

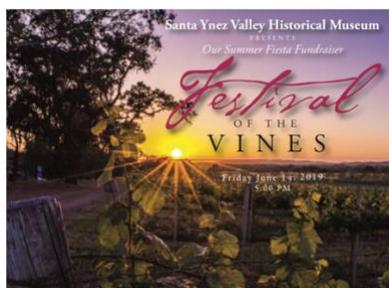
Press Release (Updated 6/5/19)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum’s “Festival of the Vines” at Gainey Vineyard on June 14th Will Honor Louis Lucas, Dan Gainey & Blair Fox with 1st Annual Pioneer Wine Maker Awards

Valley’s first summer social event will treat guests to an evening of sipping local wines, an awards ceremony, savoring farm-to-table food and live entertainment under the stars

(Santa Ynez, CA) – This year’s abundant rainfall and spring wildflowers herald what will be a spectacular summer celebration during “Festival of the Vines,” sponsored by the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum. It will take place on June 14th from 5 to 10 PM on the grounds of Gainey Vineyard, located at 3690 Highway 246 in Santa Ynez. The event, now in its third year, is popular with Museum members, Valley residents and area visitors and sells out quickly due to limited seating. Advanced ticket reservations are recommended. The cost is \$125 for Museum members and \$150 for non-members. Tickets may be purchased online at www.santaynezmuseum.org or by calling Laini Jacobsen at the Museum: (805) 688-8899. Attendees are encouraged to wear outdoor party attire; ranch footwear is recommended.

What’s new this year is the launch of the Museum’s new initiative to become the important repository of the history of the wine industry/community in the region since its neophyte inception in the 1960s. To celebrate the organization’s mission expansion, three special awards will be bestowed for the first time. They will be presented to individuals who are making a significant contribution to the art of winemaking and the expansion of viticulture in Santa Barbara County, which in turn, is increasing economic growth for certain segments of the Valley.

Louis “Louie” Lucas will be celebrated as 2019’s “Pioneer Vintner.” The Gainey family, who are generously providing the venue for the event and wines for the cocktail reception, will be recognized as this year’s “Pioneer Wine Family and Vineyard of the Year.” The third awardee is Blair Fox, who will be bestowed as 2019’s “Pioneer Wine Maker.”

Festival of the Vines is a fundraiser for Museum exhibits and programs. After wine tasting and appetizers, there will be a chance to bid on a special collection of live auction items arranged by the Board of Directors and friends of the Museum. A sumptuous plated farm-to-table dinner will follow.

Festival Co-Chair and Board member Kristin Reynolds notes that, “The event is the perfect way to enjoy a beautiful summer evening with friends and family to support our beloved Museum, which actively works to bring our community together to preserve our cultural heritage and focus on our future.” Brian Stenfors, Ph.D., SYVHM Executive Director, shares her sentiments, remarking that, “Festival of the Vines is a great way for people to experience the best the Museum has to offer and, to learn about the important role viticulture plays in our past, present and future. We are grateful for the support we receive through the generosity of our members, vendors, donors and friends, old and new. Together, we are ushering in new initiatives that will ensure the organization’s long-term viability and growth.”

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About SYVHM

Founded in 1961, the mission of the Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum and Parks-Janeway Carriage House is “Preserving, interpreting and celebrating the history of human experience in California’s Santa Ynez Valley and Central Coast by informing, educating, inspiring and engaging Museum guests of all ages and backgrounds.” The Museum is the official caretaker of the Valley’s rich cultural history, housing one of the finest collections of antique, horse-drawn carriages and wagons in the Western United States, examples of finely crafted Chumash and other Native American basketry, pottery and artifacts, one-of-a-kind horse saddlery and tack from days gone by and Western sculptures, paintings, books and handicrafts. As the “hub” for social gatherings in the Valley, the Museum sponsors events and celebrations throughout the year including gallery openings, Festival of the Vines, Vaquero Show, Wild West Camp for children and food and wine tastings that highlight the economic importance of the wine and agricultural industries in shaping the Valley’s future. To learn more, visit and become a member, visit www.santaynezmuseum.org.

About Louis “Louie” Lucas

Louis’ vast knowledge and viticulture expertise span over 50 years, making him a sought-after speaker, consultant, and advisor. Originally from the Central Valley of California, he is one of California’s premier grape growers. He literally grew up in the business. His father, son of Croatian immigrants, was a leading table grape grower in California for decades. In 1970, he formed Tepusquet Vineyards; in the early 1970s, he worked with Jack Niven to form Edna Valley Vineyards; in the 1980s, he converted most of his vineyards from Cabernet, Merlot, and Gamay Beaujolais to Chardonnay (only keeping the Pinot Noir). He also planted another vineyard in the Los Alamos Valley of Santa Barbara County. In 1996, he joined forces with retired Judge Royce Lewellen, with two of his existing vineyards, and together, they acquired several premium wine producing properties. These vineyards are located in the three principal wine grape growing regions of Santa Barbara County: the Santa Maria Valley, the Los Alamos Valley, and the Santa Ynez Valley, allowing them to utilize the 3 different climate zones that are unique to Santa Barbara County’s coastal climate. Louis is best described as an innovator and a master at utilizing a variety growing practices and techniques. A true raconteur, he is one of the Valley’s most respected oral historians specializing in recounting the coming of age story of wine in our region.

About Dan Gainey

Dan represents three generations of one of the first families of wine in the Santa Ynez Valley. In 1962, his grandfather and father purchased 1,800 acres of land stretching across the Eastern end of the Valley. The land initially hosted a cattle operation, vegetable, flower, fruit and hay crops. Later, 50 acres of grapevines were planted nurturing a dream of one day producing a Gainey family wine. In 1984, Dan's father established a Spanish-style winery – designed to produce small quantities of high-quality wine – and released a Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. One year later, Dan joined the family business and in 1996, purchased an additional plot of land in what would become the Sta. Rita Hills appellation in western Santa Ynez Valley. There he planted 60 acres of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah and named the vineyard Evan's Ranch after his great-grandfather. The Sta. Rita Hills proved ideally suited to those varieties, so in 2009, he planted another 50-acre parcel in this cool, maritime appellation and named it Rancho Esperanza. Dan and his wife Diane are proud that their son and daughters - the fourth generation of Gainey's in the Santa Ynez Valley - are continuing their family's tradition of farming and winemaking in this most beautiful region of California.

About Blair Fox

Blair, a Santa Barbara native, started his winemaking career in Santa Barbara County after his graduation from U.C. Davis with a degree in Viticulture and Enology. At U.C. Davis he found he had a passion for Syrah and other Rhône varietal wines. While working as the head winemaker for a small family run winery in the Santa Ynez Valley, Blair and his wife Sarah decided to create his ultra-boutique eponymous label, Blair Fox Cellars. After over three years of making award winning wines, and "thirsty" to learn more about his craft, he left the Santa Ynez area and traveled to the Rhône region of France for further investigation into the extraordinary wines found there. His love of Shiraz led him to establish himself at the vintage winemaker for Haselgrove Wines in McLaren Vale, South Australia, where he learned to believe in "terroir" and taste the earth in the wine. After this international winemaking experience, Blair returned home and joined Fess Parker Winery as the Rhône varietal winemaker. In 2005, Blair was promoted to head winemaker at both Fess Parker Winery and Epiphany Cellars. Today he continues to craft superb Rhône varietal wines for his Blair Fox Cellars label. As a testament to his expertise, Blair received the 2008 Andre Tchelistcheff Winemaker of the Year Award at the San Francisco International Wine Competition, the largest wine competition in the world.