

# *Society of Medical Friends of Wine*



*A Non-Profit 501(c)(3) Corporation, FEIN 94-6088159*

[www.medicalfriendsofwine.org](http://www.medicalfriendsofwine.org)

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Executive Secretary Claire Bloomberg Keiser Founding Executive Secretary Leon Adams 1905-1995 Counsel Thomas Gump, Pillsbury Law

## **NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022**

### SMFW President's Welcome

Dear Friends,

As I assume the office of President of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine, I am filled with awe and appreciation to immediate past president Dr. Jim Gallagher, and I look forward to meeting with Society members in the coming year as we emerge from a two-year pandemic period. I want to first thank Jim Gallagher for continuing to steer our ship in 2021 through the rough waters that the Covid-19 pandemic has presented, beginning with Elizabeth Kass's presidency in 2020. Who knew that we would become masters of Zoom virtual wine tastings as well as gathering for the smaller scale in-person wine education events that many of us enjoyed in 2021? I, for one, so appreciate the tireless work of our incredible Executive Committee, Society members, Board of Directors and Executive Secretary who bring their knowledge and enthusiasm to our organization and events.

Each of us has a journey that has led us to get involved in the Society of Medical Friends of Wine. Allow me to share the following with my personal introduction. I arrived in the Bay Area from the east coast in 1971 to begin my medical internship at the U.S. Public Health Hospital in San Francisco. I met Dr. Bob Blumberg, a fellow intern, who introduced me to wine appreciation and to my first case purchase – a Chateau Rieussec 1971! Soon I enrolled in Chinese cooking classes and became interested in matching wine varietals with Chinese banquet courses. While completing a residency in Psychiatry at UCSF, I and my fiancée Susan joined a Gourmet Club with colleagues, which educated us about international cuisines matched with wines from Europe and California. A few years later with a young family, I was a staff psychiatrist at Kaiser South San Francisco and joined the Golden Gate Wine Society to continue my passion for wine. I next ventured into home wine making in “Le Garage” of my home, winning blue ribbons at the Marin County Fair and California State Fair for my Carignan Field

Blend and Pinot Noir varietals. Thankfully, I stayed in touch with SFMW members Bob Blumberg and Mark Rosenberg, which led me to join the society in 2017. I continue to be a student of wine and enjoy our amazing events like so many of you, and I welcome your ideas.

Onward to the events that we are planning in the coming months, armed with the wisdom and experience that we've gained about how to gather safely as we manage Covid-19:

- The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dinner at Poggio Sausalito will focus on lesser-known Italian varietals to enhance the cuisine as well as our wine knowledge. I have enjoyed learning about the food friendly, modestly priced wines from Italy and California that we will taste and compare on March 5th.
- A wine tour of the Petaluma Gap American Viticultural Area (AVA) that includes Marin and Sonoma counties. We are planning to visit three or four wineries with talks from representatives. Lunch or dinner nearby would be factored into the proposed itinerary
- Virtual Tastings – we've learned how successful the guided wine tastings at home with friends and prospective members can be. As a Pinot fan, I would like to compare Pinot Noir varietals from Oregon, the Sonoma Coast, Monterey County and Santa Barbara at a virtual tasting this year, and I welcome member suggestions as well
- The annual Cheese and Wine Tasting on November 13<sup>th</sup> with cheese expert Janet Fletcher and our Cellarmaster Bob Blumberg will no doubt be another great adventure

Our membership has declined over the recent years, in part related to the impact of Covid-19, but also due to the seniority of members who are moving away or making life changes. We are at a pivotal point to renew and grow again. I encourage each of you to make a concerted effort to invite colleagues and friends to join our worthy enterprise. Our member base provides the means with which to operate as a non-profit in service to the SMFW mission, *to pursue education about the health aspects of moderate consumption of wine*. The Executive Committee works diligently to ensure that revenue from membership dues, charitable donations and event fees cover our operating costs. We wish to expand our reach to businesses and wine industry associates who would also be interested in contributing to our society. Please contact me or Claire Bloomberg Keiser or any other Board officer with your suggestions through the Society's e-mail address: [societyofmedicalfriendsofwine@gmail.com](mailto:societyofmedicalfriendsofwine@gmail.com).

I conclude my message with a profound sense of gratitude for my fellow officers Dr. Maynard Johnston, President Elect; Dr. Jack McElroy, Finance Manager-Treasurer; Susan Schwartz, Secretary; Dr. Jim Gallagher, Immediate Past President and Event Manager; Dr. Elizabeth Kass, Webmaster and Dr. Bob Blumberg, Newsletter Editor and Cellarmaster. This gratitude extends to Claire Bloomberg Keiser, Executive Secretary, for her very capable administrative support, and to SFMW Board members Dr. Dan Bikle, Dr. Marion Blumberg, Dr. Richard Geist, Dr. Mort Rivo, and Jim Seff, J.D. and honorary member Thomas Gump, Legal Counsel. Many of our Board members are prior presidents, and Dr. Dan Bikle is also a science writer for the SMFW newsletter. A personal note of thanks to longstanding Board member Dr. Brenda Shank who is retired from the Board for now and will remain in touch. To the family of the late Susan Guerguy, past executive secretary, we will remember Susan through the fund established in her honor. To those members who provided charitable cash gifts to the Society in addition to your annual dues and event fees, thank you! To non-members who gave charitably,

thank you also! And to fellow wine enthusiasts who donated wines to the Society in excellent condition in 2021, thank you, and I hope that others will follow suit in 2022!

Apparently, Robert Louis Stevenson once said that, “wine is bottled poetry.” So, I look forward to the verses that we will create together as we course through the coming year!

Cheers,

David A. Schwartz, MD  
President

### **NOTES FROM THE EDITOR**

by Robert Blumberg, M.D.

I apologize that several months have passed since our last newsletter. It seems like not going out to dinner, not having wine tastings, not traveling, not volunteering, and not doing much at all consumes a lot of time. I recently came up for air and realized that we have had several events that need reporting, and your Executive Committee and incoming President David Schwartz M.D. are planning some exciting events for this year that need foretelling.

### **CHEESE AND WINE EVENT**

Our annual Cheese and Wine event occurred Sunday November 14, 2021, at the Mill Valley Community Center. Our cheese expert and superb teacher Janet Fletcher offered us tastes of 7 cheeses—Chaource, a cow’s milk cheese from France; Schallenger, a cow’s milk from Switzerland; Vella Mezzo Secco, a cow’s milk from Sonoma; Chevre from the Pyrenees, an aged raw milk goat cheese; Ossau-Iraty, also from the Pyrenees but from sheep’s milk; Deer Creek, The Imperial Buck, cow’s milk from Wisconsin; and Shropshire Blue, the ultimate holiday cow’s milk blue cheese from England.



To accompany the cheeses, we served Domaine Hugot Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs Champagne, Obispo Gascon Palo Cortado Sherry, Rio Piedra Syrah-Zinfandel Sonoma County, 2008, a gift from our member Norman Panting, Chateau Leoville Baron 1997, in imperial bottle, a gift from member Marshall Berol, and Graham's 20 year old Tawny Port.



The 6-liter Imperial bottle of Leoville Barton was a rare treat for our attendees to watch the challenges of opening, syphoning, and serving wine from such a large format. Our President, Jim Gallagher, was up to the task and demonstrated his skills well.



Extracting the cork from an Imperial bottle is not that easy



President Jim Gallagher Ph.D. and Vice President David Schwartz, M.D. work on the tubing to siphon the Leoville Barton

There's no doubt our annual Cheese and Wine event has become one of our most anticipated events of the year, and I think looking at this collection of cheeses from around the world, paired with fascinating wines, and you can understand why. Add to that Janet Fletcher's skills in finding great cheeses and in describing them to us, and you have an unforgettable event. We are already planning for the coming year. Please mark your calendars for Sunday November 13<sup>th</sup>, when Janet will return to host our 2022 version at the Mill Valley Community Center.



The light, airy, and spacious quarters at the Mill Valley Community Center





Janet Fletcher addressing the audience

## **Dinner at the French Club**

Friday evening October 22 brought us back to the French Club for another “bring a bottle, share a bottle” event. As always, the quality of the food amplified by the excellent service and the luxurious surroundings made for an outstanding evening. Members were generous in the wines they brought to share, representing primarily selections, white, red, and sweet, from the Bordeaux region. I was fortunate to sample multiple wines of various vintages, some quite old, all distinguished, and all added to my enjoyment of the evening. As I think about this event, I realize how unique it is and how it would be impossible to replicate on my own or with only a

few friends. This event is truly a bonus for being a member of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine.



Noisette of lamb, baby vegetables, rosemary reduction



Rose Lychee, Hazelnut Mousse Biscuit and Raspberry Coulis



The remains of the evening

## LOOKING FORWARD

As we enter 2022 your Executive Committee, President David Schwartz M.D., and outgoing President Jim Gallagher Ph.D. have been working hard planning events for the coming year. We had to postpone our annual dinner meeting usually scheduled in January due to the Omicron Covid surge, but with cases waning we are pleased to be looking forward to our annual dinner celebrating our 83<sup>rd</sup> year which will be held at Poggio Restaurant in Sausalito on Saturday March 5. You should have already received the save the date notice, and more information about food and wine and sign-up instructions will be coming out shortly. Jim Gallagher is working with the restaurant about menu selections, and David Schwartz is in the midst of selecting wines. Regarding the latter, I can promise you David will be making selections of most interesting and most unusual wines, including some food friendly Italianate varietals that I personally had never tasted before. You do not want to miss this event.

We are also looking forward to additional dinners and wine tastings as the year progresses. I had the opportunity to travel with David and Jim several days ago to locations in Marin and Sonoma counties, including Healdsburg and the Russian River area, scouting out potential wineries for visits and wines for tasting. We had fun, I learned a lot, and expect this to translate into some exciting activities for our group.

## WINE AND HEALTH—THEN AND NOW

By Robert Blumberg, M.D.

I got a good chuckle out of this poster from Beziers, France from the 1930's. Much thanks to our member Dr. Ian Leverton for sending it my way

### **Pour le VIN,**

#### **Justice et Vérité !...**

*« Le Vin est la plus saine et la plus hygiénique des boissons. »*

**Louis PASTEUR.**

### **BUVEZ DU VIN DU MIDI**

Il provient exclusivement de la fermentation du RAISIN FRAIS  
Les informations de l'Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes  
Economiques prouvent que le

#### **Vin n'est pas responsable de l'alcoolisme**

Que l'alcoolisme est la plus faible cause de mortalité par 100.000  
habitants en France.

Le vin raisonnablement consommé n'est pas toxique.

Que donner à boire aux enfants !... DU VIN, plus ou moins coupé  
d'eau selon l'âge, à partir de 4 ans.

Pour les adultes, de 0,75 cl à 2 litres par jour à l'occasion des repas.  
Pour tous, jamais d'eau dite pure car pure elle ne l'est pas puisqu'on la  
purifie par l'adjonction d'eau de javel, poison violent.

Le vin mélangé à l'eau est antibiotique et antimicrobien.

Entre les repas, buvez du JUS DE RAISIN.

#### **Association de Propagande pour le Vin.**

18, rue du 4 septembre (Reconnue d'utilité publique).

BEZIERS

Tel : 28-42-20

For those non francophiles among you, my translation follows. I think those of you who read French will agree it reads best in French, which after all is probably the language of wine.

**FOR WINE-JUSTICE AND TRUTH**

Wine is the healthiest and most hygienic of beverages—**Louis PASTEUR**

**DRINK WINE FROM THE MIDI.** It comes exclusively from the fermentation of fresh grapes. Data from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies proves that:

**WINE IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ALCOHOLISM.** In France, alcoholism is the least cause of mortality per 100,000 inhabitants.

Wine reasonably consumed is not toxic.

Children, above the age of 4, can drink wine, more or less cut with water, depending on their age.

For adults, they can drink 750 milliliters to 2 liters of wine per day at mealtimes. For everyone, never drink so called “pure” water because it really isn’t. It has been “purified” by the addition of bleach, a violent poison.

**Wine mixed with water is antibiotic and antimicrobial.** Between meals, drink grape juice.

### **The Association for Publicity about Wine**

Contrast this with much of the publicity about wine and alcohol received today. Hardly a week passes without some story appearing in my electronic in box announcing negative health effects of alcohol, including wine. These vary from the very scientific studies and epidemiologic reports by Dr. Gary Marcus and colleagues at our very own University of California, San Francisco, that show patients prone to atrial fibrillation increase their arrhythmia risk with even mild alcohol consumption to the well documented association between alcohol intake and various cancers. In fact, the association with breast cancer is one reason the recommended maximal daily intake for women is half that for men, especially for women with a personal or family history of breast cancer.

Even the much touted and oft repeated “French Paradox” is coming under increased questioning these days. These studies, many of which have been published, show lower cardiovascular mortality for those who drink lightly or modestly compared to non-drinkers and heavy drinkers—producing the so-called J shaped curve when mortality is plotted against consumption.

An example, an organization called The World Heart Federation recently released a policy brief that recommends “no amount of alcohol is good for the heart.” They and others claim that earlier studies were skewed by including among the non-drinkers individuals who were ill or who were former heavy drinkers and therefore suffered long term consequences of prior behavior.

Of course, not all the news releases carry negative information. For example, in the past week I came across an early study suggesting slower progression of Parkinson’s Disease among those

who drank moderately and even a report that red wines, due to their anthocyanin content of their skins, increase resistance to COVID infection.

To help put things into context, we must remember that in the 1930's in France many municipal water systems did not distribute uncontaminated water, so drinking from the tap conveyed the risk of cholera, typhoid, polio, and parasitic infections—thus probably making wine indeed “healthier”. And table wine in those days as drunk by the average consumer was a scant 10 to 11% in alcohol, as compared to commonly exceeding 14% today. But two liters a day???

At the same time, the anti-drinking establishment of today ignores the many benefits of wine leading to relaxation, social interactions, enhanced dining pleasure, and overall reduction of stress in a world filled with stress.

So, to drink or not to drink at all? Like much of the successful navigation through life, I suspect the answer lies between the two extremes.

Our scientific reviewer, Dr. Dan Bikle, was burdened with grant writing chores recently and was unable to do his usual column featuring an in-depth review of a recent publication about wine and health. Look for Dr. Bikle's column in our next newsletter.

### **In Memory of Susan Guerguy**

The Executive Committee of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine, after consultation with Susan's son and daughter, have established a fund to honor the memory of our beloved former Executive Secretary who passed away last fall. Donations to this fund will be used to sustain the Society and to expand the educational activities of the Society that were so near and dear to Susan's heart during her long tenure with us.

Donations to the fund may be made out to the Society of Medical Friends of Wine, with notation they are for the Susan Guerguy memorial fund, and sent to the Society at 1038 Redwood Highway, Suite #9, Mill Valley, CA 94941. For questions, please E mail us at: [societyofmedicalfriendsofwine@gmail.com](mailto:societyofmedicalfriendsofwine@gmail.com)

### **Donors-Calendar Year 2021**

We would like to acknowledge and thank those individuals who have made donations to the Society above their membership dues and event fees. During these challenging times this additional support is vital to the continued success of your Society.

Joan and Barry Boothe  
Roger Ecker  
Jim Gallagher

Richard Geist  
Jack Gilliland  
Maynard Johnston  
Francis Mahoney  
Jack McElroy and Mary Ann Skidmore  
Norman and Karen Panting  
David and Susan Schwartz  
James Shapiro

We also thank those who have donated exceptional wines for 2021 Society events:  
Marshall Berol, Norman Panting, Maynard Johnston and the Executive Committee.

Donations received for 2022 will be listed in the next newsletter.

## **Much to Celebrate as We Review Recent SMFW Highlights with our Members—Susan Schwartz, Secretary**

Looking back on the past two years, the Board of Directors recently met on January 29, 2022 and reviewed highlights of years 2020 and 2021 with respect to the society's programs and activities during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Through the leadership of Board President Dr. Jim Gallagher in 2021, and Dr. Elizabeth Kass in 2020, we commend the contributions of the Executive Committee, Board and Members and share the following highlights with our readers:

### **2020**

In March 2020, severe restrictions on everyday life were imposed as a result of the novel Covid-19 pandemic. By summer 2020, the SMFW Board had suspended six, planned in-person events and pivoted to organizing a series of virtual wine education events via Zoom. These included:

- Dutton Goldfield Winery virtual tasting in August guided by Dr. Jim Gallagher
- Palmaz Vineyards virtual tasting in September guided by Dr. Maynard Johnston
- Elouan Wines virtual tasting in October guided by Dr. Maynard Johnston
- Cheese and Wine tasting in November guided by Janet Fletcher and Dr. Bob Blumberg

In lieu of the society's 81st in-person annual dinner, a virtual tour of the Lodi AVA was held on January 23, 2021. Led by Dr. Elizabeth Kass, it featured four Lodi winemakers. The tour logistics involved each winery contributing a sample bottle of wine that was grouped into a shipment from the St. Amant Winery to the pre-registered participants. Twenty-five households from California, Washington and Idaho (at least 50 total attendees) participated in Tour of Lodi.

In total, 130 individuals consisting of society members and their guests participated in the five, Zoom platform 2020 wine education guided tour and tasting events. Executive Secretary Claire Keiser, Board members and wineries coordinated the advanced planning with participants.

Dr. Jim Gallagher devised a plan to add three permanent Ex-Officio members to the Executive Board: Newsletter Editor, Finance Manager and Webmaster to serve in these specialized areas.



These functions had been performed by Drs. Robert Blumberg, Jack McElroy and Elizabeth Kass.

2020 was an active year for the society's newsletter, led by Editor Dr. Robert Blumberg. (Link: <http://www.medicalfriendsofwine.org/Newsletters.php>) Six newsletters issued from January to December featured updates from the president, wine education articles, reviews of the virtual tours, and reports from Dr. Dan Bikle and Dr. Blumberg on medical studies of alcohol use and cardiac health, cancer risk and bone mineral density.

Notably, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration authorized two emergency use Covid-19 vaccines in December 2020, signaling the possibility of a future return to in-person society events in 2021. The health and safety of members would be the primary focus for new SMFW policies.

A financial challenge for returning to in-person events at restaurants and private venues would be guaranteeing sufficient guest-participant reservations to cover the food and beverage (F & B) minimums that are typical in the industry. Dr. Kass devised a SMFW Dinner/Event Cost Calculation budget worksheet to be used by society event planners and the Board of Directors.

On January 29, 2021, Dr. Elizabeth Kass "passed the gavel" to incoming President, Dr. James Gallagher. Dr. Gallagher and the Board thanked Dr. Kass for her remarkable leadership of the society in the most unusual year, 2020, that was met with both challenges and opportunities.

## **2021**

Additions to the 2021 Executive Committee included Dr. David Schwartz, President-Elect; Maynard Johnston, Treasurer and Susan Schwartz, Secretary. Members at large of the 2021 Board of Directors included Drs. Daniel Bikle, Marion Blumberg, Richard Geist, Mort Rivo, Brenda Shank, and Jim Seff, JD. The full Board of Directors typically meets annually in December or January to review, advise, and confirm policy decisions made by the Executive Committee throughout the year.

President Gallagher's letter of thanks to Board officers, society members and donors appeared in the February 2021 Newsletter along with previews of events planned for 2021. Wine education articles written by Drs. Jim Gallagher and Bob Blumberg featured aging characteristics of older Napa Bordeaux varietals, and a review of the SMFW Taste of Lodi winemakers and varietals featured in the society's first major virtual wine tour in January 2021.

Dr. Blumberg's report of studies on alcohol and atrial fibrillation informed SMFW's readership.

The Executive Committee voted unanimously in April 2021 to adopt the policy to confirm three Ex-Officio officers to serve in their organizational roles without tenure limits: Dr. Elizabeth Kass – Webmaster, Dr. Bob Blumberg – Newsletter Editor, and Dr. Jack McElroy – Finance Manager. Dr. Gallagher thanked these officers for their invaluable contributions and welcomed them to regular attendance at Board of Director and Executive Committee meetings and proceedings.

As a non-profit organization, SMFW's Finance Manager Dr. Jack McElroy coordinates with accountant John Aaron who performs an annual financial audit and files state and federal

compliance reports. Dr. McElroy reported at the April 2021 Executive Committee that the audit was effectively accomplished in January 2021.

Charitable contributions are the “lifeblood” of any non-profit organization that help to bridge the gap between membership dues, event income and operating costs. In 2021, the Executive Committee explored a variety of options to gain support for the society, including donations from members and friends, corporate giving, and the Amazon Smile program. Dr. Kass added a DONATE link to the society’s website to facilitate ease of donation transactions.

Membership did decline by April, 2021, prompting the Executive Committee to identify new and creative ways to tell the great story of SMFW and invite new members in. While SMFW membership has historically been composed of physicians, dentists and allied health professionals, membership is open to those who share the society’s mission and goals. Dr. Kass had added an online membership application to the SMFW website in 2018, and the society will continue to explore strategies to increase membership in the coming year.

A preliminary Covid-19 precautionary policy for SMFW in-person events was outlined, informed by CDC guidelines and requiring that all members and guests attending SMFW events be vaccinated, and that best practice public health standards at dining establishments would be observed. This policy would be regularly revisited and updated throughout the 2021 year.

The calendar of SMFW events included:

- A May 8, 2021 Pinot Noir virtual tasting organized by wine educator Dr. Jim Gallagher
- A potential tour and dinner at the Poetic Moon Estate Winery (subsequently cancelled)
- A Piperade dinner in Fall 2021, re-scheduled and organized by Dr. Elizabeth Kass
- A French Club wine dinner to be organized by Dr. Jim Gallagher
- The annual Cheese and Wine Tasting with food writer Janet Fletcher, organized by Dr. Bob Blumberg with assistance from Dr. Marion Blumberg and Claire Bloomberg Keiser

The April-May 2021 Newsletter featured a delightful retrospective story of the society’s founder, Leon Adams, with recollections of Drs. Bob Blumberg, Mort Rivo, and Jim Gallagher of their experiences with Adams, including a 1985 society tour that he led to France and Catalonia. Donors and new members were acknowledged and the President’s letter described the SMFW in-person event vaccination policy that would continue to follow applicable CDC guidelines.

The June Executive Committee meeting focused on confirming recent administrative procedures for: event planning and budgeting, sending e-mails on the society’s G-mail account, outreach to current and former members, and a “roll-out” of in-person events as well as budget and finance review and a proposal to offer pro-rated dues (short term) for returning members.

By July 2021, the highly contagious Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus was leading to significantly increased cases and hospitalizations, including in some vaccinated individuals. Mindful of these developments, the SMFW Executive Committee re-stated the mandatory vaccine requirement policy through all event-related communications to members. The wearing of face masks, selection of well-ventilated venues, and capacity adjustment would be routine considerations for in-person wine tastings and dinners.

Resumption of 2021 In-Person Events, made possible by Covid-19 vaccinations, booster shots and protective measures, included an ambitious array of offerings:

- A guided tasting at Three Sticks Wines near the Sonoma Plaza on August 24<sup>th</sup>
- 289th Dinner at Piperade in San Francisco confirmed for September 18<sup>th</sup> using wines purchased in 2020 and including a wine donation from Dr. Maynard Johnston
- 290th Dinner at the French Club San Francisco on October 22<sup>nd</sup> where participants bring a wine to share
- Annual Cheese and Wine Tasting on November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Mill Valley Community Center. Wines donated by members Dr. Norman Panting and Marshall Berol would be served at this event.

The SMFW logo and letterhead was updated through a pro-bono donation from graphic designer Ron Rick. Susan Schwartz, Secretary, devised a series of SMFW letters to be used for donation solicitations from members, friends, in the wine industry and business sector, as well as donor acknowledgement. This is an evolving effort that benefits from member participation.

The September-October Newsletter summarized the enjoyment that members experienced at two in-person events, along with wine notes from the Three Sticks Wines tasting (Dr. Gallagher) and Piperade Basque cuisine dinner (Dr. Blumberg), and previewed what participants could expect at the French Club dinner in October and the Cheese and Wine Tasting in November.

Reporting from the medical literature, Dr. Dan Bikle cited results from a study of the potential protective effects of moderate alcohol intake and risk of development of gestational diabetes.

The final meeting of the 2021 Executive Committee was convened on January 5, 2022 by President Jim Gallagher. The agenda included a review of concerns with the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV2, which is the virus that causes Covid-19 illness. Omicron had emerged in December 2021 and had reached a 12% positivity rate statewide, leading to California public health guidelines reinstating mask wearing indoors through February 15, 2022. Due to this variant emergence, the committee decided to plan for the first wine dinner after February, 2022.

Dr. Gallagher presented a proposal to add an ex-officio Event Planner/Manager position to the Executive Committee in consideration of the significant skills and time required to plan and organize society events, and in consideration of the executive secretary's limited hours since December 2020. This position was unanimously approved and Dr. Gallagher agreed to serve in this capacity beginning February, 2022. Another ex-officio position, that of Dr. Jack McElroy Finance Manager, would assume Treasurer budget oversight in 2022. Dr. David Schwartz would serve as President, Dr. Maynard Johnston as President-Elect and Susan Schwartz as Secretary. Other continuing positions would be Executive Secretary, Webmaster and Newsletter Editor. End of year budget statements would be finalized by January 31, 2022.

The society lost a dear friend in 2021, Susan Guerguy, former executive secretary. Dr. Elizabeth Kass and Drs. Robert and Marion Blumberg arranged to establish a fund in Susan's memory to support SMFW's educational programs. Society members will find additional information in the February 2022 newsletter and donation web-links on the SMFW website homepage:

<http://www.medicalfriendsofwine.org/> .

Dr. Gallagher led previews and a planning discussion for several events in 2022 including:

- The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dinner at Poggio Trattoria in Sausalito on March 5, 2022
- A virtual wine tasting in Spring, 2022
- An in-person wine tour in Summer 2022 of the Petaluma Gap AVA
- Planning for a wine dinner in Fall 2022
- The annual Cheese and Wine tasting with Janet Fletcher on November 13, 2022

The annual meeting of the Board of Directors scheduled for January 29, 2022 included members at large with the exception of Dr. Brenda Shank who had resigned from the Board for personal reasons and would be departing from the society. Dr. Shank was recognized for her considerable contributions as former President and in helping to establish non-profit status for SMFW. Dr. Gallagher thanked the Executive Committee and Board of Director members for their volunteer time and contributions, and passed the gavel to 2022 President, Dr. David Schwartz. The Board reviewed a Finance Report presented by Dr. Jack McElroy and approved the addition of the four ex-officio positions to the Executive Committee. The Board reviewed the Annual Report of Years 2020-2021 compiled by Susan Schwartz and others, and moved that the report be shared with society members, as is being delivered in this newsletter summary.

Some interesting facts by the numbers, and other immeasurable facets of the organization:

- By year's end 2021, SMFW's membership had increased slightly
- The society's website received 601 visits in 2021. The *Contact Us*, *Photos* and *Events* and *Membership Application* links received the most views, especially since July, 2021
- The society's e-mail list reaches members and event guests and food and wine societies
- More than 100 participants attended the four in-person events in 2021 and 20 registered for the virtual wine tasting
- More than \$4,000.00 was donated by 14 individuals in 2021 – THANK YOU!
- Hundreds of volunteer hours helped to organize meetings, newsletter issues, virtual tastings and in-person gatherings of the Society of Medical Friends of Wine in 2021 - THANK YOU!
- We all appreciate the capable support of Claire Bloomberg Keiser, Executive Secretary
- Most of all, the members of SMFW are the backbone of our success - THANK YOU!

Looking forward in 2022, the society is emerging from a nearly two-year altered pandemic reality and disrupted social life, of which much has been recorded in the SMFW newsletters and letters from the presidents. In spite of unique challenges, the society has re-invented how it reaches members through virtual tours and tastings and smaller scale in-person events. Those who have remained as Active Members through this unprecedented time period are the true Friends of this society. Let us all take pause to celebrate these accomplishments together!

*This report is submitted by Susan Schwartz, Secretary, with appreciation to the SMFW Board of Directors*

