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Benefit in Honor of Douglas Wisor: April 8 in Geneva
By Samantha Wickham

GENEVA, NY: A wine and food pairing will be held Saturday, April 8, at the Geneva Country Club, in Geneva, NY, as a tribute to Douglas Wisor. The event will be hosted by Doug's parents, Dr. Charles and Joanne Wisor, and the faculty of the Cornell University Enology Program at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station. Proceeds will benefit the Cornell Enology Program and the Doug Wisor Memorial Scholarship. This competitive scholarship will give one young American winemaker the opportunity to travel to New Zealand each year to work at the winery of his/her choice, and will be awarded annually.

"This dinner is a fitting memorial to Doug and his accomplishments, and at the same time provides valuable support to the Cornell Enology Program," said Thomas Henick-Kling, Cornell professor of enology and head of the Wine Research and Extension Group at the Experiment Station. "This young man grew up in Geneva, became interested in winemaking, and then went out into the world and became successful in that very field."

Doug Wisor, who died in a tragic kite-surfing accident on a rural beach in New Zealand in October 2004, was the son of former Geneva Mayor Joanne Wisor and Dr. Charles Wisor, a retired ophthalmologist. He attended Phillips Exeter Academy, and was a graduate of Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

Doug's initial interests were in fermentation science and, particularly, the art of making beer. When his interests changed to winemaking, Doug moved to California to work in the Napa Valley. He apprenticed with Ted Lemon before moving to New Zealand in March, 2000, where he initially worked at Dry River Winery. He was soon hired as the red winemaker for the new Craggy Range Winery in the Hawkes Bay Region, where he ultimately became head winemaker. Doug was known for his exceptional winemaking skills and had a passion for creating great wine. One of his primary goals was to create a great Pinot Noir.

"Doug was the perfect winemaking partner," said Steve Smith, managing director at Craggy Range. "With him, we were able to create wines that consistently received high ratings at competitions in New Zealand, Australia and the United States."

Doug's first Pinot Noir was due to go to the international stage, and he was making plans to remain in New Zealand and purchase land for his own vineyard. A special Pinot Noir from 2003, a small batch with labels that read "My Selection," was Doug's greatest wine to date and has recently been released as a tribute wine.

The dinner at the Geneva Country Club will feature food and wine pairings with wines from Oregon, the Finger Lakes and some of Doug's highly praised wines from New Zealand's Craggy Range Winery. The food will be prepared by several notable chefs from the Finger Lakes area including, Schott Snyder, chef/owner at Madderlake Café; Scott Signori, chef/owner at the Stone Cat Café; and Karen Gilman, chef at Dano's on Seneca.

The price of the dinner is \$75/person, and checks should be made out to the NY Wine & Grape Foundation. To make reservations, contact Nancy Long at 315-787-2288. The time of the dinner is 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 8.

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