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Working the Hungarian connection

Posted on September 12, 2013 by Sun News



Mate Kerekes, raised in the shadow of Tokaj Mountain in the northeast corner of Hungary, is now rolling barrels around a wine cave deep within the Mayacamas. He is a winery intern at **Buena Vista Winery**, which was founded by the Hungarian-born Agoston Haraszthy in 1857, and was brought to Sonoma by the Sonoma-Tokaj Sister City Committee.

The towns, with fine wines and The Count in common, became Sister Cities in 2012, and Kerekes was chosen by the winery from several potential candidates presented by the Tokaj-Sonoma Association.

“We are very pleased to have Mr. Kerekes working with us; he is energetic, and has already worked in wine cellars and vineyards,” says Tom Blackwood, director of retail operations. “I am grateful to Otilia Majer of Tokaj and the rest of her committee for sending us such a fine intern.”

Kerekes has been staying with local families in Sonoma, and has been squired around town, to the beach, on mountain hikes, and to local theatrical performances. “Sonoma is a lovely town, and everyone is very welcoming and friendly,” said Mate. “Getting this internship is really going to help me as I complete my oenology degree at Corvinus University of Budapest.”

“We are very excited to have this opportunity to host a wine

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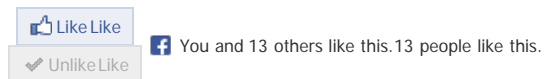
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student from Tokaj” said Sylvia Toth, Co-Chair of the **Sonoma-Tokaj Sister City Committee**. “One of the goals of the committee was to establish meaningful connections with Tokaj through economic and cultural exchange,” she said. “The wine student exchange program has been our primary focus, and we are happy to implement it this year. We are very grateful for the assistance of the Tokaj-Sonoma Association in finding Mate.”

The young man will be a key part of a Sonoma-Tokaj Sister City Committee fundraiser on October 12 in Sonoma. “A Night in Tokaj!” will feature Hungarian food, music, dancing and wine tastings. To RSVP call 338-5058.



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