

Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

Selling wine is more than just a job to Richard Gergis, owner of the Vintage Wine Shoppe in West Bloomfield. Gergis, who opened his supermarket of discount wines last fall at Wilkins Corners, loves to talk wines—anywhere he found a ready audience recently when he conducted a wine tasting evening for the West Bloomfield Optimist Club at the Potomac Club.

"They kept me on stage for three hours answering questions," he said.

Gergis, who speaks five languages, travels the world selecting wines. In California he met with Robert Lawrence Blazer, one of the most knowledgeable people in wine today in the wine country. They call him "the wine master" according to Gergis.

THE VINTAGE Wine Key Club is just getting under way, as part of Gergis' wine

shop operation. Blazer has been invited to come and lecture to the club in April.

The club got its first 150 to 200 members through distribution of a grand opening flyer with a membership coupon. Joiners were asked to check three appropriate category: beginner or connoisseur.

Some wine lovers with a smattering of knowledge checked a nonconformist box in between. Gergis plans to divide the club membership which now stands at 200, into groups divided by experience for meetings of not more than 50 persons.

"Each meeting will include a speaker, and we will test wines with appropriate cheeses," Gergis and he estimates that through the years he has conducted 50 to 60 wine tastings.

The club's first meeting date has not been set, but it will be during the first part of March in the West Bloomfield area.

DISCUSSING OTHER club activities, Gergis said, "We will encourage wine to go through breweries and wineries. I have arranged a tour of the Warner Vineyards in Paso Pasa two months from now."

Lectures and meetings on wines will be held every six weeks. The annual membership dues permits members to buy wines at greater discounts.

"We want to educate people all about what wine is," he said. "We will introduce the public to the districts and the differences between these districts: California, France, Germany, Italy, Spain."

Gergis thanks the time for wine education and pleasure to wine.

"People are hooked today. They don't care what they spend. They drink for enjoyment, not to get drunk."



Richard Gergis (left) and Robert Lawrence Blazer got together to talk wines in California.

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