

Taste

FOCUS ON WINE



RAY & ELEANOR HEALD

Serious wines, quirky labels scream 'fun'

Some wines are just plain fun. They're seriously crafted, but the label tells you something about the mindset of the producer. They scream "wine should be fun." And some really are. We need more of this.

Todd Hollow wines fill the fun bill. Because this holiday weekend formally ushers in the good and fun times of summer, if you've not discovered Todd Hollow—do it!

Todd Hollow's owner/partner Todd Williams is best known to his friends as "Dr. Todd." But these same friends also know that he's actor Robin Williams' brother. And now you know! The sense of humor is in the genes.

Todd Williams

You've probably seen Todd Williams. In the pool scene of "Mrs. Doubtfire," his brother's smash-hit

Wine Picks

■ **Best white wine of the summer 1997** Pine Ridge Cheri Blanc-Viegnier \$11. This is a new wine for the Pine Ridge lineup. It raised the bar of its well-regarded Cheri Blanc to delicious heights.

■ **Pick of the packed 1995** Pine Ridge Aragus Reserve, Napa Valley \$30. We've not become cheating evangelists here, but Pine Ridge has been doing some dynamite things with wine. Sure, this wine is pricey, but have you priced a top-flight Bordeaux from the '95 vintage? Heck, it's right higher and more elegantly packed with big rich fruit as this beauty from California!

■ **Near the end of the 18th century**, the British were very involved in India. The soldiers, seamen, merchants and administrators needed their beer, not as a luxury, but as a necessity, as water was unreliable

fun with frogs, and in this case, they are playing frontmen for some darn good wines at very affordable prices.

There are actually two labels. Todd Hollow wines are made from grapes sourced from some vineyards in Sonoma County, Calif., owned by Rodney Strong whose eponymous winery is known for some top-notch wines. Strong is Williams' partner and characterized as the bender on some of the labels. Rodney Strong's talented winemaker Rick Sayre oversees production of Todd Hollow's California wines.

Imports

Le Faux Frog wines are imports from the Pays d'Oc region of southern France. On these tongue-in-cheek labels you encounter French frog Jean-Pierre wearing a beret, saluting the American frog across the big pond, the Atlantic Ocean.

Le Faux Frog wines are Williams' way of poking fun at California producers who are trying to pass off wines from southern France as California wines. This all started with the wine shortage that developed a few years ago, brought on by short crops in several consecutive years, replanting, of phylloxera-diseased vines and a heightened interest in wine drinking.

With this said, if you don't want to be duped by wineries that did not change their labels, but put imported

Please see WINE, B2

LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Food for Sport
- Main Dish Miracle



Building a rainbow: The Webers (left to right), Jennifer, 9, William, 4, Victoria, 5 3/4, Jacqueline, 7, Bill and Catherine created this rainbow out of Jell-O.

Jell-O Smiles Contest Winner

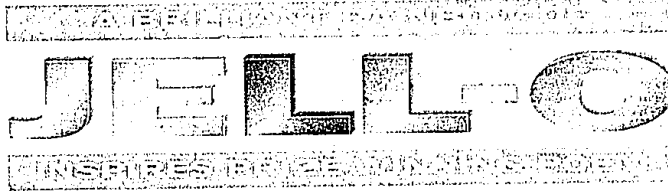
At three-and-a-half William said to me, "Mommy, when I grow up a rainbow I will be."

"Let's build a rainbow," I said in reply. Remembering the Jell-O boxes nearby. Sweet cherry...lemon so bright... Fresh lime...cool berry blue...just right. We spoke of love, friendship and laughter. Words about life and peace followed after. Simple. Like Jell-O, the lessons begin... The rainbow has found come from within. He smiled. I smiled.

— Catherine Weber



Times Square: Catherine Weber, winner of the Jell-O Smiles contest, and Jim Craigie, executive vice president, Kraft Foods, stand below the Jell-O billboard in New York City's Times Square.



"Jell-O" has a soft spot in everyone's heart. It's what you eat at family picnics and parties, a special dessert, and what makes you feel better when you're sick.

"My special memory is making Jell-O side by side my children as we laugh, talk and enjoy the moment," said Catherine Weber of Bloomfield Hills, grand prize winner of a national contest sponsored by Jell-O.

Weber's poem, was chosen from over 6,000 entries. Contestants were asked to explain how Jell-O makes them smile.

"I read about the contest in a magazine I was flipping through for certain ideas," explained the mother of four. "Over my life I've written some things, I dabble. When you have kids you make things rhyme, sing songs!"

She thought of her son William as she wrote her poem after the kids had gone to bed. "We talked about all the different colors of people in the world, the diversity, we are a melting pot, but we are all one."

The Webers enjoy making Jell-O desserts, especially pudding. "It's kid friendly," she said. "We sing - 'this is the way we stir the pudding,' while we make it. It's something the kids can do together."

Weber and her family were flown to New York City to meet Bill Cosby at a gala ceremony where he unveiled the first ever Jell-O billboard in Times Square.

At the ceremony, Weber's poem appeared on the billboard immediately following Cosby's favorite Jell-O story. The billboard measures 65- by 105-feet and features a mosaic of spoons (3,850 to be exact), which are crowned by a 52-foot spoon and an electronic display that continually scrolls stories like Weber's that were selected from the contest.

Weber's story will be featured on the billboard's electronic display for the next three years. An estimated 1.7 million people per day will see Weber's story and the Jell-O Times Square billboard.

"It was absolutely fabulous," she

said. "Mr. Cosby was wonderful. It was the best trip I ever took. It was like a vacation. The hotel was beautiful, the weather was great. We saw two plays 'The Sound of Music' and 'Beauty and the Beast.' I never knew until we got there what a big deal it was for Jell-O. People came up to me and said 'I read your poem, and just wanted to meet you. It's such a neat poem, I have it on my fridge.'"

Her mother was thrilled by the news. "My mom wrote about raising children for a newspaper, and had her own column," said Weber. "She entered contests, essays were ones she liked best, and she won prizes."

Since winning the prize, the Webers have received a couple of gift packages from Jell-O. "It's been so much fun, and the kids got involved," she said. "My daughter said, 'mother, we have way too much Jell-O. This summer instead of a lemonade stand, we might have a Jell-O stand.'"

■ See recipes inside

Pack veggies, fruits, for pick up and go lunches

LIVING BETTER SENSIBLY



BEVERLY PRICE

these tips for vegetarian picnics.

■ **Fresh fruits and vegetables** are abundant this time of year, so incorporating them into recipes, or making them the center of your meal, is simple. Chopped vegetables for a nutritious snack that is easy for the little hands in your family to grab. Red, green, and yellow peppers mixed with onions and broccoli, topped with an olive oil and balsamic vinegar marinade is a colorful alternative to an ordinary salad. Or, try a bean salad. Mix white, black, kidney, and lima beans together; soak them in lemon juice, garlic, onion and parsley.

Adding vegetables to starch based salads contributes color, crunch, and variety. Toss whole wheat pasta spirals

■ **Grill only the amount of food that can be eaten immediately. Food that has been sitting out for more than two hours should be thrown out.**

or potato chunks with zucchini, squash, tomatoes, pea pods and artichokes. Consuming a variety of fruits and vegetables on a daily basis has been linked with reducing the risk of developing cancer.

The antioxidants in fruits and vegetables, including vitamins C, E and beta-carotene repair cell damage. In addition, replacing barbecued meat with fruits and vegetables eliminates the consumption of carcinogens linked to foods prepared on a grill.

■ **Picnicking with children** can prove to be a messy experience, but lining lavash bread or whole wheat pita bread with sandwich stuffings is easy and drip-free.

■ **Use hummus** as a spread to add zing to sandwiches and top with alfalfa sprouts, cucumbers, and tomatoes.

■ **Finish your meal** with a dessert that is fresh and sweet. Chop melons, strawberries, pineapple, and grapes, splash with lemon juice, or a non-alco-

holic champagne, and fill a hollowed out watermelon with this bright, fruity mixture.

There is no better time of the year to pack up a healthy meal for the outdoors, but remembering to be a safe traveler is also important.

■ **Prepare your meal** the night before so that any food that is cooked has appropriate time to cool.

■ **Pack coolers** with ice, placing perishables next to ice packs. Cold food should be kept at 45°F. When you reach your destination, leave coolers in the shade until it is time to eat. Only unload chilled foods at the time they will be consumed.

■ **Grill only the amount** of food that can be eaten immediately. Food that has been sitting out for more than two hours should be thrown out.

Take advantage of this time of year. Enjoy a healthy and safe picnic. It's a delicious treat for the whole family. Beverly Price is a registered dietitian and exercise physiologist. She operates Living Better Sensibly, a private nutrition practice in Farmington Hills that offers programs for individuals and corporations. She is the co-author of "Nutrition Secrets for Optimal Health," Tall Tree Publishing Company. Look for her column on the first Sunday of each month in Taste.

■ See recipes inside

