

Lake County WINEFEST

www.lakecountywinefest.com

June 13, 2026, 12 to 5 PM at Library Park, Lakeport, CA
A fundraiser for the Lake County Symphony Association



2025 BLIND TASTING RESULTS



The evening before WINEFEST 2025 professional judging was held to award ribbons for the best wines made by participating home wine makers. This yearly judging event was open to all amateur wine makers who signed up in advance and provided bottles to be evaluated in a blind tasting.

Jerry Martinez was the big winner this year, winning five ribbons total. His Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and Chardonnay were awarded gold ribbons; he won a silver for his Merlot and a bronze for his Zinfandel.

Merry Jo Velasquez took home four ribbons: she won golds for her 2020 Barbera, Merlot (2020), and her Sauvignon Blanc (2023), along with a silver for her Red Other-Vintners blend (2020).

Scott Knickmeyer won four ribbons: he took home silvers for his Cabernet Sauvignon and his Chardonnay (no malolactic); his Rose (other red category) and his Syrah were awarded bronze ribbons.

The LCSA Wine Club was awarded gold ribbons for its Zinfandel (2020) and Petite Sirah (2019) and took silvers for Sauvignon Blanc (2024) and Riesling (2024).

Other gold ribbon winners were **Doug Moore** for his Riesling, **Melanie Smith** for her Elderflower “champagne” (Aperitif, Dessert, Unique category) and **Deborah & Chris Welch** for their 2020 Red blend of Merlot, Zinfandel and Petite Sirah.

Silver ribbons went to **Glenda Smith** for her Walnut Wine, **Juan Leal** for his Barbera, **David Hicks** for his Petite Sirah (2017) and **Doug Moore** for his Zinfandel.

Tara Venezia won a bronze for her Blackberry Port, as did **David Hicks** for his Cabernet Sauvignon (2017). **Deborah & Chris Welch** took home a bronze for their 2024 Sauvignon Blanc.

Judges were Scott Simkover (Smiling Dogs Ranch), Cinamon Vann (Wine in the Willows), Cheryl Lucido (Laujor Winery), Danie Howsepian (winery owner, Contra Costa County, and Susan Feiler, formerly of Lake County Wine Studio.

Wine Club members worked together to make it all work smoothly: David Hicks was the host for this year’s event; David Velasquez was the event coordinator; Denny Renfrow organized the blinding of the entries and tabulated the judges’ scores to determine the winners; and Juan Leal provided a wonderful dinner for everyone involved after the results were tabulated. Susie Novak also assisted with the tasting, opening wines, keeping water available and dealing with other necessary tasks.



[MORE INFORMATION](#)