiful.



NATE WALSH

Officers Elected

Todd Henkle, of the Vineyards & Winery at Lost Creek in Leesburg, has been elected vice president of the Virginia Vineyards Association. He succeeds Jim Benefiel, of Benevino Vineyards, who has been elected VVA secretary.

The elections were held Feb. 23 during the VVA's annual Winter Technical Meeting in Charlottesville.

Show Off Your Vineyard!

With the guidance of the VVA board, we're in the process of revamping the VVA website so that it better serves our members and better represents Virginia growers.

To showcase the state's vineyards, we're looking for photos of your vines, your grapes or your harvest that can be displayed on a rotating basis on the website.

Here are some guidelines:

1. Include the name of your vineyard and town so they can be added to the site, and, if relevant, specify the varietal pictured (harvesting Chardonnay, etc.).
2. We'll try to work with any image; most helpful are photos with a minimum resolution of 72 pixels per inch and minimum width of 10 inches — larger is always better.
3. For each photo, identify the photographer so that we can give proper credit, and please be sure that you have the rights to have the photo published.
4. Please email photos (or any questions) to Grape Press at cgarsson@gmail.com. Thank you!

► **NORTHERN VA.:** “A number of growers are planning on increasing their acreage.”

By Dean Triplett
Greenstone Vineyard

As I write this, mid-March is upon us, and we're close to the end of Old Man Winter for another year. Winter 2017-18 was a mild one as winters go. We only had one day at the tail end of December that reached the single digits while early January saw three.

The coldest day at my site was Jan. 3 when we got down to 1 degree above zero. The coldest I've heard from a grower in our region was 3 below. The temperatures were below normal for nearly two weeks at the beginning of the year.

Aside from this period, the temperatures this winter were average to above average. Snow so far has been pretty much non-existent. We've had three or four dustings up here on the Catoctin ridge with the largest snowfall dropping a measly 3 inches. None

of the dustings stayed around for much more than a day or two. Friends in Fauquier County have reported no snow this winter at all.

Precipitation this winter has been below average across the region with some areas in a mild to moderate drought.

Continuing the mild winter theme, we had three days in February when the temperatures spiked into the 70's and one day around 80! While it was nice to air the house out, these events were short lived as well. Interestingly, we had four days in January that reached the 60s, six days in February that made it to at least 60, and zero days in March where temperatures reached 60 degrees.

March has seen daytime highs primarily in the low 40s to mid-50s. We did have three days of tremendous wind due to a nor'easter that skirted off to the northeast of us March 2-4. Winds on the ridge here were in the sustained 30 to 50 mph range with spikes up to the high 60s. Power was on and off for the

three-day event, but fortunately no damage was sustained in any vineyard that I'm aware of, although there are still multiple trees down all over the region.

As I write this piece we've just dodged the third winter storm in two weeks.

Dormant pruning is in full swing in most vineyards in my area. Some folks have done rough pruning and still others are waiting for April to make their finish pruning. If you've got the crew that can get in and get it done quickly, waiting is certainly the strategy that I'd prefer.

In my case, rough pruning was done back in February and we've started final pruning in our late-season varieties. We'll probably be done by the first of April.

We've seen no signs of winter damage in any of our vines and I haven't heard of any damage to any other grower in my area.

See NORTHERN on page 4

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NORTHERN VA.

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Adding Vines

A number of growers are planning on increasing their acreage this spring. One major problem is the availability of plant material. I should say non-availability. At least one grower I know was unable to get the vines he wanted, even though he had started planning for his vineyard expansion well over a year in advance.

The problem seems to be increased vine demand nationwide, increased demand for certain "hot" varieties, and high demand for so-called clean (virus-free) stock.

The silver lining to this situation is that it is forcing some growers to slow down and take more time for proper site preparation. For me, replanting in my vineyard is now a two-year process to be assured that I can get the small number of vines I need.

And speaking of planting and site preparation, the folks at Zephaniah Farm Vineyard are expanding their planting with an additional 1,400 vines this spring. They're planting about 500 Cab Sauvignon vines along with 900 Petit Manseng vines.

The Cab Sauvignon vines will be planted using 14-inch grow bags. They want to lime the site before planting but are having trouble getting someone with a truck to spread the amount of lime they want to apply.

I'd like to apply lime to my established vineyard but no truck could get down my rows. I've got a small cone spreader that can do the job but it's only capable of spreading pelletized lime. Pulverized lime is much cheaper, of course.

So for my situation, I'm thinking of purchasing a drop spreader that can handle a quarter- to half-ton of pulverized lime. I'll then get into a yearly schedule of liming the vineyard, based on soil analyses recommendations.

This should work for me but would be less efficient for folks putting down very large amounts of lime. This sort of equipment is the type of thing that I think several vineyards could go into as a cooperative endeavor since normally no two vineyards would need them at the exact same time.

Growers Meeting

The Loudoun Wine Growers Association held a meeting this past Feb. 15. Tremain Hatch, Viticultural Extension Agent from Virginia Tech, led a discussion of winter pruning strategies and showed examples of healthy vines as well as cold-injured vines.

According to Tremain, neither the earlier cold temperatures nor the more recent warm days should have been severe enough to cause winter damage to buds or vines.

Tremain did mention research regarding the suggestion that all pruning should be done during dry sunny weather if possible and at least two days before any rain event. The possibility of transmitting viral and bacterial trunk diseases through pruning wounds made during wet conditions was higher, especially regarding large pruning wounds.

Beth Sastre, Loudoun County Extension Agent, spoke about upcoming educational events for growers. In particular, Beth mentioned the the April 10 IPM workshop at Early Mountain Vineyards and the June 6 Beginners Grape Growing workshop at the Winchester AREC Center.

Beth also discussed the recent finding of the Spotted Lanternfly in Frederick County in January. Two sites reported both overwintering adults and egg cases on trees on the property. The owners are destroying the infected timber, but unfortunately it's likely that more sightings will occur.

Douglas G. Pfeiffer gave a more expansive account of research into this pest at the recent VVA Winter Technical Meeting in Charlottesville.

Bill Hatch of Zephaniah Farm Vineyard talked a bit about the H2A and H2C Visa programs available for the hiring of vineyard workers. This subject also received

attention at the VVA winter meeting. It's a complicated subject to say the least, but one of considerable interest to members of many industries across the country, especially the agriculture community.

The meeting was sponsored by Wally Owens, CPA, and he talked about some upcoming changes in the tax code and the impact on vineyards and wineries and offered his services should anyone need more information. We'd like to thank Wally for sponsoring the meeting.

Bill Hatch led the discussion on installing officers for the LWGA for the 2018 year. Fortunately, all of last year's board members agreed to remain in office for another year. The members unanimously voted their approval.

Bill remains President, with Fernando Mathov of F&J Vineyards as Vice President; Joan Watkins, Quartz Hill Farm Vineyards, as Secretary; and M. J. Merlin, Legacy Farm and Vineyards, as Treasurer.

I'd like to thank everyone for remaining on board. Stepping up to the plate and working for local associations like the LWGA or our very own VVA is one of the best decisions a grower can make. It gives you an up-close look at the people and issues that make up our industry in a way that working in our own vineyards just can't.

And it's a lot of fun and a great way to make friends that you'll most likely keep for life.

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Spraying: Doing More With Less

There's no substitute for paying careful attention to your vines

By Jim Law
Linden Vineyards

I would like to address spraying for disease control from a practitioner's perspective. With years of experience and experimentation we have reduced the number of applications at Hardscrabble Vineyard to an average of eight spray applications per season, which is apparently less than many other Virginia vineyards.

For spraying purposes there are three distinct vine development phases: early shoot development, bloom and berry

development, and canopy cover. Insect control is not discussed for clarity purposes. If an insecticide is required at Hardscrabble it is an addition to a fungicide spray rather than an additional spray.

Background

Hardscrabble Vineyard is a low- to moderate-vigor 20-acre vineyard. Most of the vineyard is in a thermal zone, which, due to warmer nighttime temperatures, reduces morning dew formation on vines (this makes a big difference with late-season downy mildew). I live here, do most of the spraying, and am tuned into specific weather conditions on the farm.

Sprays are applied over a period of several days in order to take advantage of ideal weather conditions (calm mornings) and to allow staff to work continuously while respecting reentry parameters. Most

spraying is done between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. when there is less chance of wind or pop-up thunderstorms.

I do like to spray at night, but reduced visibility can make navigating steep slopes dangerous. Daylight spraying also affords the opportunity of visually inspecting the entire vineyard (lots of notes taken during tank refilling pit stops).

Disease Targets

Four diseases are targeted: phomopsis (PH), black rot (BR), downy mildew (DM), and powdery mildew (PM). Some might only be targeted once (PH) or twice (BR), others throughout the season (DM & PM). I have dropped sprays that target bunch rots as I find they rarely have any efficacy.

Additionally, berries are not sprayed after cluster close (early July) due to residue and philosophical issues. Good canopy management helps significantly to reduce bunch rot incidence.

A brief introduction to each disease follows:

Phomopsis: One well-timed application of Mancozeb is usually sufficient to control any major PH problems. We are not looking for 100 percent control of basal shoot scarring. Years ago, when the vineyard was cordon pruned, PH was a major factor in losing spur placements. Now that the vineyard is mostly cane pruned, PH is much less of a problem.

With cane pruned vines, distal shoots are rarely infected by PH. For spraying purposes, I keep an eye on the newly emerging basal shoots (closest to old wood) and spray just prior to a forecasted prolonged wet period. That one application is usually sufficient.

Downy Mildew: Persistent disease pressure from DM requires diligence and a certain amount of risk-taking if one is to maintain a limited, restricted spray program. A DM material is included in every spray, but leaves can still show DM spots. I've learned not to worry about a lesion or two in May, knowing that the "big gun" sprays of June will keep the disease in check.

Wet midsummers can trigger an extra spray or two, but once the canopy is filled, any young, new leaves, which are most susceptible to DM, are going to be hedged off anyway.

Our spray intervals are long (14-plus days between applications), so Ridomil and phosphorous acid are always on hand for kick back (post-infection activity) purposes.

See *SPRAYING* on page 6

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How One Grower Schedules Sprays

SPRAYING, from page 5

Black Rot is the easiest disease to control. I don't care if there are BR spots on the leaves. They do little harm. True, they do provide a source of inoculum to the adjacent susceptible berries, but two well-executed sprays provide 100 percent control to the berries. At bloom a "strobie" (strobilurin class of fungicides) is used, followed 14 days later with a DMI. Berries are resistant enough after that.

Powdery Mildew on developing berries is a major concern so my three "big-gun" sprays always include very high-end, effective PM materials. When DM sprays are applied in mid-summer a PM material (usually sulfur) is included.

We may see a bit of foliar PM very late in the season, but it never seems to develop enough to adversely affect ripening or carbohydrate accumulation.

The Spray Calendar

The spray season is divided into three phases; early shoot development (late April through late May); berry development (late May through early July); and canopy covers (mid July through mid August). Each phase has a very different approach.

1. Early Shoot Development (late April through May)

A very wet spring may require three sprays, a dry spring only one (I have yet to bring the number down to zero). The sprayer is in the ready position by bud break with PH being the concern. PH is not a worry in young vines (less than four years old, nor Merlot (very resistant). On the other end of the spectrum, old Cabernet Sauvignon vines that exhibit PH scaring from the previous season are a big concern. After their basal buds (close to old wood) leaf out, as soon as there is a predicted duration rain event, the vines are sprayed.

Once the shoots lengthen past 10 inches, another spray application may be applied if conditions warrant (prolonged leaf wetness). Mancozeb and sulfur are typically applied. I often wait until after an infection period and include phosphorous acid or Ridomil as a kick back on DM, which is the primary concern.

At this phase, because the canopy is sparse, we spray every third row. The spray mist will travel multiple rows under still conditions. We use two targeted nozzles on each side of the air blast sprayers, and only

spray 20 gallons of mix per acre.

2. Berry Development (Big Guns: June to early July)

Bloom kicks off the beginning of the "Big Three" berry sprays. The very best materials are used and the sprays are applied every 14 days regardless of weather conditions. There is a lot of pressure to leaf pull ASAP in order to get spray material on the target (clusters).

We start with two nozzles exclusively focused on and slightly below the fruit zone. We spray ARM (alternate row middle), so the material that bypasses below the fruit zone of one row hits the adjacent row.

The shear volume and range of an air blast sprayer results in a lot of overspray. This overspray finds its way to cover the still developing upper canopy if spraying is done under still conditions. I realize that the experts do not recommend spraying ARM, but having sprayed Lyre trellising successfully for 30 years I figure that it is the equivalent to spraying standard VSP ARM. Every row is sprayed on the vineyard blocks that remain in Lyre. The amount of spray volume is 40 gallons per acre for all sprays through the end of the season.

As far as "big-gun" fungicides, systemics are used almost exclusively. For resistance management only one from each resistance group is used in any given year. Each of the three sprays includes a material for each of the three diseases (BR, PM, and DM) with the exception of the last spray (cluster close) where a BR material is dropped. We try to avoid using Mancozeb, sulfur, copper and especially Captan at this phase because we all spend a tremendous amount of time doing

hand canopy management work and the residues from these materials are irritating or worse.

3. Canopy Covers (mid-July to mid-August)

After the application of the third "big-gun" spray (which coincides with cluster close) the fruit zone is no longer sprayed. Sprays are exclusively directed at the canopy top. The main concern is DM in the upper canopy.

Use of systemic materials is avoided because of resistance concerns. Copper (for DM) and sulfur (PM) are commonly used. Phosphorous acid may be added to the tank if conditions are particularly wet. Most of the handwork done in the vines at this time involves cluster thinning and fine-tuning of leaf pulling, so workers are not handling the sprayed parts of the canopy.

Over the years our spray program has become more relaxed and thoughtful. If the "Big Gun" sprays are well applied, the crop will be fine. Canopy diseases (DM!) can be caught in time before any serious consequences take hold.

The best tool is being in the vineyard and observing. The first thing I do every morning as the sun rises is feel the leaves for dew. Our unsprayed sentinel vine planted on the winery deck is also a reliable visual indicator of disease pressure.

My favorite winegrower quote, by Andre Ostertag, is very apropos:

"When scientific knowledge and technology are limited, our senses of observation, intuition and sensitivity are heightened."

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Grower Alert: If Graft Unions Are Out of Sight, You Could Wind Up Out of Roots

By Lucie Morton

This is the time of year to be sure that each and every graft union is in plain view. They can become buried over time and the vinifera scion variety will use that as a signal to send out its own roots. These roots are fully functional for any number of years until and unless the phylloxera aphids (the reason you went to the expense of buying grafted plants in the first place) starts chowing down on them.

If the vinifera roots are left to take over for some years, the rootstock roots will grow weaker and weaker to the point that they can no longer take over the job of supporting the vine if phylloxera feeding causes the vinifera roots to rot and die.

An Internet search of “phylloxera” will give hours of info-tainment. This little bulletin is simply meant to inspire the reader to grab a shovel and inspect for scion rooting and root borer damage.

With most vinifera varieties, the scion rooting is quite obvious once the graft unions are exposed. The roots tend to run mostly horizontally through the top soil. With Petit Verdot (PV), however, they seem to plunge straight down — literally parallel to the rootstock trunk. They blend in so well that I call them “cammie” roots.

I can be a little cranky when I see that scion rooting has been allowed to go on for a period of time. However, a block of Petit Verdot took me down a few pegs when I discovered that I, along with everyone else, had been walking right by some extreme scion rooting there for a number of years. By the time we discovered them, the PV roots were as thick or thicker than the rootstock stem!

It just happened that I was touring around the state with my colleague Dr. Helen Waite from Australia when I got a chance to examine some seriously well-developed PV roots closely. My self-esteem took another dive when I failed to find phylloxera with a 10x loup and gave up — only for Helen to persist until she found them. Phylloxera spread is a major concern in Australia so she had had plenty of practice.

We passed the tuberosity-laden roots along to a friend with a microscope and here are some of the images he captured.

To add insult to injury, we discovered that grapevine root borers love to tunnel in between the PV roots and the rootstock stem. Thus, out of sight, out of mind, and these poor vines were on the brink of running out of roots. It is a situation that can bring a person to her knees!



Photos by Lucie Morton and Francis Zamborsky



Clockwise from top left: A “cammie” root; tuberosity on a structural root; juvenile phylloxera crawlers on a vinifera root; and a failing vine where the rootstock has been ravaged by grapevine root borers.



Above, courtesy of Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture; on the cover, courtesy of Douglas G. Pfeiffer

A feeding aggregation of spotted lanternfly on a Pennsylvania grapevine in 2017, just before harvest. On the cover: An adult spotted lanternfly.

The Spotted Lanternfly Has Arrived

LANTERNFLY, from Page 1

in commercial fruit operations and domestic settings with their massive feeding aggregations and resulting sticky honeydew deposits.

The adult is a large planthopper, about an inch long, with pinkish-brown wings marked with distinctive black spots. The hind wings have bright red markings, apparently an anti-predator scare device.

In January 2018, viable egg masses and dead adults were found at a Winchester, Va., site, including trees along a railway. SLF overwinters in the egg stage, and the egg masses can be quite cryptic. There is often a waxy grey covering, but this is variable, and the eggs may be completely exposed. The surface of eggs, when exposed, has a fluted appearance.

Eggs are laid indiscriminately on hard, smooth objects, including tree bark, stone surfaces, and vehicles. Oviposition takes place beginning in late summer and continues through the fall.

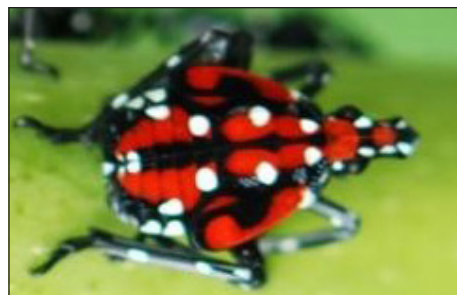
We project that eggs will hatch in April in Virginia, but there has been no time for phenological studies so far.

Spotted lanternfly has four nymphal instars — the first three are black with white markings; the fourth instar is bright red with white and black markings. Nymphs feed on a wide range of plant hosts, including more than 70 species. These hosts include many commercially valuable plants, including grape, apple, peach, hop and caneberries. Many hosts are common in the surrounding environment, including



Above and below, courtesy of Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture

Third and fourth instar spotted lanternfly nymphs, top and below, and SLF eggs showing variable presence of protective covering, bottom.



Courtesy of Douglas G. Pfeiffer

maple, willow, oak, Virginia creeper, rose, and importantly, tree of heaven.

As nymphal development progresses, the host range constricts, until finally adults feed on a few favored plants, especially grapevines and tree of heaven. Tree of heaven is apparently required for normal development of SLF. As the adults feed on the phloem of this species, the insect acquires and sequesters indole alkaloids, conferring emetic qualities that are passed on to the young. Birds that feed on SLF have been reported to vomit, so the bright coloration is likely an anti-predator display.

SLF nymphs often fall off the host plant and must then climb back in order to resume feeding. This will aid in a mechanical control approach I'll discuss below.

Fulgorid planthoppers are phloem feeders — this certainly applies to SLF, as it removes large amounts of phloem sap in order to acquire needed nutrients. The amount of sap removed is compounded by the large size of the insect, coupled with the huge feeding aggregations formed by nymphs as well as adults.

Both nymphs and adults crowd on plants, jostling for position, and eject streams of honeydew. Surrounding surfaces may become coated with the sticky honeydew and the sooty mold that develops on this sweet material.

In Pennsylvania, SLF has been reported to become a quality-of-life issue, limiting the use of yards in residential areas.

See *LANTERNFLY* on page 9

IN THE VINEYARD

LANTERNFLY, from Page 8

There are insecticides that are effective in killing SLF, though work is needed in this area. There are some inconsistencies in results between South Korea and preliminary work in Pennsylvania. Furthermore, if chemical control alone is relied on, there will need to be repeated sprays to protect against continued immigration of SLF into vineyards from the surrounding habitat.

There are has been some exploration of biological control in South Korea – there is an egg parasitoid that can achieve high levels of parasitization, but so far natural enemies in Pennsylvania have not been able to greatly impact SLF densities.

A variety of generalist predators have been found to feed on SLF, including predatory hemipterans (e.g. wheel bug), mantids, and spiders. An egg parasitoid was found attacking SLF in Pennsylvania, interesting because this wasp species was originally imported to the U.S. to control gypsy moth; SLF was the first non-lepidopteran host on record. So far it does

not appear to be a major natural enemy.

In Pennsylvania, an eradication program has been in effect. While not successful so far in eradication, some of the techniques employed have been successful in dramatically lowering local populations, thereby minimizing immigration pressure into agricultural and residential areas.

Tree banding is a cultural control approach that takes advantage of the behavior of nymphs I mentioned earlier. Nymphs often fall out of trees and must climb up the trunk to resume feeding. Bands consisting of brown paper treated with adhesive intercept the returning nymphs. This is an easy measure to perform, but bands should be replaced every two weeks.

Another approach is to create trap trees, which takes advantage of the normal behavior of adults returning to tree of heaven to feed. Most trees of heaven on a property are removed by cutting and herbicide treatment (cutting alone is insufficient because of the tree's tendency to send up new shoots from the roots). A few trees are left, concentrating the SLF where they may be killed with insecticides. This reduces the

environmental impact of pesticide application. A 24C Specialized Local Need label application is being prepared now for an insecticide that has been successfully used in this manner in Pennsylvania.

I will be communicating other information on SLF as appropriate through my new Grape Insect Google Group (virginia-grape-insect-group@googlegroups.com) and in my blog: <https://virginiafruitinsectupdates.blogspot.com>.

Additional information is posted on the following sites:

▶ SLF factsheet (VT English): <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/ENTO/ENTO-180/ENTO-180.html>

▶ SLF factsheet (USDA Spanish): <http://www.virginiafruit.ento.vt.edu/alert-spotted-lanternfly-sp.pdf>

▶ Virginia Cooperative Extension SLF page: <https://ext.vt.edu/agriculture/commercial-horticulture/spotted-lanternfly.html>

▶ For reporting suspected finds of SLF: <https://ask.extension.org/groups/1981/ask>



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VINEYARD HONORS

The Virginia wine industry took time this winter to recognize the achievements of three of its major contributors. Here's a look at some of their accomplishments.

Chris Hill

An authentic pioneer in the growth of the Virginia vineyard and wine industry, Chris was honored with the VVA Lifetime Achievement Award, which is given once every five years.

PAGE 11

Bill Tonkins

After a long and successful career in the British Army, Bill "retired" to Afton to manage Veritas's vineyards. He's this year's recipient of the VVA Grower of the Year Award.

PAGE 12

Lucie Morton

Lucie has made contributions in virtually every aspect of viticulture, from ampelography to rootstocks. She received the Virginia Wine Lifetime Achievement Award.

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CHRIS HILL

VVA Lifetime Achievement Award

By Bob Garsson

Chris Hill is one of the true pioneers of Virginia viticulture. Along with George Jackson, he established the 15-acre Glendower Vineyards near Scottsville in 1981, when Virginia wine was scarcely in its infancy. In the early 1990s, he began lending assistance to friends and fellow growers with vineyard problems, and by 1995 that work had developed into a consulting business. In that capacity, he has played a significant role in the establishment and growth of several dozen vineyards around the Commonwealth.

So, it probably came as no surprise to many of those present at the Winter Technical Meeting of the Virginia Vineyards Association in February that Chris was honored with the association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

By way of background, in addition to his efforts as a viticulturist and a consultant, Chris is a past president of the VVA, and he served two terms on the Virginia Wine Board. In 2005, he was the first recipient of the VVA's Grower of the Year award.

He also helped a number of aspiring viticulturists who took his classes at Piedmont Virginia Community College, which offers certificate programs in viticulture and enology. He taught at the Charlottesville-based community college for a decade, ending in 2015.

Introducing Chris at the VVA banquet in Charlottesville, Bill Tonkins, vineyard manager at Veritas Vineyard & Winery, recalled that he met Chris when Veritas was just preparing to plant its first vines in 1990. Along with Veritas proprietor Andrew Hodson, he journeyed "to the darkest depths of Covesville" to borrow an auger.

"I can vividly recall meeting Chris for the first time in a field surrounded by forest and the feeling that I got from him towering above me and how he introduced me to my first piece of farm equipment," Bill said. "I have literally looked up to him ever since and I can only imagine what he thought of us 'city slickers' as he looked down on us."

Chris is definitely a towering figure in the Virginia wine industry, and he drew plaudits from a number of his colleagues contacted by



Bob Garsson

Chris Hill accepts the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Winter Technical Meeting in Charlottesville in February.

Grape Press.

Bruce Zoecklein, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award five years earlier, told Grape Press that he had known Chris for more than 30 years. His first substantive interaction with Chris occurred in the early days of his tenure at Virginia Tech when he was a member of the Virginia Winegrowers Advisory Board.

"Since light travels faster than sound, many appear bright until they speak," he said. Yet, "it was apparent Chris spoke with authority, understanding the tenets of viticulture and winemaking, and the critical need to bring vintners and growers together to optimize industry development."

In retrospect, he added, "it is clear Chris has consistently used his vast, hands-on knowledge to craft recommendations adjusted to the numerous seasonal vicissitudes of Virginia viticulture. Without question, Chris Hill's winegrowing tactics and methods have helped guide Virginia wines to an unprecedented level of quality and prominence!"

"It was apparent Chris spoke with authority, understanding the tenets of viticulture and winemaking."

— Bruce Zoecklein

Virginia Tech professor and viticulture expert Tony Wolf also weighed in, telling Grape Press that "Chris's effectiveness is his combination of knowledge, 30-plus years of first-hand grape growing experience, an ability to connect people from agricultural workers to vineyard and winery owners, and his unwavering pragmatism."

Aside from his knowledge and enthusiasm for wine growing in Virginia, Chris is a perpetual student of the physical and biological world, Tony said. "He might relate his understanding of entanglement theory one day and pose questions about epigenetics the next. But his concern for others is perhaps his most endearing quality. A mutual friend, the late Shirley Dorrier, told me soon after I'd met Chris, 'He would give you the shirt off his back.' I have seen that countless times in so many ways with Chris."

And, of course, Chris enjoyed a glass of wine while he talked about the fate of the world. "I, too, have been fortunate enough to spend many

hours in conversation with Chris," added Bill Tonkins, noting that they normally talked "with a glass of wine or two and some fresh oysters. Our conversations have transitioned from plant physiology and pathology to the human genome and the British Empire. Chris knows more than I'll ever know, including knowledge of the British Empire."

One thing Chris knows better than anyone is that the world of viticulture is always surprising. "Our world and our lives are not predictable, no matter how hard we try to make them that way," he said in his acceptance speech. "It's interesting to scheme and create ways to increase predictability, but in the end, we need some luck — we need some good luck."

"We are constantly trying to load the dice, but then the world changes, our reality changes, and we need a new set of dice. Sometimes good luck comes our way and we feel blessed. Sometimes we feel smart, but it is much better to feel blessed. Feeling blessed lasts a lot longer."

BILL TONKINS

2018 VVA Grower of the Year

By Bob Garsson

Bill Tonkins, vineyard manager at Veritas Vineyard & Winery, was named 2018 Grower of the Year by the Virginia Vineyards Association.

A former VVA president, Bill now serves as a gubernatorial appointee to the Virginia Wine Board. Since moving to Afton in 2007 with his wife, Diane, after a long and successful career in the British Army, including deployments with the U.S. Army, Bill oversaw the growth of Veritas's vineyards from 20 acres of vines to 100 acres.

"Bill exemplifies the kind of modern grower who is helping to raise the bar for Virginia wine as a whole," said VVA president Nate Walsh. "Wines made from Veritas grapes have been consistent medalists in the Virginia Governor's Cup, and in 2017 those grapes were responsible for two wines included in the Governor's Cup case — our Commonwealth's highest award."

A week after the meeting, Veritas again placed a wine in the Governor's Cup Case — this time, its 2015 Petit Verdot.

In addition to the vineyards he manages for Veritas, Mr. Tonkins has his own vineyard of Petit Verdot, which he lovingly calls Aftonshire. He has a master's degree in technology from the University of Manchester in England.

The award was presented to Bill at the VVA Winter Technical Meeting in Charlottesville by Bettina Ring, who said "Bill's work in increasing the Veritas acreage fivefold is a fitting parallel to the dramatic growth of the Virginia wine industry in general."

Ms. Ring, who became Virginia's Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry in January, is a Virginia native and Virginia Tech graduate who worked with land conservation organizations in California, including organizations in Napa and Sonoma counties, before moving to Washington, D.C., to join the American Forest Foundation.

Sonoma, she said in her presentation, is "a great wine producing area, but nothing compared to the Commonwealth of Virginia!"

She moved to Charlottesville in 2014 to serve as the State Forester and Director of the Virginia Department of Forestry under Gov. Terry McAuliffe before becoming



Chris Garsson

Bill Tonkins received the VVA Grower of the Year Award at the Winter Technical Meeting in Charlottesville in February from Bettina Ring, state Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry.

"Bill's commitment to the Virginia wine industry is unquestionable and his enthusiasm unshakable"

— Bettina Ring,
Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry this year.

In her remarks, she said the Virginia wine industry "is a booming industry in the Commonwealth, contributing \$1.37 billion to our robust economy."

She noted that the number of wineries has significantly increased across our state in the past few years, adding, "I am proud to say we currently have more than 280 wineries in Virginia. In the future, this number will continue to rise and individuals from all over the world continue to travel to Virginia to experience our wines."

Bill, she said, "has had a successful career not only as a grower, but also as an active member of the Virginia grape growing community ever since he and his wife moved to Afton after his service in the British military.

"Bill's commitment to the Virginia wine industry is unquestionable and his enthusiasm unshakable," she added. "He also has given new meaning to the concept of retirement, showing us all that enthusiasm and dedication for a new pursuit can be as rewarding and as rewarded as one's career accomplishments."

LUCIE MORTON

Virginia Wine Lifetime Achievement Award



Jay Paul

Justin Rose, left, president of the Virginia Wineries Association; Lucie Morton, and Gordon Murchie, a lifelong supporter of Virginia wine, at the Virginia Governor's Cup Gala in February.

Lucie Morton is a familiar presence at VVA meetings, as well as in vineyards throughout the Commonwealth and around the world.

An expert on rootstocks and one of only a handful of ampelographers (the science of identifying grape varieties by their leaves and other physical characteristics) in the world, she is a researcher, lecturer and frequent contributor to Grape Press (see p. 7).

However, she is probably best known as a consultant who has helped a number of outstanding vineyards get started.

In accepting the Virginia Wineries Association's Gordon Murchie Virginia Wine Lifetime Achievement Award at the Governor's Cup Gala in Richmond on Feb. 27, Lucie talked about vineyards in general and

Virginia vineyards in particular. Excerpts of her remarks follow:

"As a life-long independent viticulturist, my bias as to what makes wines special is obvious — the vineyards.

"When someone comes to me with the intention of growing grapes for wine, my first duty is to try to talk them out of it.

"Growing grapes is a great challenge.

"In fact, establishing and maintaining vineyards is the central challenge to creating Virginia wines of distinction and authenticity.

"We all know that a house is not a 'home' per se. It can be, when the things in it and the people in it interact in a way that makes it unique and special.

"Home is where the heart is.

"The hearts of any wine region are found in

"My bias as to what makes wines special is obvious — the vineyards."

— Lucie Morton

the places where people have literally planted stakes to trellis the vines that produce grapes for them to artfully ferment into local magic.

"What I find special in so many of Virginia's farm wineries is the small scale, the intimacy, the multi-generational family aspect, the saving of scenic and historic properties, and how my daughters and their friends love to visit them.

"How special to be tasting wines unique to these properties.

"Some people wonder if Virginia will ever plant very large tracts of vineyard acreages to match other more prolific wine producing states.

"Size is not what is prized in the world of wine.

"The ongoing establishment of vineyards across the Commonwealth from 20 to 200-plus acres — that supply fruit to wineries with educated and enthusiastic staff — will assure an enduring source of pleasure and discovery for all of you in this room today, your friends, family, and wine enthusiasts everywhere.

"Thank you for this great honor. It means so much to me, especially coming from you.

"I'd like to conclude with the new 'Make Mine Virginia Wine' salute (which consists of making a two-finger V with the right hand and a W with three fingers of the left).

"Thank you."

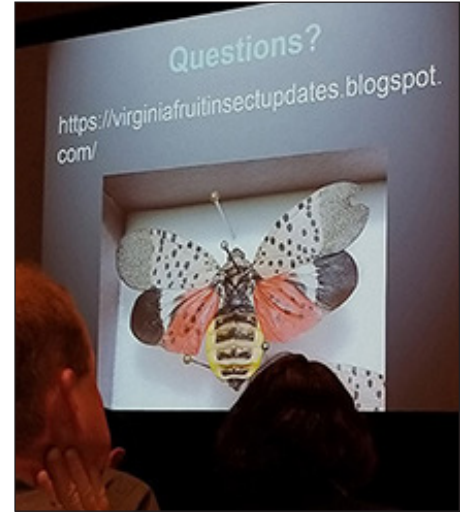
12 Wines Selected for 2018 Governor's Case

Congratulations to all the medalists in the 2018 Virginia Governor's Cup Competition and, in particular, King Family Vineyards, whose 2014 Meritage was awarded the Governor's Cup in February.

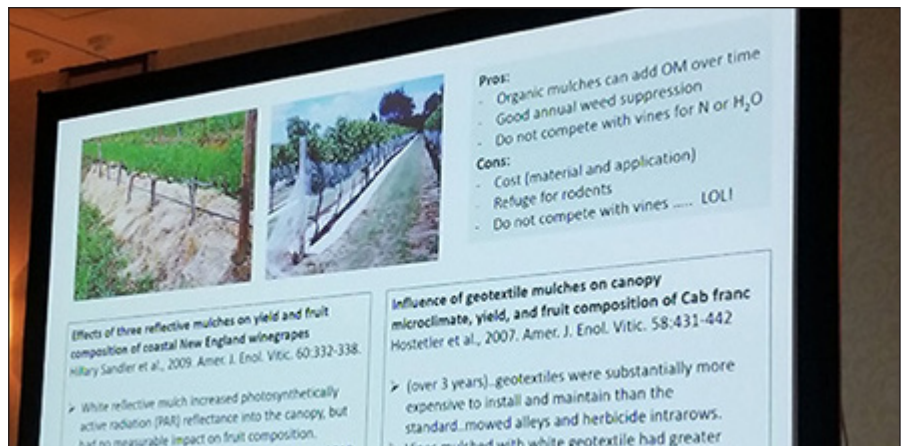
Also earning a coveted spot in the Governor's Case were:

- ▶ Barboursville Vineyards: 2014 Paxxito
- ▶ CrossKeys Vineyards: 2015 Ali d'Oro
- ▶ Early Mountain Vineyards: 2015 Eluvium
- ▶ Jefferson Vineyards: 2016 Viognier
- ▶ Jefferson Vineyards: 2015 Viognier
- ▶ Keswick Vineyards: 2016 Cabernet Franc Estate Reserve
- ▶ North Gate Vineyard: 2015 Petit Verdot
- ▶ Potomac Point Winery: 2016 Cabernet Franc
- ▶ Veritas Vineyard & Winery: 2015 Petit Verdot
- ▶ Virginia Cellars 2015 The Barns at Hamilton Station Petit Verdot
- ▶ Virginia Cellars 2015 The Barns at Hamilton Station Meritage

WINTER TECHNICAL 2018



The VVA's 2018 Winter Technical Meeting, which was held Feb. 22 to 24 at the Omni Hotel in Charlottesville, combined an extensive schedule of educational presentations (top right, below and bottom right) with time for growers to socialize, including the annual Saturday luncheon (top left).



Photos by Chris Garsson

Bill Hatch, left, of Zephaniah Farm Vineyard in Leesburg, participates in a recorded interview during the technical meeting. The interviews were conducted by Kim Stryker, an independent folklorist who is working on a project for the Library of Congress that will document the occupational culture of workers involved in the Virginia wine industry. The interviews with VVA members will become part of the permanent collection of the Library of Congress's American Folklife Center.