



Message in a Bottle

## Teamwork, wine quality keys to success

As we start 2006, I think it is important to look back at 2005 and credit our success with the decisions we made over the past year that kept us going. '05 was a landmark year for Gordon Brothers. One of the best things was the addition of John Gabriel as our winemaker. We spent a lot of time searching and we had many candidates that were well-qualified and would have had a success with us. Until we met John it just didn't feel right. He brings a passion and ethics to Gordon Brothers that I really admire. We are glad to have him on board.

The biggest accomplishment was that we increased our sales by over 50%. It was an amazing year. People said it could not be done, but it is a real testimony to the quality of wines we have. I really must give credit to all facets of our team. They did an amazing job. I would like to recognize Denise Ochsner who was always ready to get samples out, take care of the wine club and just make sure Gordon Brothers looked great. She did, and continues to do a great job.

We have really built up some momentum and it is carrying over into 2006. We are excited to bring you new things from the vineyard. I have tried our new wines and I know you are going to like the releases coming up. By the end of the year we should have sales where we want them. We would like to thank you for all of your support over the past couple of years.

Cheers!

## Cellar Report by John J. Gabriel, Winemaker

As winter slowly seems to start fading in the background all our 2005 reds have finished their malolactic fermentation. Our red wines completed this secondary fermentation in the barrel in order to create more complexity in the wine. Depending on the temperature of the cellar this takes between 6 to 8 weeks after which the barrels are racked.

Now the 18 to 22 months aging process will begin. It always amazes me that every barrel although from the same lot has its own life and will age differently from the one right beside it. At this point, we start picking up slight differences in fruit expression, complexity and mouth feel. At the end of this aging process we go through each lot, a total of almost 700 barrels and select only the best 20 barrels that we will use for our Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and, Syrah blend that we call "Tradition."

As the remaining wine will get ready to be bottled, our Tradition blend will go into a tank as a blend for several weeks. Then we put it back into the barrel for an additional 12 months.

As our vines are still deep in their winter sleep, we are still very busy in the cellar. In February we began bottling the 2003 reds starting with the Merlot. Next will be the 2002 Tradition and 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon.

The barrel-fermented Chardonnay is still progressing well as the new French oak is showing forth very nicely. We kept most of our Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc on the lees in order to create a more complex flavor profile. Every week the wines are tasted to monitor their progression and although the acids on our whites are slightly higher this year they show very bright fruit and structure.

### Inside this issue:

Coming events	2
Syrah, Chardonnay featured in wine club	2
Washington CEO magazine accolades	2

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### Current Releases:

- ☞ 2003 Sauvignon Blanc
- ☞ 2003 Chardonnay
- ☞ 2002 Merlot
- ☞ 2002 Syrah
- ☞ 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon
- ☞ 2000 Tradition

# Our best-kept secret...

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The secrets to Gordon Brothers' success are the people behind the scenes. One of our best is Denise Ochsner, the friendly voice who normally answers the phone, the one who carefully packages your wine and ships it off, and the one who would do absolutely anything in her power to make sure the entire world knows about Gordon Brothers' premium wines!



*Denise and her husband, Ray at a recent wine event.*

Denise grew up in South Dakota where she and her husband, Ray lived until they moved to the Tri-Cities

in 2003. They fell in love with the local wine industry. It wasn't long until Denise started working for Gordon Brothers in the tasting room. Since then, her role with the winery has grown to include many different hats, and she wears them all with a smile!

We want to thank Denise for her hard work and dedication to Gordon Brothers and the Washington wine industry as a whole. Her passion for wine and her faith in Gordon Brothers are some of our biggest assets!

## Wine club feature: '04 Chardonnay and '02 Syrah

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## Coming Events

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**Attention wine club members!** The following are our featured wines! Through March 20, we are offering our members a **25% case discount** (limit 2 cases). Call or email us right away for this incredible special.

### 2004 Chardonnay

This is not your average Chardonnay with a distinctively crisp fresh citrus and melon. The wine has a nice rounded finish with rich layers of vanilla and buttery nuances with undertones of fennel and autumn straw.

This wine will pair well with favorite grilled white meats or grilled seafood with a exotic fruit salsa.

### 2002 Syrah

This seductive Syrah introduces itself with vanilla, raspberry and slight rose petal on the nose, followed by a mouthful of jammy fruit and espresso with a perfect layer of dark chocolate and underlying clove.

Serve this dense, slightly meaty Syrah with lamb or prime rib for a fantastic meal!

### March

11-12—Spring Release and Barrel Tasting weekend at Gordon Brothers. 10-5 both days.

21—Oyster Olympics at Anthony's on Shilshole Bay, Seattle.

### April

8—Taste Washington Seattle

### May

8-11—Washington State Wine Expo

## Mark your calendar for July 15 "Vineyard Sunset Barbeque"

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On Saturday, July 15, 2006 we will once again be hosting our "Vineyard Sunset Barbeque!" The event will feature music from "Big Daddy & the Nightcrawlers" and food by Castle Catering.

Last year's barbeque sold out quickly, and we anticipate an even larger response this year. Ticket information will be posted soon on our website, be sure to check back frequently.

## Washington CEO names GB Chardonnay, Syrah best in Washington

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The February issue of Washington CEO Magazine announces their 2006 "Best of Washington Wines," and Gordon Brothers did very well! Our 2003 Chardonnay and 2002 Syrah were the best-ranked wines in their categories! In addition, our Late Harvest Gewurztraminer was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the dessert wine category and our 2002 Kamiak Cellar Select Red Wine was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the red blends category—and it's the least expensive of the 34 wines in the category at \$10 a bottle!

We are very excited to share with you these ratings and the wonderful press generated by the article. To read about it, please visit [www.washingtonceo.com](http://www.washingtonceo.com).

## Join us March 11 and 12 for our "Spring Release & Barrel Tasting Weekend."

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This is one of the two weekends a year we are open, so don't miss it! We'll be featuring our new and upcoming releases: 2003 Merlot and 2004 Chardonnay. These wines will be offered at 25% off case purchases and 10% off bottle purchases. John Gabriel, our winemaker, has agreed to pull some special barrel and tank samples of the later vintages for you to preview.

Directions to Gordon Brothers: From Pasco: Head east on I-182 towards Walla Walla. Take the Kahlotus exit and head north on the Kahlotus highway 10.2 miles. Turn right on Levey Road. Follow approximately 1 mile until you reach the *second* Gordon Brothers sign. You'll see our production facility on the left-hand side of the road. We'll be in the barrel room...we can't wait to see you!

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**Join our wine club! Visit [www.gordonwines.com/wineclub](http://www.gordonwines.com/wineclub) for details.**

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