

Amateur vintner wins Best in Show prize

By **TED BROWN**
Staff Writer

Ray Shier of Limehouse enjoys making wine. He says he enjoys drinking it too, but that's another story.

Starting out as an amateur vintner in 1966, he's been experimenting, learning and creating different wines since that time. He admits to having a couple of bottles of his original wines hidden away in the wine cellar.

"It's gone from some pretty awful stuff to not too bad wine," jokes Shier. "But I kept some of the originals—they're sort of my 'babies.'"

Shier has been entering his wines in various competitions over the years, and has won his share of medals for the various vintages he has created. But this year will go down in the Shier Family History Book as a banner year.

Shier's 2008 Riesling Ice Wine recently won 'Best in Show' honours at the prestigious Amateur Winemakers of Canada (AWC) national competition, held in New Dundee, Ontario, in November.

To be eligible, Shier's wines had to win at the local level (at Georgetown Vintners' competition), then on to the provincial level, and finally the national competition. To make it to the national level, all wines had to win a gold or silver medal at all levels to advance.

Shier's ice wine won gold at every competi-

tion, and his Sauvignon Blanc finished with a silver at the national competition.

"In all the years I've been making wine and competing, I never dreamed of receiving a Best In Show (award)," Shier says. "Over the years, I've won a few gold medals at the national level, but a Best in Show? Now that's pretty special."

The two wines were up against about 700 entries from all over Canada, and won gold at every level. It was an outstanding competition for Ontario vintners— Ontario collected more points overall than British Columbia, which usually has a distinct advantage with their Okanagan Valley area vintners.

Both wines were bottled in 2008, and had to age for two years before being entered in the competition.

Although his ice wine is a winner, Shier admits to a bittersweet ending to the story.

"If I'd known that (ice) wine was going to do so well at the national show, I wouldn't have parted with so much of it," says a grinning Shier. "I only have two or three bottles left."

Shier admits that winning the Best in Show honours is a bit intimidating, since he doesn't expect to be able to match that level of excellence again.

"It's pretty rare," says Shier. "Sort of a one-shot deal."

"But that doesn't really matter," he says, "I'll still keep making it."



Ray Shier of Limehouse shows off his two award-winning wines at the Amateur Winemakers of Canada competition. His 2008 Sauvignon Blanc received a silver medal at the Canadian level, and his 2008 Ice-wine was awarded both a gold medal at the show, as well as Best in Show honours.

Photo by Ted Brown

Local girls win world championship medals in Poland

Three Center Stage dancers brought more than memories home after a trip to the International Dance Organization (IDO) World Championships in Poland.

Krista Manteiga, 11, Bekki Rehfeldt, 14, and Courtney Martinec, 11, competed Dec. 5-12 on Team Canada, under the leadership of Alex Wong, Team Canada's choreographer.

The three competed against dancers from 28 different countries in jazz and modern dance.

Courtney and Krista earned gold in their jazz duet as well as a silver for Krista's jazz solo and a bronze for Courtney's modern solo.

Bekki also received a gold in the Junior Ballet formation while Courtney and Krista earned silver in their ballet small group entry.

"We are all very proud," said Courtney's mom Jennifer Martinec.

Kelly Paddle and Claudia Caicedo, owners/Artistic Directors of Center Stage School of the Arts, Kelly Paddle and Claudia Caicedo agree.

"Not only are they wonderful dancers but they are great role models and ambassadors for the Town of Halton Hills. Having the opportunity to travel and dance abroad allows these girls the chance to see beyond their own experience, be in-



Center Stage dancers Krista Manteiga, 11, Bekki Rehfeldt, 14, and Courtney Martinec, 11, competed Dec. 5-12 on Team Canada and came home with plenty of medals. Left photo: Krista (left) and Courtney (right) dance the gold medal performance in the jazz duet.

Photos submitted

this can broaden their scope of the kinds of possibilities that are achievable and attainable in the future, either in the field of dance or any other pathway they choose to follow."

spired and be an inspiration to others," said Paddle and Caicedo. "Trips and experiences like

New Universal Design principle to aid people of all abilities

We will all be faced with one form of disability or another, especially as we age. Many have experienced a temporary disabling injury like a broken limb which has restricted mobility, providing obstacles in navigating the home and public places.

It is for these reasons that there is an increasing emphasis for designers of physical spaces and consumer products towards Universal Design or Barrier Free design concepts.

Universal Design is the design of products and environments so they can be used by all people. These environments and products need to be used to the greatest extent possible and there should be little need for adaptation or specialized design. One stumbling block may have been the perception of marketers, product engineers, architects and entrepreneurs of the limited market for these products and services.

This preconception has now changed as it is understood that roughly 15% of Canadians have a physical or mental disability. That's a sizeable market for housing, automobiles, electronics, washers, stoves, etc.

Some of the principles of designing for all are:

1. Equitable Use— useful and marketable to people with a va-

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riety of abilities

2. Flexibility In Use— accommodates a wider range of consumer preferences and abilities.

3. Simple to Use— simple to use regardless of the person's physical or mental aptitudes.

4. Perceptible Information— Information on use must be communicated effectively regardless of the user's sensory abilities.

5. Error Tolerance— has a high tolerance for accidental input errors or use.

6. Low Physical Effort— Must be used efficiently without extreme effort or fatigue.

7. Size and Space for Approach and Use— Enough space is provided for approach and manipulation without regard to body size, posture or mobility restriction.

Designing with these principles in mind will help all of us as in the enjoyment of our daily lives; excluding none.

Andrew Tutty is a member of the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee (HHAAC)