

Monday, July 18, 1983 O&F

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Farmington Hills resident Jim Perkins, who recently returned from a tour of New England, has brought his Irish music to Chalm Sweeny's Pub, Outer Drive at Pelham Street in Dearborn. He will be traveling on to Central Illinois in August.

Bob Crosby and the Bobcats may be best known for Dixieland jazz music, but they will switch to polkas or contemporary pieces during his band night aboard the Bobcat Friday, July 28.

Crosby's first parts the dock at 8:45 p.m. and returns to the dock at 11:45 a.m. at \$14.95 in advance (\$15.95 at the dock) are available through AAA and Bobo offices, with group sales and senior citizens rates available through Bobo's office in the Veterans Building, 151 E. Jefferson, Detroit 48226 (phone 252-7500).

Crosby's musical career began with bouts of stage fright at the age of 15.

He overcame the fear while in college by singing in an orchestra. He later became the first male vocalist in a band formed by the Dorsey brothers.

In 1936, Crosby was leading his own band and soon began appearing on radio and television and on the cover of *Time* magazine in the 1940s as a musical maverick.

Through the 1960s, Crosby appeared in main-room entertainment shows in Las Vegas, Reno and Lake Tahoe.

He is credited with producing more than 1,000 records. Brother of the late crooner Bing Crosby, Bob Crosby bears the family's Crosby features and laid-back style of Crosby fame.

The phrase "family winery" usually conjures up associations of small-time mom-and-pop affairs, the struggling wife and husband with one or two children pitching in where they can. It is a good association most times. There are a great many such enterprises in California wine country.

But the phrase, apt as it is when applied to Fetzer Vineyards in the Redwood Valley of northern Sonoma County, violates the image in several ways. First, the family is huge (even with the recent death of patriarch and founder Bernard) — numbering some nine children (plus their wives and husbands).

That formidable array takes care of most of the management functions of the winery, all of them except for chief winemaker. For that critical function, Bernie hired Paul Dolan in the late 1970s, and Dolan's place seems secure as an outsider.

There are, of course, other non-family members running things in part, but this has been and seems destined to continue to be a family operation.

THE SECOND exception to the stereotype is the scope of the operation. Last year saw Felzer pass the 400,000-case-per-year level, now exceeding neighbor John Parducci by more than 50,000 cases.

And the financial scene is excellent today, thanks largely to Bernie's excellent marketing and distribution strategies established over some 14 years he led the operation. Growth at the winery suggests that sound profits are being made. The most dramatic example of this is the separate facility recently opened to handle the white wine production, which has now caught up with the red wine production.

Chief reason behind the winery's success has been the quality of its wines. Peter is usually associated with red wine, but he is also well known as the producer of some of the finest zinfandels to come out of California.

The last several years have seen four different issues each year. There have been the light and fruity issues from Lake County, modestly priced and designed for early consumption. The Lolois releases have been eloquent and noble; the Scharffenberger chewy and rich; and the Ricciotti hard and demanding in their youth, only to mature into rich and complex statements with five to eight years of age.

All in all, only Ridge Vineyards in Santa Clara does as well year in and



wine

**Richard
Watson**

out with this grape in all its complexities.

BUT, UNLIKE the scene at Ridge, the excellence does not stop there. Fetzer does nearly as well with cabernet sauvignon. Again, a Lake County issue is designed for immediate consumption (though soon all Fetzer wines will come only from its home county, Mendocino), and a Mendocino release is the equal of many others in tannin, complexity and depth.

The recent 1979 Cole Ranch (Mendocino) promises great things for wines of that appellation and the estate-bottled wines are also of great quality. Quite an array.

Fetzer's other reds, gamay, pinot noir and petite sirah, are generally of sound quality without being exceptional. Sometimes the petite sirah becomes a bit of a monster, but usually the winery is dependable.

The whites tend to be clean and crisp and, with one exception, lacking in complexity. Johannisberg riesling, chenin blanc, a blanc de blancs, fume blanc and pinot blanc are all pleasant and sometimes excellent. While gewurztraminer suffers from the usual California fatness syndrome.

However, with chardonnay, Fetzer excellence again shines. Try the 1981 Barrel Select currently available to see what a well-balanced, properly oaked Chardonnay should taste like. Marvelous!

AND TO SAMPLE what pure chardonnay tastes like, without oak-aging to develop complexity, try the 1982 Sundial. One has the feeling that a new age in chardonnay quality is just beginning as Paul Dolan acquires skills in working with this most rewarding grape.

Finally, for everyday consumption, Fetzer's Premium Red and White wines are available in 750 ml. as well as 1.5-liter bottles. Both sound investments.

A struggling mom-and-pop operation this is not. Many consider it one of the truly great wineries of California, this writer among them.

Victor Borge's music and wit will highlight a concert to benefit Meadow Brook Hall and Festival on Monday, Aug. 1, at Baldwin Pavilion.

Victor Borge will return to Michigan by Borge to aid in fund-raising for a Meadow Brook Music Festival Meadow Brook programs.

concert at 8 p.m. Monday, Aug. 1, to benefit Meadow Brook Hall and the music festival.

The concert will be held in Baldwin Pavilion on the Oakland University campus near Rochester. Lawn, pavilion and patron tickets are available for \$9, \$14 and \$50. For details call 377-2010.

Borge, internationally renowned for his blending of wit and music, will team with guest conductor Francisco

team with guest conductor Ernest A. (Ernie) Jones of Bloomfield Hills and the Metropolitan Symphonic Band, conducted by Martin Stella, in "An Evening with Victor and Ernie."

This will mark the third appearance more than 150,000 concert-goers each at Meadow Brook in the last five years.

Places are still available on The Community House trip to the Stratford (Ont.) Festival on Saturday-Sunday, Aug. 28-29.

The travel package includes round-trip deluxe motorcoach transportation from The Community House, one night at the Victorian Inn, dinner at the Victorian Inn, backstage tour of the Festival Theatre and seats for "Macbeth" and "The Mikado."

The "Stratford Festival Theatre Trip" is priced at \$169 per person, double occupancy. For further information call the travel desk at The Community House, 644-5832, in Birmingham.

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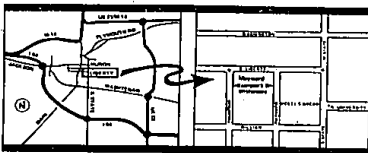
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