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There Is Nothin'

Fred Dame, MS with Geoff Kruth, MS, COO of the Guild of Sommeliers (the education arm of the Court of Master Sommeliers). Dame now assists restaurateurs and hoteliers in developing their wine programs in his role as Vice-President of Prestige Accounts, American Wine & Spirits of California.



Ted Balestreri and Bert Cutino are proprietors of Monterey's Sardine Factory, where Fred got his start in the business.



Fred with SOMM Journal Publisher/Editorial Director Meridith May.

Like a Dame

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE COUNTRY'S TOP MASTER SOMMELIER

by Meridith May / photos by John Curley and Erica Bartel

THE CONSENSUS IS THERE IS NOTHIN' LIKE THIS DAME. We're not referring to the Rogers & Hammerstein classic song from *South Pacific*. We're talking about the pied piper of the hospitality industry, a man who has changed the course of educating the wine service professional in the U.S.

It's been 30 years since Fred Dame brought the Court of Master Sommeliers to the U.S.

He is the first American to have served as President of the Court of Master Sommeliers and he founded the American Branch of the Court in 1986. He continues to help expand of the Master Sommelier program throughout America.

Is that a reason to roast him? His colleagues and friends thought so.

Hosted by Jordan Winery and Roederer Champagne, it was a "Fred Dame, this is your life" moment in Pebble Beach in mid-April. Scores of Master Sommeliers (former students) raised their glass to their respected mentor, but also brought down the house with anecdotes and absurdly hilarious remarks about Dame. Andrea Immer, MS, concluded the evening with a singing tribute to the tune of "Chattanooga Choo Choo." ■

Kim Beto, VP of Key Accounts, SWS. "Had Fred not brought the Court of Masters to the U.S., we would not have such a great wine industry in America."



Julie Raynaud of wine import company Eric Solomon and Paul Mekis, Wine Director for all Rosewood Hotels and Resorts properties worldwide.



Emily Wines, MS Wine Director for the Kimpton Hotel Group and Diane DeLuca of Providence restaurant in Los Angeles.



Master Somms Chris Lavin and Brian McClintic.



Andrea Immer Robinson, MS belts out a song for Fred.



Nick Literski and Chris Avery of Jordan Winery with David Gainza and Monica Fitzgerald of American Wine & Spirits.



Wendy Heilmann, Wine & Beverage Director for Pebble Beach Resorts with Fred's wife, Carolyn Dame.