

Rhythms of The Reef



by Terry Baxter

Richard Weinstein created a legacy of memorable images when he managed advertising for Ocean Reef. One I liked was a stream of attractive boats cruising past Buccaneer Island, with the tagline, "Our Members return each season as faithfully as the tide." Poetry. It perfectly captures the nearly gravitational pull The Reef exerts. We surf in on a wave of friendships and remarkable traditions. The season brings us The Gathering, The Holiday Concert, Vintage Weekend, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's celebrations, the Superbowl, All Charities, Valentine's, the Catwalk, Reef Boutique, President's Weekend, spring break...yikes. We appreciate the short lull before Easter.

The lull permits a different pleasure – starting to hear Members recount their adventures as All Charities' prizes are redeemed – such as watching a Formula One Grand Prix from the pit lane; attending The Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance; dining at the World-Class French Laundry -- unique experiences contributed to foster charitable giving. Thanks to **Michael Berman**, I just got to experience one of these. Mike arranged for the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) to present a daylong sommelier class leading to a WSET Level I Certificate. I joined thirty Ocean Reefers looking to expand their appreciation of wine. **Sarina Kinney** sat to my left, and **Teresa Holmes** was on my right. They remained impressively attentive and sober through nine glasses of wine and detailed instruction from Rebecca Hodges and Alessandra Esteves, our seasoned wine



Thirty newly-minted Level One Oenophiles ready to spread the gospel.

experts from WSET.

Fair Patricia and I have enjoyed wine for more than fifty years. We joined *Les Amis du Vin* when we lived in Washington, D.C. I remember my first Grand Cru (1970 Chateau Palmer, Bordeaux) was \$9 dollars a bottle (now it is \$430). On our first European vacation, we spent several days in the Vineyards of Burgundy and the wine caves under the town of Beaune. Over time, we visited Alsace, Bordeaux, St. Emilion, Provence, Champagne, Chablis, Cognac, Oporto, Tuscany, and Napa and Sonoma. **The WSET class revealed how much I didn't know.**

Rebecca and Alessandria concentrated on the tasting of wine and appropriate food/wine pairings. We sampled reds and whites, noting the fruit or the oak, and evaluating the sweetness, acidity, tannin, alcohol content, and body. For instance, sweetness is detected on the tip of your tongue, so Rebecca recommended tilting the glass and extending just the tip your tongue into the wine. Sarina and Teresa cracked each other up trying this maneuver. Winston would have been a whiz; his tongue is two feet long. We got a little basket of food products containing salt, acid, umami, sweet, spicy, or fat. Some surprise pairing results: salty food made both the red and white wines taste better, with more fruit and body. Acid (tomato) also made the red wine taste better, so salt your tomatoes. The demonstrations were fun and eye-opening.

As we departed, Mike

Berman passed out a take-home gift of two Grand Cru wines from Bordeaux, and a red and a white from Magnolia Blossom, a California estate bottling. A very generous finish. Thanks, Mike. You have given a nice boost to All Charities and contributed another enhancement to the rhythms of The Reef.

Short Takes

An alert reader noted that I did not mention that the *Conservas* on the Port O' Call lite bites

menu are *TINS* of celebrated seafood delicacies of Spain and Portugal preserved in Olive Oil or Brine. Apparently, tins of imported seafood are all the rage among young people. Pass the word.

Chef Josh of the Ocean Room Breakfast Buffet has re-introduced his heavenly **Bananas Foster** topping for waffles. A handful of pecans, a dash of whipped cream and Bob's Your Uncle.