



2018 SavorNW Wine Awards Judges & Staff

Gary Hayes, Director

Gary Hayes is Executive Director of the SavorNW Wine Awards and lead wine reviewer for SavorNW. He is founder of Explorer Media Group, publisher of Coast Explorer Magazine and a freelance writer specializing in Northwest travel, food and wine culture. Gary has judged at the Great Northwest Invitational and the Wine Press Northwest Platinum Judging, in addition to moderating at the SavorNW Wine Awards.

Chris Arora, Judge

Chris Arora is Key Account Manager at American Northwest Distributors, Lead Sommelier at John Howie Steak and Sommelier and Program Manager for the Rivers of Wine Cruise for UnCruise Adventures. Arora is a CMS Certified and WSET Level 3 Sommelier and is also currently attending French Wine Scholar with the Wine Scholar Guild program.

Doug Charles, Judge

With nearly 40 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Doug Charles is considered one of the nation's authorities on the wines of Washington State and was the first retailer to ever be awarded the prestigious 'Walter Clore Honorarium' by the Washington Wine Commission. Doug is co-owner of Compass Wines in Anacortes, as well as the ded reckoning Wine Co. and BBQ Wine Co.

Eric Degerman, Judge

Eric Degerman is president and CEO of Great Northwest Wine. He co-founded Wine Press Northwest, becoming a food writer and wine judge, and has contributed to Vineyard & Winery Management magazine. He has judged at many competitions including the SavorNW Wine Awards, the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, Pacific Rim International Wine Competition, Northwest Wine Summit, Idaho Wine Competition, British Columbia Wine Awards and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo International Wine Competition.

Katelyn Peil, Judge

Named Sommelier of the Year at the 2017 Washington State Wine Awards, Katelyn Peil is beverage director for Seattle-based Heavy Restaurant Group and manages the wine programs at several area restaurants. In addition to the Savor NW Wine Awards, Katelyn has also judged for the Great Northwest Invitational Wine Competition.

April Reddout, Judge

April Reddout is the Wine Program Manager at the Walter Clore Wine & Culinary Center. She procures wines from all over Washington and oversees the wine education programs offered at the

center. April has judged at the San Francisco Wine Competition and is a regular judge for Great Northwest Wine. She also writes a wine column for the Prosser Record-Bulletin.

Ken Robertson, Judge

Ken Robertson has been sipping and writing about Northwest wines since he moved to Kennewick, Washington, in 1976. He retired as editor of the Tri-City Herald, where he was among a group of editors and writers who helped found Wine Press Northwest magazine in 1998. He remains a contributing editor and writer on the magazine and serves on its tasting panel. He has judged at several Northwest wine competitions including the SavorNW Wine Awards, Wine Press Northwest's annual Platinum Judging, the Northwest Wine Summit and the Idaho Wine Competition.

Steven Sinkler, Judge

Level 3 Sommelier and owner of The Wine Shack and Provisions 124 in Cannon Beach, Steven Sinkler's Puffin Brand Wines have garnered multiple awards through the years. His wine judging experience extends not only to prior years with SavorNW, but also competitions that include the Great Northwest Wine Competition and the Great Northwest Invitational Wine Competition.

Julia Crowley, Judge

With nearly 25 years in the wine industry, Julia Crowley is the namesake behind the award-winning website TheRealWineJulia.com. Additionally, Julia is the Wine Buyer and Marketing Director of a popular retail wine and beer shop and proud co-owner to newly established LUX: photo essays. She makes regular radio appearances, judges frequently in wine competitions and contributes to regional and national publications. Previously, Julia owned a wine shop and wine bar that was exclusive to Oregon wine and wrote two long-standing columns as the food and wine editor of a hyper-local news source.

Hank and Nancy Sauer, Facilitators

Hank and Nancy Sauer have facilitated some of the largest wine competitions in the Northwest, including the Great Northwest Wine Competition, the Walla Walla Valley Wine Competition, the Wine Press Northwest Platinum Judging, the Great Northwest Invitational Wine Competition and the Northwest Wine Summit. Both are retired educators who have participated with the SavorNW Wine Awards since inception.