



Dear friends,

As I sat down to write this letter I asked myself, “how many of these missals have I penned over the years?”. Hmmmm....1986 to 2010. That makes for a very nice round number of 25. So hard to believe these many years have passed. I hope, like me, that you feel much younger than the reality of your years.

When I turned 40 my loving wife Karen bought a Fender Stratocaster for me after hearing for so long that my ultimate dream was to play that thing like Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits. My friend John Thomas, the ultimate hermit winemaker, bought an original Marshall Tube amp to complete the deal (dare).

Well, at fifty-six I have yet to pick up that precious instrument. It sits in our guest bedroom closet....haunting me. To her credit, my lovely wife has been golden about the fact that I have not, as yet, made good on living my dream. A couple of comments, over such a long time, in front of thousands of listeners is only fair.

Over so many years the reality of my true love is clear. I love making wine. I love tending vines. I love spreading the good word about Oregon Pinot noir and that its place is at the very top of excellence on this planet.

My good friend Chris Olson moves the equipment of all the major musical acts around this country. As an example, he has provided the trucking for the Superbowl halftime performances for more than the last ten years. When Dire Straits came to Portland to play at the Schnitz two years ago he invited Karen and I to join him. Before the show, and because we knew Chris, we were invited to a private gathering with the band. Ten of us waited in a very small room for a “meet and greet. “ The band came out, put cardboard boxes on the floor and began to play four incredible “Hawaiian” songs for us acoustically. Knocked us out. After the last crazy beautiful song they stood and asked us all to come forward to say hello. As you might expect I was more than a little excited to meet my “musical hero”. With a bottle of our Pinot in hand I greeted Mark and handed him my offering. He looked me in the eyes and said “Wow, Oregon Pinot noir, it’s the best.” Do I love him more? You bet. I’m hoping that will be my fix that allows me to get on with what I do best.

Our volunteers for harvest were, as usual, incredibly good at removing all material from the sorting belt that they would not accept. Led by Father “T”, everything that you would not willingly eat was removed post haste. After losing Alice, his wife of 60 years, last year, Father “T” was a welcome addition to our posse again. We love him for what he does for us.

What a weather year this was! We had a very cool and wet spring, followed by an early wet June that saw our vineyard manager Seth’s’ wife Kay lose her car to flooding on the John Day River when it rose ten feet in one day! Totaled.

The birds were voracious. In all of my years I have never seen anything like this. Our belief is that their natural fruit sources were unavailable (Did you notice that the blackberries this year rotted before they were ripe?) leaving grapes as the only offering on the menu. Most of our sites came in with reasonable crop levels though Canary Hill had but one ton per acre. Over all we are down almost 30 percent versus last year. Yikes! A number of our sites, particularly Canary Hill and Shea, will be in very short supply this year.

As we press off the fruit of this year we are happily stunned at the intensity of color and depth of aroma and flavor that we are seeing. Brilliant laser-like cherry aromas are the dominant theme. Violets, cola, coffee and licorice add further dimension to the aromatic profiles. It is a great testimony to the efforts of Mark, Seth and Taylor (our vineyard management team) that we could succeed like this with all the hurdles that Mother Nature provided. We had the benefit of over 110 days of hang-time which also played a role in aroma and flavor development. We are again grateful for the effort of our volunteers whose detailed sorting ensured that the value of a years worth of effort by all in our company was protected. 2010 is proving to be a small but terrific vintage.

NEW LABELS! After years of talking about creating individual labels for each of our vineyard sites we have finally made it happen. David Berkvam, who created our existing label artwork, produced nine more original wax carvings that depict various practices in the vineyard and winery. We will have the original works on display over the holiday weekend. For a sneak peek you can view the labels online at [www.kenwrightcellars.com](http://www.kenwrightcellars.com).

We will be open the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, from 10a-4p.

Thank you for supporting us for so many years and believing that we will produce wine for you that makes you stand up and cheer. Ken