

The 2017 season was an exercise in suspended disbelief.

Before breaking bud we had been furiously working between massive rain and snow events to plant more than 265 trees and shrubs around the property to create some ecological structure within the vineyard itself. This is part of our long-term vision of restoring functional layers on the agricultural landscape. We managed to get everything planted just as spring slammed into us, going from flood to fire, almost literally.

Oregon saw even higher maximum temperatures and lower rainfall in 2017 than in 2016. 2017 was also a year of devastating wildfires in Oregon, the resulting smoke blanketing the Willamette Valley for days at a time during the hottest weather. Ironically, that smoke created an impermeable layer that actually protected the grapes from what might have been terrible sunburn and came at a time when the berries were not susceptible to smoke taint.

The drama mounted as harvest drew near, everyone expecting another early harvest. The vineyard appeared to be unconcerned, however. What I affectionately call 'the parking lot' was blessedly long in 2017, when we sit on our hands and the grapes appear to be doing nothing, sugars and acids not moving. Every year we try to put more into this place. More diversity, more energy, more love; the vineyard soaks it up like a sponge and pays us back in spades.

When we finally picked the fruit for the Hope Well wines, smelling and tasting the grapes during processing, I was grateful for every moment of every hour, every blister, every gash and every new freckle. Every time I tasted the wines in the cellar, I heard the voice of the vineyard and I resolved to keep doing *more*.

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Hope Well 2017 Chardonnay Eola-Amity Hills

Harvested September 15, 2017

100% Chardonnay

100% organically farmed

From a mélange of clones

From soils of both volcanic
and ancient marine parentage

East / Southeast aspect

Whole cluster pressed, not inoculated

0% new oak

Alcohol 13.5%, pH 3.3, TA 6.8 g/L

125 cases produced

Bottled August 6, 2018

The inaugural Chardonnay from Hope Well is such an exciting landmark in the vineyard. We planted Chardonnay after much of the Pinot Noir was asserting the 'personality' of its home, and chose our favorite sites based on what we were learning from the Pinot. For young fruit it was very assertive and distinct. The grapes were pressed cold and went to barrel without settling, each barrel was hand filled and received the same amount of solids from the press. The next morning the barrels were bubbling, so they were tucked into a cool spot to ferment. Malolactic started before primary was finished, and throughout it was clear that Hope Well has a distinct signature for Chardonnay as well as Pinot noir. No commercial yeasts or bacteria were used.

Human. Nature. Hope Well

