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James Beard Awards

By Gretchen Giles



From the Better Late than Never files, we finally got over to the James Beard Awards list and were gratified to confirm what other media outlets had reported last week: the North Bay is beautifully represented at this annual honor. With the final awards to be announced in New York City May 3–4, many area chefs and food professionals are proudly represented, including the perennial Thomas Keller (for his book *Under Pressure: Cooking Sous Vide*); Redd's Nicole Plue (Outstanding Pastry Chef); Merry Edwards for her eponymous brand as well as John and Doug Shafer of Shafer Vineyards (Outstanding Wine and Spirits Professional); and Ubuntu's Jeremy Fox and Cyrus' Douglas Keane (Best Chef: Pacific).

But really made us start up from our slump was to see our own Clark Wolf listed as an inductee into the Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America category, along with such luminaries as chef and entrepreneur David Burke, Southern Foodways Alliance director and author John T. Edge, culinary historian and cookbook author Betty Fussell and French Culinary Institute founder Dorothy Hamilton. Clark, who divides his time between Guerneville and N.Y.C. (and has the good humor to realize the bad T-shirt that makes), contributes Napkin Notes on an occasional basis to these pages.

Owner of the Clark Wolf Company, a food and restaurant consulting firm that has been instrumental in guiding the Las Vegas culinary boom, Clark's latest book is *American Cheese*, a fitting tome for a former English major who found his passion in a San Francisco cheese shop and parlayed that into an international career that includes establishing the New York chapter of the American Institute of Wine and Food and hosting NYU's seminal Critical Topics in Food series, which enjoyed a West Coast run at the now-defunct COPIA.

Locally, Clark has done much for programs up on the River, establishing the Russian River Food and Wine Festival with former partner Scott Mitchell, which not only allowed patrons to have relaxed interactions with nationally known chefs and providers but donated huge, large swadges of cash to promote locally grown sustainable food for local nonprofits. We're very proud of our lad.

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