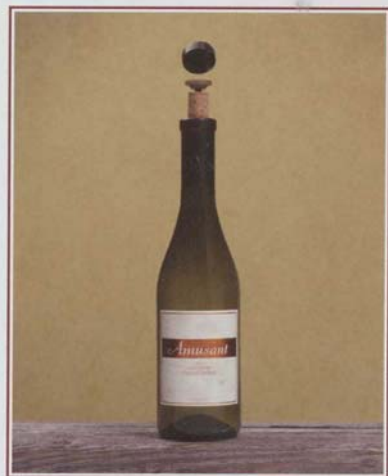
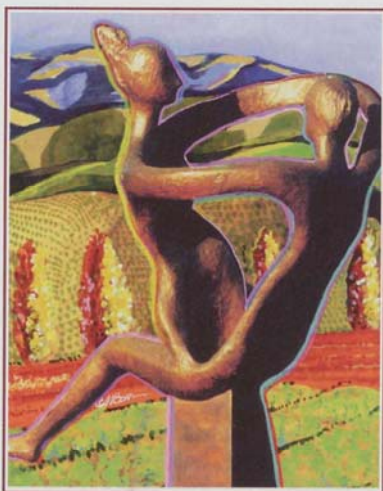


A look at the sometimes provocative side of label art—page 50.



Part cork closure and part twist capsule, the new Metacork—page 60.

Examining the current trend toward small stainless steel barrels—page 64.



Cover Photo: Bob Miller Design.

The wine ring is a copyrighted device of Vineyard & Winery Management.



V&WM circulation has been audited by Business Publication Auditors.

Vineyard & Winery Management (ISSN 1047-4951) is published bi-monthly by Vineyard & Winery Services, Inc. Business office is located at 103 3rd St., Watkins Glen, New York 14891; Tel.: (607) 535-7133, J. William Moffett executive officer. Cover and contents are copyright protected. © 2003. Unauthorized duplication prohibited. Subscription rates are listed on the self-mailer within. Periodical Postage Paid at Watkins Glen, NY and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: please send form 3579 to Vineyard & Winery Management, Box 231, Watkins Glen, NY 14891. Changing address? Please send notice of address change to the above office to insure uninterrupted delivery of your subscription. Subscription Rates: US \$37.00; Canada and Mexico, \$47.00; Overseas \$57.00.

MANAGEMENT

of PROCESS, TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003

Vol. 29, No. 6

GENERAL

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Feature Story: The Role of the Wine Label, Using Art | 50 |
| <i>Chris Sawyer explores the sensual side of labeling as wine labels become works of art.</i> | |
| Publishers' Page | 6 |
| Classifieds | 92 |
| Advertisers this Issue | 93 |
| In the Spotlight | 94 |
| Calendar | 97 |

SPECIAL PACKAGING FOCUS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Glass Packaging Institute Clear Choice Award | 18 |
| <i>Almaden Vineyard's 1.5 liter size varietal line is this year's winner.</i> | |
| Etched Bottles | 20 |
| <i>Dan Berger visits a key "niche-market" that is growing as a marketing tool.</i> | |
| The Revolutionary Metacork | 60 |
| <i>Gerry Boyd reviews a new product that has purists' eyebrows raised.</i> | |
| Labels Sell the First Bottle | 77 |
| <i>Isaac Segal explores the sensory qualities of a wine, through the design of its label.</i> | |
| "Put a Cork in It?" The 28th ASEV/ES Conference | 81 |
| <i>Richard Leahy examines the closure quality control, which is the most pressing technical issue for the wine industry today.</i> | |

MAINLY IN THE WINE CELLAR

| | |
|--|-----------|
| WineTech | 13 |
| <i>Dr. Tom Cottrell, in Part Three of Lab Work, looks at the when, what, why and how of conditions in the laboratory.</i> | |
| Compliance Watch | 43 |
| <i>Sara Schorske and Alex Heckathorn layout the cases that have given the wine industry hope for direct shipping, even to the point of involving the Supreme Court.</i> | |
| Stainless Steel Barrels—Back to the Future | 64 |
| <i>Paul Franson suggests that in striving for non-oaked fermentation and aging on lees, the current trend in using specially made stainless steel barrels is one that bears repeating.</i> | |

MAINLY IN THE VINEYARD

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Irrigated Vineyard | 71 |
| <i>Rich Thomas suggests some techniques to growers when they resume their operations in the spring.</i> | |

MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, PR

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Market Watch | 9 |
| <i>Wilfred Wong offers the point that prestige cuvées are not just for special occasions.</i> | |
| Perspectives on Personnel | 11 |
| <i>Shelley Brott has some useful tips on motivating employees in an uncertain economy.</i> | |
| Money Talk | 24 |
| <i>Tol Broome Jr. has ten ideas for improving the profitability of your winery.</i> | |
| Winewise Marketing | 29 |
| <i>Elizabeth Slater states that telling "a story" with your packaging can help the customer connect with your wines.</i> | |
| Uncorking PR | 33 |
| <i>Louise Como asks whether the health labels on the wine bottles are being used to the extent that people perceived they would be.</i> | |
| TechWatch | 35 |
| <i>Marne Coggan, in Part One of Cogeneration in Wineries, examines the promise of operational savings throughout the life of your winery.</i> | |

The Revolutionary Metacork

By Gerald D. Boyd

Cork purists like to point out that no satisfactory wine bottle closure has come along since the first woody plug was rammed into a bottle sometime at the beginning of the 17th century. A few small blips, like synthetic "corks," composite corks and, of course, the return of the vaunted screw cap, have raised the purists' eyebrows, but cork continues to reign supreme among wine bottle closures.

Now, a quiet, mild-mannered, Napa-based communications engineer and his small staff have come up with a new closure that they say will forever change how people approach the ritual of opening a bottle of wine. The three-part hybrid device, part cork closure, part "twist capsule," is called MetaCork, from Gardner Technologies. Heading the small start-up company is founder and CTO William A. Gardner, CEO William Borghetti, Patrick Whelan, P.E., director of product development and Kerry Manahan-Ehlow, vice president of sales and marketing.

Innovation Versus Tradition

Working on the principle that it is easier to ease a cork from a bottle by distributing the pulling pressure through an ingenious triple helix screw, than it is to grunt and pull, or even use the leverage of the best corkscrew, MetaCork eases the cork out of the bottle with a turn of the wrist. As a single unit on the bottle, MetaCork appears as a foil-capsule finished bottle, but when you see the parts laid out on a table, the device looks like it shouldn't work, but does. A MetaCork bottle is a little bulkier around the neck and the glass is indented slightly so the thicker plastic capsule fits against the neck more snugly without standing out. Perhaps most striking is the traditional appearance of a MetaCork finished bottle alongside one with a Stelvin screwcap.

MetaCork consists of an outer hard plastic capsule with a threaded interior surface, a matching plastic threaded cap and a natural cork or synthetic closure fitted with an anchor pin. A simple

effortless twist, followed by a few turns, and the cork is eased out of the bottle, thanks to the triple-helix threads, mated to ones on the bottle, that are longer and smoother than those on a screw cap. To remove the cork and anchor and the cap from the capsule, simply insert the thumb and push upward. Redressing the bottle is just as easy; simply spin the capsule back into place on the bottle and you have a neat package that doubles as a drip-resistant pourer. Although the recyclable cork and anchor are disposable, the plastic cap can be used to form a leak proof bottle seal.

Market Research Strongly Supports Acceptance

The development of MetaCork stems from the desire of Borghetti and the Gardner staff to improve the wine experience, validated by market research. TRD Frameworks, a Seattle-based market research firm, was commissioned to conduct a national survey of MetaCork. According to Borghetti, the

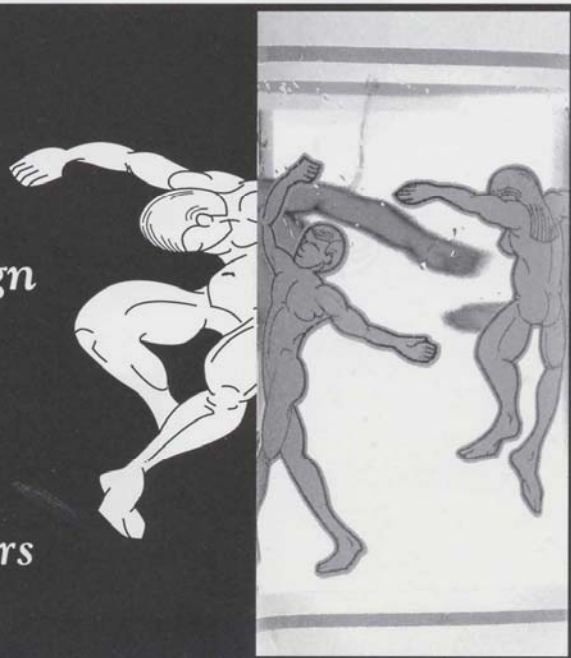
STANPAC

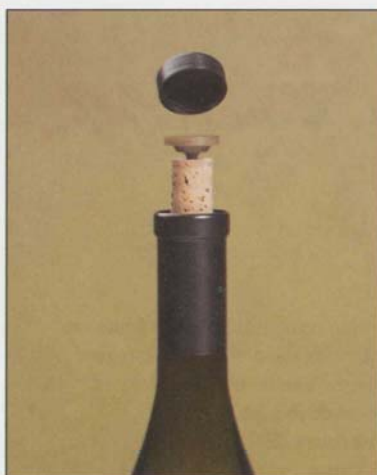
Glass Container Printing and Design

AWARD WINNING DESIGN AND THE EXPERIENCE
OF HUNDREDS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Packaging Perfection for Over 50 Years

905.957.3326 • WWW.STANPACNET.COM





results "strongly support our premise that MetaCork will have a high rate of acceptance." The study found that 73 percent of the survey group preferred a MetaCork sealed wine over traditional packaging and 83 percent described their image of wineries using MetaCork "as innovative, more progressive and more in tune with consumers' needs."

In the initial roll out, MetaCork is being market tested by three wineries: Amusant Wines Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, and limited amounts of Clos du Bois 2002 Sonoma County Chardonnay and Fetzer 2001 Barrel Select Sonoma County Merlot. All of the wines were released last August and are available at retail wine merchants and restaurants in Texas and California. While actively working with the three California wineries, Manahan-Ehlow says that Gardner is in the talking stages with other California wineries, including Opus One. Additionally she notes, MetaCork is now available to wineries worldwide.

Chris Lynch, senior vice president of marketing for Clos du Bois, says that when they were approached by Gardner Technologies, the idea was intriguing. "We have been concerned how people will adapt to alternative clo-

sures and were intrigued by MetaCork because the wine is still cork-finished and no corkscrew is required to remove the closure. Cork is clearly a symbol of wine quality, so we wanted to retain the image." The Clos du Bois roll out is 500 cases of the 2002 Sonoma County Chardonnay with the MetaCork twist-to-uncork closures. Whether the wine is closed with the usual cork stopper or a MetaCork, the wine will still retail for \$ 14.00.

Doug Gillespie, U.S. brand director for Fetzer, says the Mendocino winery is excited about participation in the MetaCork market test. "Fetzer has a history of innovation and we've been testing a lot of alternative closures, including the screwcap." He points out that California and Texas are two of Fetzer's major markets, so the 1,000-case release of the 2001 Barrel Select Merlot, closed with MetaCork, will be a good test prior to the release to a broader market. "With this limited release we can fully assess if MetaCork will be a success for Fetzer," says Gillespie.

MetaCork Mechanics

Manahan-Ehlow notes that Gardner Technologies has two plans for the release and use of the MetaCork. "Plan A has the winery fill the special bottles,



*Last year, he
kept over 40
annual grasses
and broadleaf
weeds out of
your fields
for months.
A battle won.*

Medal Winning Wines Sell



The only wine competition where wines are judged only with those of the same region or AVA. Judges' comments on typicity of terroir are made available.

Event: February 2004

Entry Deadline: January 9, 2004



Benefits the American Vineyard Foundation and Santa Rosa Symphony Association. Open to producers from CA, WA, OR, ID, NV, BC, and Western Mexico. Culminates in public tasting of medalists. Co-sponsored by the Santa Rosa Press Democrat.

Event: April 2004

Entry Deadline: March 8, 2004



In its 28th year, IEWC is one of the oldest and largest competitions featuring wines produced world-wide. Benefits the Corning Museum of Glass. Culminates in "Summer Bouquet," a public tasting of medalist wines served by winery designates at the Museum, June 18, 2004.

Event: May 2004

Entry Deadline: April 15, 2004

Three Leading Wine Competitions.

One-Stop Registration at
800-535-5670 x27 or
www.vwm-online.com



made with a cylindrical neck, to handle the torque force needed to extract the cork, by Vitro Glass of Plano, Texas at their plant in Mexico. The bottles must then go through a Gardner-designed semi-automatic machine that inserts the cork and anchor with plug. The winery then can either bring the corked bottle to Gardner to have the capsule spun into place, locking itself to the anchor and plug, or Gardner will bring the machine to the winery.

The cost of MetaCorks to wineries will vary between 9 cents and 39 cents depending on how special the wineries want the closures to look. This cost is on top of the cork itself as well as any adjustments that have to be made to the bottling line to accept the re-styled bottles and capsules.

When the machine spins the capsule into place, the action causes the anchor plug to snap into the outer cap. Finally, a tamper proof seal is affixed to the bottle and capsule at the point where the bottom of the capsule meets the glass. The length of the capsule is determined by the length of the cork used by the winery, Manahan-Ehlow says, adding that MetaCork works with natural cork or synthetic closures and is available in virtually any texture and color, including clear. "In quantity, the bottles could be less expensive than regular wine bottles," she says, noting that eventually there will be 12 different stock bottles available.

In Plan B Gardner Technologies supplies the cork supplier with the machine that inserts the shank, which resembles a short wood auger topped by a small plug that will stick out above the cork by approximately one-quarter inch. A winery using MetaCork would then order the corks fitted with the anchor and plug from the cork supplier. Manahan-Ehlow notes that the winery will need to have an orienter on their corking machine, similar to the ones used in Champagne cellars.

As attractive and easy-to-use as MetaCork is, the device is not without a few minor drawbacks. When the MetaCork capsule is twisted off by the consumer, the cork naturally swells as it is extracted. The consumer or sommelier throws the cork with anchor away and, then can either screw the capsule back in place for a drip-resistant pourer or screw on the cap for a leak-proof seal. Not a problem for home use, but it could be a bother on premise.

By spinning the capsule back onto

the bottle (just start it and the weight of the capsule will cause the capsule to spin down without twisting) the bottle is redressed, clean and neat, making a very good appearance on the table, better by far than a bottle with the screw cap removed. However, when wine is poured, the depression in the top of the capsule, where the reseal-cap sat, is a collecting point for wine, a potential problem for the restaurant customer who wishes to take the remainder of the wine home. When the capsule is removed, the small amount of wine could spill out unless care is taken to keep the capsule upright.

MetaCork Components are 100 Percent Recyclable

Then, there's the question for on premise use about what to do with the reseal-cap during the meal, put in your pocket, leave on the table, give it to sommelier? Though Gardner Technologies says that MetaCork is 100 percent recyclable, the various parts, capsule, cork and anchor, reseal-cap, must be collected for recycling. "MetaCork will definitely change how the wait staff in a restaurant would approach wine service," says Chris Lynch of Clos du Bois. "But the most intriguing aspect of MetaCork to me is the presentation; it is what people would expect." Doug Gillespie of Fetzer says he does not anticipate any inconvenience related to MetaCork, "but we will survey and talk to wait staffs and get their input."

While the most important jury, wine consumers, is still out, all indications are that MetaCork is capable of bridging the gap between those favoring a cork or a cap. And perhaps most exciting, MetaCork is just the beginning. Gardner Technologies is also working on a variation of MetaCork, which they are calling "MetaPop," for sparkling wine bottles that will address the safety issue of corks exploding accidentally from bottles. And research continues on MetaSeal, a "non-cork" closure, with a synthetic plug on the inside that will retain the traditional look of a foil-finished cork-sealed bottle of wine. Gardener says he wants MetaSeal to be "far superior to the screwcap." Plans are for a release of MetaSeal in late spring of 2004.

While natural cork may always be the closure of choice for most high-end wines, it is possible that cork purists may also be ready to admit that the wider world of premium is poised for MetaCork.



HE'S THE SUPERHERO OF PRE-EMERGENTS.

Here to fight the never-ending battle for clean orchards and vineyards. With **Oryzalin 4 A.S.** you stay in control even when surface and groundwater concerns for other herbicides make front page news. Oryzalin 4 A.S. has all the residual, all of the power to stay in the weed zone for months. This means **fewer spray trips, less fuel and labor, and more savings.**

FarmSaver.com® brought back the pre-emergent superhero and fought to keep this cost-effective foundation of your orchard and vineyard weed management program. Call 800-979-8994 for the ag retailer nearest you, or click www.FarmSaver.com to stop sandbur, pigweeds and grasses before they grow and start saving money today!



*High Test, Low Cost Oryzalin
from FarmSaver.com.
Now That's Good Chemistry.*

©2003 FarmSaver.com. FarmSaver.com is a registered trademark of FarmSaver.com LLC. Always read and follow label directions.