



PRESQUE ISLE
WINE CELLARS
WHERE PENNSYLVANIA WINE BEGAN

World Class Wines from an Unexpected Place

WINEws UPDATE – June 10, 2021

The latest PIWC news for our Wine Loving Community

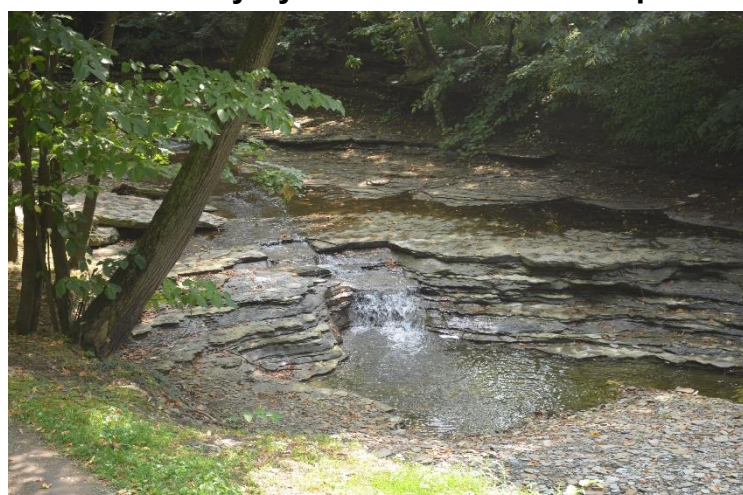


Remembering Douglas P. Moorhead, the Father of Pennsylvania Wine (1934-2021)



Dear Friends:

With great sadness but with thankful and fond remembrance for an impactful life well and happily lived, we must report the passing of Douglas P. Moorhead, our founder and the man generally acknowledged as the “Father of Pennsylvania Wine”. After contending with the effects of a major stroke suffered three years ago, Doug died on June 10 peacefully in his sleep with his wife and partner Marlene by his side. His loss is a sadness keenly felt by his family and his many friends and colleagues and his extended family of winemakers, grape growers, and others he helped and with whom he shared his knowledge, wisdom, enthusiasm, patience, generosity, and influence over his long career. That sadness, however, is tempered by the knowledge that his passing was a release from a purgatory of sorts for both him and Marlene and that he lived a long, truly wonderful and meaningful life. He was one of the fortunate among us who figured out what he loved, was able to make a living doing what he loved, affected many other lives positively, and in doing what he loved effectively started an industry that today provides good livelihoods for thousands and pleasure and improved quality of life for millions. Doug would not want a somber, depressing memorial service – instead we will be honoring his memory with a **Doug Moorhead Life Remembrance and Celebration Day by the creekside at Presque Isle**

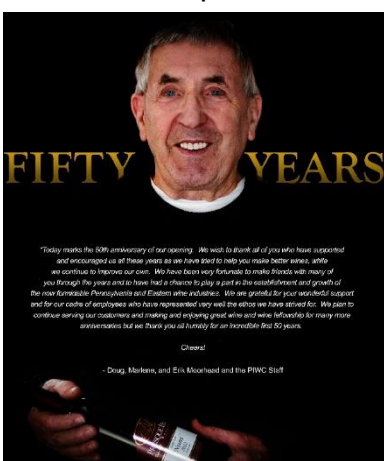


Wine Cellars, the place he loved best. The celebration will be at 9440 W Main Road, North East, PA from 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, June 26. All who knew or were affected by Doug and his work who would like to come and pay respects and share memories are welcome. There will be an open mike from noon to 2 PM for anyone who wishes to publicly share personal memories or stories about Doug...and there will be wine. This will not be an overly formal affair so casual dress is fine and kids, grandkids, and well-behaved dogs are welcome. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in Doug's name to the [Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest PA](#), 814-459-3663. If you can't join us on the 26th but would like to share a thought or memory, please send us note at rememberingdoug@piwine.com.

Doug was preceded in death by his brother, Fred and sister Janet and is survived by his younger brother Steve Moorhead, of Toronto, Ontario; his wife Marlene Moorhead whom he married on February 11, 1961; his son Erik Moorhead and daughter-in-law Lorrie Adair of Grapevine, Texas; and granddaughters Tully Adair Moorhead and Dr. Ava Adair Moorhead. Doug was born March 16, 1934, to Douglas McCord Moorhead and Helen Patterson Moorhead, the third of 4 children in a family that had been living in Erie County since the 1790's and that had been growing grapes on their

family farm since the late 1870's. Doug always loved grapes and knew he would be the one to carry on the family tradition of farming from his father Douglas M. Moorhead, who was a leader in the establishment of the National Grape Cooperative, a farmers' cooperative that eventually purchased Welch Foods, and who served as President of Welch's in the 50's and 60's. After completing his degree from Penn State ('56 Horticulture and Pomology), Doug was drafted into the Army and served in Germany (along with Elvis) from 1956-1958. There he was exposed to the German cool climate vineyard and wine industry which got him thinking about the possibility of growing wine grapes in the Lake Erie region to replace the acreage of other fruits such as sweet and sour cherries, peaches, plums and apples which had become less and less profitable. Wanting to make his own mark and break from just the traditional table and grape juice grapes grown in the area, Doug experimented with nearly 200 French Hybrid varieties and was the first to introduce the growing of Riesling and other classic European *Vitis vinifera* grapes into Pennsylvania and the Lake Erie area in the late 1950's. He worked closely with Eastern Wine pioneers Dr. Konstantin Frank and Philip Wagner to further his knowledge of *vinifera* viticulture and identify varieties that could thrive in our local region. Doug was a founding member of the Erie County Wine Club and it was there that Presque Isle Wine Cellars was born. The club had many members who liked to make wine in addition to drinking it and Doug and fellow club member Bill Konnerth became the go-to guys for helping other club members source winemaking equipment, supplies, and grapes. Doug and Bill thought there might be a business opportunity in providing this service for a wider audience and in 1964 they opened Presque Isle Wine Cellars as a winemaking supplies business. They also produced wine, the first Pennsylvania winery to do so since Prohibition, but could not sell it as the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) had a monopoly on wine sales in the state through their wine and spirits stores and Pennsylvania wines at the time were in no position to compete on PLCB shelves with wines from California and Europe. In those early years our wines were shared with friends and customers as examples of what could be made from the grapes and juices we sold. The supplies business began to thrive and Doug continued his experimental work in the vineyards and wine cellar and began his next challenge – finding a way for him and other aspiring Pennsylvania wine producers to be able to market their product outside of the PLCB system. Working with other grape growers and wine enthusiasts, Doug led the formation of the Pennsylvania State Grape Marketing Council and enlisted the help and support of sympathetic state legislators, notably Senator Bill Sesler from Erie and House Member Forrest Hopkins from North East, to develop and pass a legislative proposal that would allow licensed wine producers to sell their wine direct to consumers on their own premises. After a protracted battle that faced stiff resistance from the PLCB and their legislative allies, and in literally the final hours before the bill would have died in senate committee, the Lieutenant Governor Raymond Broderick intervened to get the bill to the floor and the Pennsylvania Limited Winery Act became law on July 13, 1968. This bill that may never have happened but for the last minute help of Lt. Governor Broderick's Executive Assistant who knew Doug's father and who got a final plea to the Lt. Governor on our behalf, set the foundation for what would become today's Pennsylvania wine industry with over 300 licensed wineries producing over 12 million gallons of wine annually and in most years edging our Oregon as the [4th largest wine producing state](#) behind California, Washington, and New York.

In 1969 Presque Isle Wine Cellars and neighboring

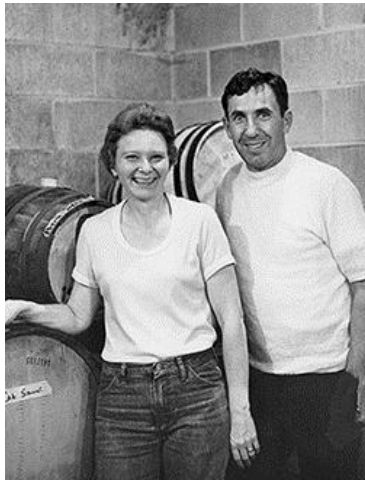


Penn Shore Vineyards became the first two licensed PA wineries under the new law and Doug set about on the next phase of his career – improving and raising the profile of Pennsylvania Wine. He advised, trained, and mentored aspiring winemakers and grape growers across the

state and region and worked tirelessly with other wineries and local growers to improve cellar and viticultural practices and steadily improve the quality and perception of wine produced in Pennsylvania to the point where today Presque Isle and several other PA wineries consistently win awards in top wine competitions around the country, successfully competing on quality against West Coast and international wines. Doug was a founding member and past President of the Pennsylvania Wine Association and served as a director of Wine America and The Pennsylvania Grape Marketing Board as well as serving as a long-time national director for The National Grape Cooperative. Doug

was also one of only two recipients of The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Eastern Winery Exposition.

In 1974 Doug's original partner, Bill Konnerth, retired and his wife Marlene joined him as a partner in Presque Isle Wine Cellars. Together they built Presque Isle Wine Cellars into a larger and more successful business. Doug spent countless happy hours meeting personally with and talking on the phone with customers and winemakers from across the country answering questions and dispensing winemaking and winery operating wisdom and advice. This interaction – helping people enjoy and make the best wine they can - was Doug's absolute favorite thing to do and he certainly would have continued doing it to his last day had his stroke not forced his retirement. Doug's generosity and personal touch with our customers earned Presque Isle a legendary reputation for kindness and service and we will never cease to operate with those values originated and exemplified by Doug.



Doug was also a lifelong athlete and sports fan. He was a 5-sport athlete at Harbor Creek High School and a member of the inaugural track and cross country teams at the school. In 2019 he joined his brother Steve Moorhead as an inductee into the Harbor Creek Athletic Hall of Fame. Doug was a passionate runner, competing for Penn State in Cross Country and finishing as high as 6th in the NCAA championships. After college he competed on the All-Army track team and later in his forties took up distance running, winning age group titles at several marathons. At age 49 he completed a 50-mile ultra-marathon in under 8 hours then hopped in the car and drove 3 hours to State College to pick up his son from Penn State at semester break and drove another 4 hours home with no apparent discomfort from the race. Doug played fastpitch softball with his son's team into his 40's and was a proud member of the Erie Codgers "mature" players' softball team into his 70's. Doug was also an avid Bridge player, attaining the rank of Life Master.

He loved his Penn State Nittany Lions sports teams and, because WJR from Detroit was the radio station with best reception on the farm in the 40's and 50's, he became a lifelong fan of Ernie Harwell and Detroit sports teams – The Tigers, Pistons, Red Wings, and yes, because Doug was a man of great conviction, steadfastness, and stoic loyalty, even the Lions. To make the sports suffering complete, because we could pick up TV stations from across Lake Erie in Kitchener, Ontario, on our antenna,



Doug loved watching *Hockey Night in Canada* and was a long-disappointed Toronto Maple Leafs fan as well. He was beamingly

proud of his granddaughters Tully and Ava who, in addition to being highly accomplished women, students, and professionals, were both All-American Lacrosse players at the University of Texas at Austin.

Doug was a proud Penn Stater and member of The Lion's Paw and Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity and he was humbly honored to be the subject of a wonderful profile in the February 2009 issue of [Penn Stater Magazine](#). He was a very proud grandfather and, inspired by his granddaughters, was able to bury the hatchet from the controversy over the rightful 1969 NCAA Football Champions and make a place in his heart for the UT Longhorns as well.

In addition to his monumental contributions to the Pennsylvania wine and grape industries, Doug greatly enjoyed serving his community and was a long-serving Harborcreek School Board Member and director of The National Bank of North East and the Hirtzel Foundation.

We are thankful to have had Doug be part of our lives and to have benefitted from his example and his gifts and accomplishments. The life values that he lived daily – commitment, kindness, honor, honesty, modesty, generosity, curiosity, loyalty, service, humor, endurance, striving for excellence, and a willingness to see people as they are without prejudging will continue to inspire our lives and our business and our family will continue to operate Presque Isle Wine Cellars and Moorhead Vineyards with those values as part of our fundamental DNA.

We wish Godspeed to Doug, “The Father of Pennsylvania Wine” as he continues his journey and we hope you will think of him a moment and join us in gratitude and celebration for his happy, momentous, and impactful life.

Doug would be thrilled at the next evolution in Pennsylvania Wine – premium retail stores in Pennsylvania’s best markets dedicated solely to Pennsylvania’s best made wines & spirits.

For Our Pittsburgh Area Friends

We invite you to come visit us at [PA Libations Wine Store](#) an amazing new store featuring the best of PA Wines now open at 1700 Penn Avenue in Pittsburgh’s Strip District.



For Our Philadelphia Area Friends

BIG NEWS! Beginning in mid June, Presque Isle Wine Cellars is coming to Philadelphia’s legendary Reading Terminal Market. We will be joining several other PA wineries and distilleries being featured in [Pennsylvania Libations new RTM Store](#). We invite you to come visit us there and see just how good Pennsylvania Wine has become.



The best from our family to yours. Cheers!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erik Moorhead".

Erik Moorhead
President, Presque Isle Wine Cellars
www.piwine.com

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**Presque Isle Wine Cellars | 9440 W Main Rd, North East, PA
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