

No Humbug at Humanitas Wines

Wallenbrock gives away his profits

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'Tis the season to be jolly, and few people are jollier than Judd Wallenbrock, proprietor of Humanitas Wines, who is giving away the last of about \$15,000 that represents all the profits from the sale of his wine this year.

Wallenbrock started Humanitas in 2002 with the express intent to donate 100 percent of the profits to nonprofit organizations dealing with hunger, illiteracy and affordable housing. He's a 25-year wine industry veteran, so along the way he has made many friendships, and he called on those friends to help him. Thus, many of the expenses involved in producing his wine are either donated or offered at cost, including labor and supplies.

Wallenbrock, who has a day job as senior vice president and general manager at Michel Schlumberger winery, calls Humanitas a "small business" that generates about \$150,000 a year in total revenues. After paying expenses (he doesn't take a salary for himself), he nets between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per year and donates all of it to the organizations within the communities where he sells his wine.

Locally, one of his major customers is Bounty Hunter, and through sales there and a few other smaller accounts, this year he donated \$500 to COPE Family Services and \$500 to the Napa-Solano chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

COPE is the only Napa-based organization on Humanitas' current list, but Wallenbrock has assisted the organization in other ways in addition to the donations from sales. He has provided magnums of wine for fundraisers, has poured wine at fundraising events and donated 16 cases of unlabeled wine so COPE could put their own labels on them and give them to major donors and supporters.

"It's a great partnership for us," said Mandy Page, COPE development coordinator. "He's been a great supporter and very generous."

Another major customer of Humanitas is Kuleto's restaurant in San Francisco, and this year he donated \$1,000 from those sales to the San Francisco Food Bank. He also donates to food banks in the Central Coast area and Los Angeles, where Chateau Marmont Hotel uses Humanitas as its house wine.

Wallenbrock has a Web site through which he also sells directly to consumers, and here, too, he directs the profits toward organizations in the communities where the buyers reside. COPE has a link to his Web site, and when someone buys wine online through that link, Wallenbrock often delivers the wine to COPE for pickup by the customer.

A few years ago Wallenbrock used some of the funds to buy backpacks so volunteers at the Napa Valley Shelter Project could fill them with toiletries and snacks for the homeless.

To keep reminding people of the goal of Humanitas, Wallenbrock created the slogan, "Drink Charitably." Enjoy wine and help others.

For information, go to www.humanitaswines.com