

COMMUNITY

Ontario Wine Society looks to attract Milton members

Everyone welcome, from beginners to experts, says chapter president

By Christina Commisso
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Look, smell, swish and enjoy. Easy, right?

To the untrained eye, wine tasting could look as simple as ABCs, but it takes a true expert to pair the perfect merlot or cabernet sauvignon with your dish.

That's where the wine tasting club comes in.

One need not be a professionally trained sommelier to join Halton's chapter of the Ontario Wine Society.

"The one thing every member of our group has in common is they enjoy drinking wine," said chapter president Cathy Bergsma, adding, "We have events for everyone — from beginners to experts."

Previously a member of the Ontario Wine Society's Toronto Chapter, Bergsma wanted to form a chapter closer to her Georgetown residence.

Fresh start for club

She launched the Oakville chapter in 2009, but is now re-branding the 50-member group as the Halton/Peel chapter in an attempt to grow its membership.

"We wanted to appeal to people in Milton, Georgetown, Burlington and Mississauga," said Bergsma, who was a board member with the Toronto chapter when she realized there was enough interest to create a 'west' chapter.

The group meets every six weeks for a tasting, usually held at a local eatery and

led by some of the top names in Ontario's wine community.

In March, the group hosted 'The Wine Guy' Tony Aspler, an author, accomplished lecturer and wine educator, for an evening on wine cellaring.

The group's next event — in May — will host Canada's 2010 winery of the year, Vineland's Tawse Winery at Julia's Ristorante in Oakville.

Their wines have been described as "liquid gold in a bottle" and last year the winery won an unprecedented five gold awards from Wine Access Magazine.

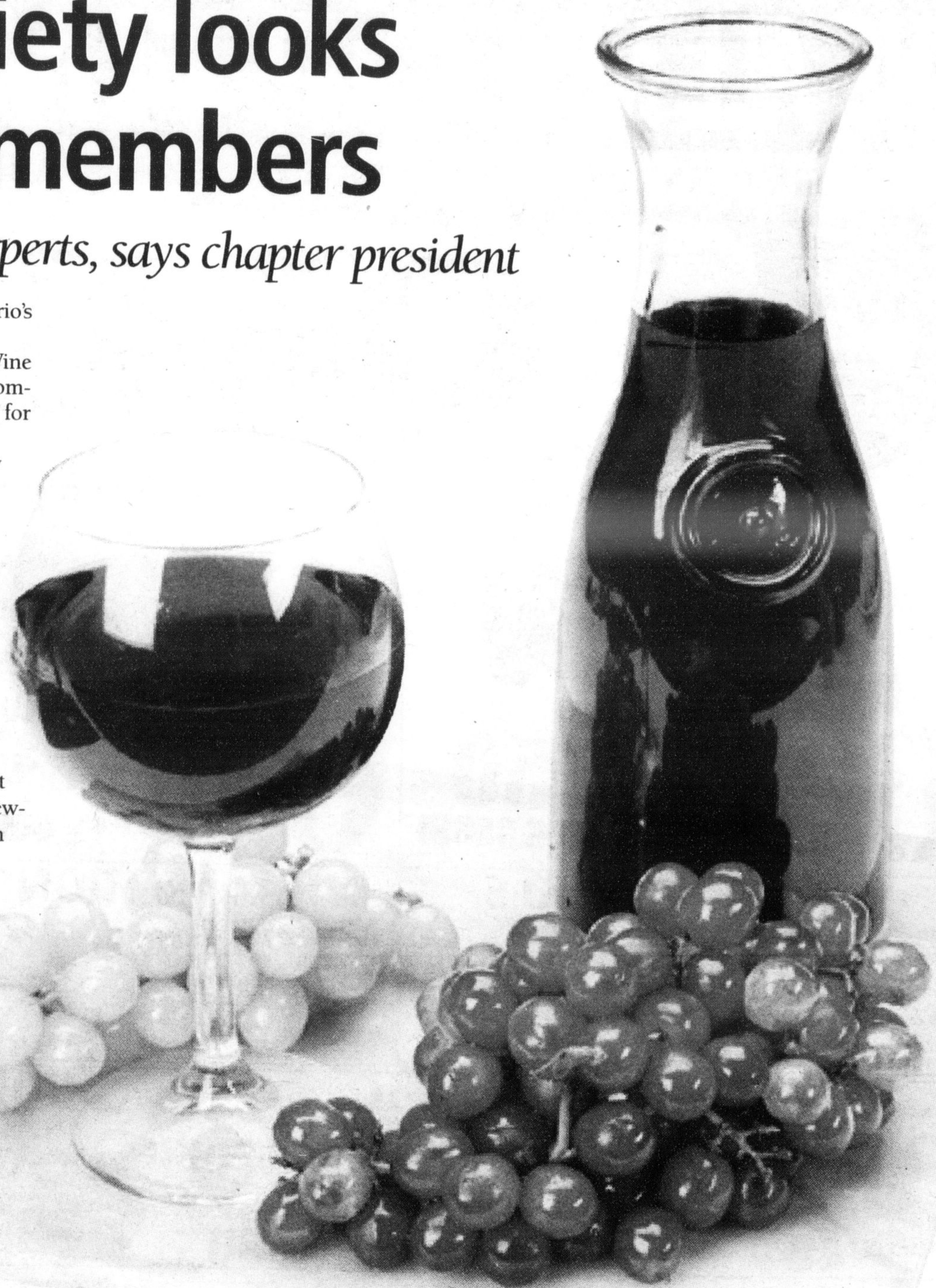
Can learn in no time

Bergsma said while there may be wine connoisseurs in attendance, it only takes a couple of events for newcomers to feel more comfortable with choosing a wine they could appreciate.

"We'll help people determine what they enjoy about wines."

For more information or to join the Halton/Peel Ontario Wine Society Chapter, visit www.ontariowinesociety.com.

Christina Commisso can be reached at ccommisso@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



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