



**Western Iowa Grape Grower's Association, Inc.**

**January 2006 Annual Meeting**

**Charles Caldwell  
President – Annual Report**

2005 was a “G.O.Y.A.” year in Western Iowa Grape Grower’s Association. With a highly dedicated board’s vision, the Association moved forward in the wine and grape industry in Western Iowa and in the State of Iowa.

Three wineries were operating and four new wineries will be opening their doors in 2006. Vineyards were becoming productive and new land was being prepared more new acres of grape plants. It was truly a moving forward year.

As I traveled the association’s area meeting winery and vineyard owners, I was inspired by the positive attitude the members had toward the wine and grape industry. But I also know that before we pat each other on the back, there needs to be more done before Western Iowa and Iowa can be called a leader in the Midwest in this industry.

One giant step in that direction was the hiring of Dr. Murli Dhamadhikai to lead the Enology/Viticulture Center at Iowa State University. Dr. Dhamadhikai’s “Vision 2020” draft sets forth a vision, mission statements, and key objectives in a plan that will need to be achieved in 3, 5, and 10 year.

How does Western Iowa Grape Growers fit into this plan for the State? The wineries and vineyard owners that I have listened to have developed objectives of producing first-class wines that will have an “unrivaled style and distinctiveness” found no other place in the Midwest. Likewise, vineyard owners/operators are continuing their education in growing a high quality grape that will assist wineries in achieving outstanding wines.

But all of this can fall by the wayside if PEOPLE are not willing to step up and become involved. I have seen the G.O.Y.A. in the members, in the Board of Directors, in members working at functions, in the writing of articles, in helping wineries with openings, in educating and sharing knowledge with others about wine and grape growing plus promoting whenever and wherever they can about the wine and grape industry in Western Iowa.

Demonstenes, the greatest orator of the ancient world, stuttered. It was said that the first time he spoke; he was laughed off the podium. Julius Caesar was an epileptic. Beethoven was deaf, as was Thomas Edison. Charles Dickens was lame, as was Handel. Homer was blind; Plato was hunchback; Sir Walter Scott was paralyzed.

What gave these great individuals the stamina to overcome server setbacks and become successful? Each had an inner dream that lit a fire within them which could not be extinguished. Their great “vision” began as an “inside job”.

Each of you has that vision, that “fire inside” to make Western Iowa Grape Growers a leader in the state. I have “seen it”; I have “felt” it radiate from each of you during our conversations. Individual rights are set aside because each knows that the “whole is much more important than the part.” I am often asked by

other associations in the state or other Midwest wineries, “What is Western Iowa Grape Grower’s secret for developing some many new wineries and acres of grapes.”

There is no secret because you have a “vision” for the wine and grape industry, but the vision is going nowhere with the watch word. And that word is commitment.

I love the Chinese proverb that states; “Man who says; ‘it cannot be done’ should not interrupt man who is doing it.” Well, you are “getting it done” people even when others say it can not. Yes, 2005 was truly a “G.O.Y. A.” year. By the way, G.O.Y.A. stands for “Get Off Your Anatomy.”

Western Iowa Grape Grower’s Association President – *Charlie Caldwell*