



## MEDIA KIT

### OUR STORY

The name Vidon (vee-dohn) comes from Vicki and Don Hagge, the founders of **Vidon Vineyard**. Patrice Vidon is the name of the owner of a French intellectual property law firm in Rennes, Brittany. Patrice discovered vidonvineyard.com and wrote to Don. Some wine was shipped and an email dialogue developed. In 2011 Vicki and Don were invited and visited Patrice at his chateau that was built in 1670. The French connection!

Vidon is a small, vertically-integrated vineyard and winery. They bought in 1999 and immediately began clearing stumps, rocks and scrub trees. By August of 2000 the first Pinot Noir was planted on their "**Petite Vineyard**". This is vertically integrated - they cleared, planted, harvest, make the wine and sell it all on their property outside Newberg in the Chehalem Mountains AVA of Willamette Valley, Oregon. Vidon recently engaged a distributor for Oregon but not out-of-state. A few select local wine shops and restaurants have had the wines but most sales are out of the tasting room or online.

Vidon produces estate Pinot Noirs from 8.5 acres and small amounts of Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Viognier, Syrah, and Tempranillo from 4 acres. Vines were planted each year until completion in 2014. In all, between 2,000 and 2,500 cases are produced annually.

**Fun FAQ:** It is interesting to note that Don Hagge closed his tasting room for a period – opening it only to Rewards Program members. That's because the tasting room was getting so popular that the small property was becoming inundated by tour buses, limos, and loads of people.

"Crowds are not conducive to serious tasting and conversation. I had some \$10,000 days (in sales), but it was no fun. "It's so much nicer to be here when there aren't many people so we can talk wine and other things. It's the total experience. Wine is a part of it, but not the whole thing."

This is why Hagge created an awards program that offers "Vidollars" to customers, who purchase wine – any of Vidon's wines, at any time. It is an innovative non-traditional approach to recurring revenue without the hassle of managing a wine club. The Tasting Room has since re-opened to the public with regular hours (**Daily 11am – 4pm**).

The tasting room features a wine preserving and dispensing machine designed and built by Don, who is a farmer at heart but a physicist by training (see below). A nitrogen tank pushes out and preserves wine up to two weeks minimizing waste. "The negative is that it pisses off our Tasting Room Staff", says Don.

Vidon is Certified Sustainable both in the vineyard and the winery under the LIVE (Low Input Viticulture and Enology) program. Its label bears the "Certified Sustainable" "Salmon Safe" logos.

## DON HAGGE

Don Hagge's vision for Vidon was shaped by early life experiences - having been born and raised on a farm in North Dakota, visiting Napa wineries while a UC Berkeley student when there were only five wineries, and living in France on a post-graduate assignment. As a result, he loves farming, wine and particularly Burgundy. When he came to Oregon as CEO of a startup semiconductor company he biked in the Willamette Valley regularly and fell in love with the wine country. This led to his plan to develop a small vineyard with a winery to produce estate Pinot Noirs. He feels there's "real satisfaction in developing new skills and creating something from scratch" and he believes, "it's the journey, not the destination" that is most satisfying.

Hagge (HAY gi), 84, served 2 years in Korea in Naval aviation. Upon leaving the Navy he entered UC Berkeley to complete an engineering degree. There he met Ernest Lawrence and was inspired to study particle physics using the Bevatron, at that time the world's largest accelerator. He earned his PhD in physics and later studied business at Stanford. Then he continued to do post-graduate work at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory and the *Centre d'Etude Physiques Nucleaire* in Paris. Dr. Hagge joined NASA at the Goddard Space Flight Center where he designed experiments for the Explorer satellite program to measure solar and galactic cosmic radiation. After the Apollo 1 accident, he was called to Houston and became Chief of the Physics Branch in at the Manned Space flight center (now Johnson Space Center) for the Apollo program. He held this position from Apollo 7 through the Apollo 13. Signed photos of the moon and Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong decorate his office today.

He then moved to Silicon Valley and entered the high tech industry. While with NASA, he collaborated on several experiments with Luis Alvarez, U.C. Berkeley Nobel Laureate. Alvarez was a member of the board for Hewlett-Packard and introduced him to Bill Hewlett and Tony Perkins (Kleiner-Perkins). This was the era when Silicon Valley was small and very congenial. Bill and Dave attended meetings of WEMA (Western Electronics Manufacturing Association) in the Palo Alto Country Club. INTEL hadn't been founded. Noyce and Moore worked for Fairchild. A very interesting time! After a few months in a small company, he was fired and began to understand the high tech and venture capital world. After being unemployed for a few months, he founded his first company, INSTOR Corporation, which revolutionized instrumentation laboratories using the mini-computer technology available at that time. This company was merged with another after 3 years. After a year with the new company he left and founded a communications company and consulted for a few years before accepting a position at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory to head their technology commercialization department. From there he moved to Seattle to co-found a company to treat brain tumors based on BNCT. They soon learned that this technology required huge funding and years of research. It's now under development but the U.S. Dept. of Energy and Sumitomo Heavy Industries, Ltd.

At 69 he bought land and founded Vidon Vineyards, for which, at 84, he continuously designs and manufactures equipment, such as inventing his own bottling line designed for glass stoppers. "You just need to get the right parts." Oh, and he also makes wine. At this moment he's "dreaming" about building a new winery, replete with a helipad; constructing a park in the middle of his vineyard; and developing a new way to sell wine. His vision is to create an online association of wineries to make it easy for consumers to "buy any wine at any time" from several wineries with the benefits of a wine club but without the hassle and commitment. He owns the name and website for "Vin Alliance" and intends to launch it later this year.

“Part of what you learn as a scientist, is to be systematic. I always try to figure out how to do things better and more efficiently. Recently I came up with a way to make better wine and save labor in barrel topping. Exposing oxygen to wine isn’t good and barrel topping does it all the time. “We could make something that might be called a bung hole/barrel aspirator. This would eliminate the need to remove bungs from barrels for topping and allow one to sample the wine without exposing it to air. It would use Argon gas, preserve the wine and save a lot of labor. We’ll try it out soon.” Don’s chemist colleague Dr. David Bellows says of Don “He’s a scientist and engineer who hates variability”.

What else he doesn’t like to do, but realizes is part of producing wine, is the notion of submitting his wines for review. He once said of the protocol: “Reviews are only the opinion of the taster on that particular time and on that particular day. Scores are not important.” He has since taken a more pragmatic stance on the subject: “I realize reviews are judgmental, but you need to market your wines; and I now have more wine to sell.”

Finally, on being “unique” and “passionate” about his winery and his wines – much of what many other vintners claim – Hagge suggests when pressed: “We’re not unique, but we’re different. I don’t want any gimmicks. I just want to make a good product, charge fair prices, and give folks a nice experience.

And this: “Most winemakers have passion most of the time”.

## WINEMAKING

This is where the “**Boutique Winery**” comes in. Don says “Making 2100 cases in 800 Sq Ft. is inconvenient, unconventional, and a high wire act; tricky but kinda’ fun”.

The processes are gentle and natural with gravity used whenever possible to avoid pumping – meaning a forklift, affectionately dubbed “Gato Hydrolico” by harvest workers – is often required. The Vidon winery also practices minimal intervention winemaking.

The grapes are picked by hand and delivered in small bins to the cellar. The fruit is generally very clean when it arrives but it’s hand-sorted again before passing into the destemmer and 1 ½ - ton fermentation tanks. After an initial "cold soak" (below 60 degrees) for 3 to 5 days to extract color and flavor from Pinot Noir's small, thin-skinned grapes, fermentation is allowed to occur spontaneously with *indigenous yeasts*. The cap is punched by hand, usually twice each day in the beginning and as needed thereafter. After fermentation is complete (usually 7 to 10 days) the wine is allowed to settle for a few days before being moved into French oak barrels and then into the barrel room for aging and malolactic fermentation.

Vineyard labor and spraying are provided and managed by Adelsheim's Chad Vargas. Don enjoys mowing and tilling as “quiet time” on his new tractor.

Because of his background in technology, he can be practical about his winemaking philosophy. To wit: “I’m a scientist, not a winemaker, therefore I’m not hung up on winemaking traditions.”

Some of the idiosyncratic methods employed by Vidon: No corks are used, replaced by glass stoppers and screwcaps. Very little stainless is employed, but translucent, food-grade polyethylene oxygen-permeable tanks are sometimes used for aging both reds and whites. No nitrogen is used to displace oxygen, only Argon.

Don Hagge’s style is not to make big, bold wines that garner high marks. Of his style, Hagge proclaims: “We do not make big, fruit-forward wines. Our style is more restrained. The nature of the Oregon climate and soils has nothing to do with us; so it’s the terroir. But we don’t use much new oak, and we don’t inoculate (yeast), which is a manifestation of managing the vineyard right; then you don’t have to add anything.

“We keep the use of SO<sub>2</sub> down, and we don’t used enzymes or additives. And we don’t make mess with the wines but let nature take its course, every vintage is different and reflects the season. Although we have drip irrigation, it’s only used to get the vineyard established; after that it’s dry farming.”

Vidon is one of the Oregon wineries that are part of the Carbon Reduction Challenge. The winery is well-insulated and is cooled and heated by an efficient heat pump system. Solar panels are installed on the roof and energy independence is the goal.

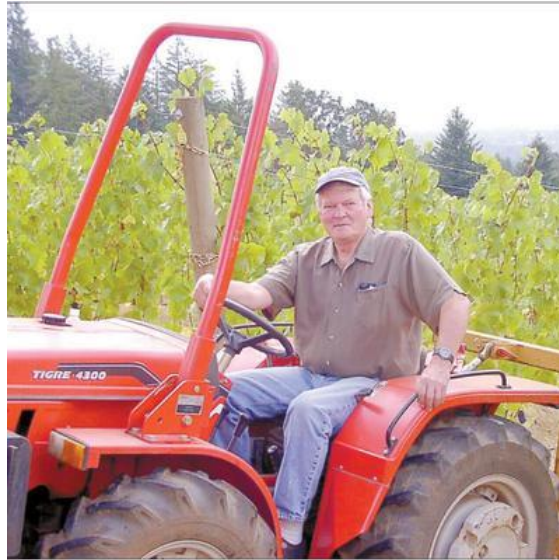
And this: “You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to make good wine, but it doesn’t hurt if you are”.

## VIDON VINEYARD

Don adheres to the notion that winemaking begins in the vineyard. Vidon has planted three Pinot Noir clones – 777, 115 and Pommard -- on its 20 acres in the Chehalem Mountains at an elevation of 400-to-500 feet, facing south towards the Red Hills of Dundee.

Even though drip irrigation is in place, Don Hagge insists that he's never used water either in the vineyard, or during fermentation. That said, he was planning to try water a week before the 2014 harvest as an experiment to see if hang-time might be prolonged.

“The Oregon climate and soils are everything - it's the terroir”, Hagge reiterates, “



A New Vineyard Block

Early in 2014, the last open block in the Vidon Vineyard was planted bringing the total vine acreage up to 12.5. These 2.4 acres of Pinot Noir include an additional acre of Pommard, along with 0.4 acres of Clone 115 (Mirabelle) and an acre of Clone 667. Additionally, Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Viognier, Syrah, and Tempranillo were planted. With the 2014 crush, the Vidon Vineyard became 100 percent estate-grown fruit. The south-to-southeast site is warm, lending confidence that the Rhône variety Syrah and Spanish Tempranillo – all on early-ripening rootstock with rocky, shallow soil – will reach full maturity.

Approaching the sites scientifically, Hagge discovered that there were three diverse soils on the one site: Jory, Nekia and Willakenzie. This mix of volcanic and marine sedimentary soils offers lots of room for experimentation with the 3-Clones Pinot Noir blend.

The property had been logged in the early '90s, so there were many old stumps and small trees. After the first 7 acres had been cleared and planted in 2001, it took another 13 years to become fully planted. There was rock picking, burning piles, rock picking, cultivating, rock picking, disking, more rock picking, rock pile burying and so on for years. Finally, by July 4 2012, the trellis and drip irrigation systems had been installed so planting could begin on the last block. The vines were planted on July 5 and 6, 2013

## THE WINES

### Current Releases

The **3-Clones** Pinot Noirs comprise Vidon's largest production. They are a blend of the three **Single Clones** that are also available individually as **Brigita Clone 777**, **Mirabelle Clone 115** and **Hans Clone Pommard** after the names of Hagge's grandchildren.

Vidon also produces a **Barrel Select** Pinot Noir from his favorite barrels each year. Starting with the 2014 vintage, **Chardonnay**, **Pinot Blanc**, **Pinot Gris**, **Viognier** and **Syrah** were also produced. A small percentage of Viognier is co-fermented with the Syrah in the Southern Rhone style. In 2015 the **Tempranillo** block was first harvested. **Tech Sheets** are available upon request for each of the wines.



### Future Releases

#### SATURN SYRAH

SATURN was the powerful booster that launched the APOLLO 11 spacecraft into Earth orbit on its way to the Moon in 1969. Don was on the APOLLO team from missions 7 through 13. This Syrah was co-fermented with 2.5% Viognier. Primary and malolactic fermentations were indigenous. 150 CASES MADE

#### EXPLORER TEMPRANILLO

EXPLORER was the first U.S. satellite placed in Earth orbit in 1958. I designed instrumentation to measure solar and galactic cosmic radiation that was launched in 1968 on an EXPLORER. Primary and malolactic fermentations of this wine were indigenous. 140 CASES MADE

#### APOLLO CHARDONNAY

The APOLLO 11 spacecraft carried man to a lunar landing on July 20, 1969. This wine is from our favorite barrel of the 2015 lot. Primary and malolactic fermentations of this wine were indigenous. 25 CASES MADE

#### MELANGE PINOT NOIR

This wine is exclusively from grapes grown in our Chehalem Mountains vineyard using clones 115, 777, Pommard and AS2 (suitcase clippings brought back from France by Gary Andrus). Winemaking is gentle & natural with indigenous primary and malolactic fermentation and aging with French oak for 11 months.

## TASTING ROOM

Open Daily: 11a.m. – 4 p.m. Spring through Fall

Winter: Weekends & Holidays 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Weekdays by Appointment Only

Vidon Vineyard, 17425 NE Hillside Dr, Newberg, OR 97132, [503.538.4092](tel:503.538.4092)  
<http://www.vidonvineyard.com>



### THE BEE?

The Bee on our labels and capsule came about because of an old well house on the property that contained a very large hive between its studs. After our home was built in the summer of 2003, we heard much buzzing while sitting on the deck one evening. Upon looking under the deck, we discovered that the electrician had left a hole that led to the space between floors. As they do every year, bees swarmed and set up housekeeping in our new abode. This experience resulted in many photos and a few stings and led to our use of the bee on our packaging.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

For Distribution or Retailer inquiries – please contact Don Hagge at [Don@VidonVineyard.com](mailto:Don@VidonVineyard.com)

For Media inquiries – please contact Carl Giavanti Consulting at [cgiavanti@mindspring.com](mailto:cgiavanti@mindspring.com)