Dear friends of the Vineyard,

Summer has again passed too quickly and already thoughts of the harvest and new wine remind us of the busy fall ahead. Life at the Markko continues to bring its share of surprises, frustrations and rewards, some of which we would like to share with you in this brief communique from Conneaut.

The vineyard appears to be thriving. Our grapes came through the severe winter quite well sustaining some winter kill, but thankfully no frost damage. We decided against further plantings this year in order to devote more time to the winery and its operations.

Markko's cellar has a new face this summer. The front and side stone steps are in place looking much as they might have 100 years ago when they graced the Brash house in Ashtabula. When the Prospect road home was demolished several years ago, Tim Hubbard preserved these lovely old stones, dating back to 1874 for use at the winery. Inside, a fresh coat of paint and additional furniture should add to your comfort and aesthetic pleasure. Picnic tables are available for those wishing to sample our wines in the country air.

The recent bottling of Chardonnay '74, aged one year in German oak, may interest many of you for its subtle character and fine quality. This is a limited bottling of only 48 cases. Our '75 wines will be released soon and a notice will be sent to you next month.

It looks as if there will be enough grapes and juice this year for those of you who make wine at home. Pricing will be available later in the season and reservations should be made before the harvest. An excellent Russian table grape, Muscat Belli, will also be available in limited supply.

As usual, many new people came to the Markko this year. Several tasting and tour groups visited from cities like Toledo, Cleveland and Geneva. Many came as a result of the Akron Beacon Journal article feature on Ohio wines and wineries. We were very grateful for the kind words from Steve Kenyon, Russ Vernon and John Piscazzi. Leon Adams, the noted author and founder of the Wine Institute of California, spent several days in the area gathering new material for a revision of his classic, "Wines of America". The new book will include Markko Vineyard.

One family note....our eldest son, Andrew, and a friend from Ashtabula, David Rakestraw, have worked this past summer on an old, neglected apple orchard, bringing it back to life by pruning and mowing. The boys will pick and press their own apples and sell cider later in the fall. If anyone is interested in ordering cider, they may call the Vineyard.

Please make a note of the winery hours: Mon. - Sat. 1:00 - 7:00 p.m. Closed Sundays.

We hope you all have enjoyed a fine summer and we'll look forward to a visit from you.

Markko Vineyard