

Artists lends talents to Roundup wine fundraiser

By Milo Dailey, Butte County Post staff | Sunday, March 15, 2009

BELLE FOURCHE -- "What could be better?" vintner John Jackson asked as he stacked bottles in a new display at the Belle Fourche City Liquor store.

"We have a world-renowned artist living in Belle Fourche who could produce a classic label for our 90th Anniversary Black Hills Roundup commemorative wine."

Artist Mick B. Harrison is known for his Western art -- and for his flexibility in showing the prairie and Western experience on diverse media including paintings and book covers.

"It's the first time I've ever done a wine bottle," he said. "I've done a lot of different advertising type of things, but it's the first time for that."

That made it "kind of fun" as a special project for Jackson.

Jackson's a Belle Fourche dentist who has grown grapes and made wine at home for years.

His developing Belle Joli boutique winery is growing as fast as his dozens of acres of grapevines around Belle Fourche.

Thinking about how he could help with plans for the 90th annual Roundup, "We thought about a commemorative wine, and Mick's name came up in a conversation," Jackson said.

The Roundup Committee approved the label and the concept, which will put \$4 from the sale of each bottle into the committee's coffers.

It's now approved by the Belle Fourche City Council as an officially recognized Roundup item and is on sale at the Belle Fourche City Liquor Store.

Jackson said the winery and Belle Fourche are "awesomely lucky" to have an artist as flexible and talented as Harrison.

Harrison said he had to make a few changes in his original design of a cowboy carrying a flag. It first had an American flag, but apparently, that isn't allowed on a wine label, so it was switched to have the Roundup logo on the flag.

"It's a blended label with a blended wine," he said.

The artist has lived here about 10 years and has his home and studio on the outskirts of town. His background in central South Dakota adds a prairie and general rural perspective.

"It's all Western," he said. "I like doing prairie and rural paintings, so it doesn't always have to be cowboy stuff."

"I think it's a nice tie-in with the rodeo," he said. "They're always looking for new things, particularly with a year like the 90th. The wine is a good promotion for Belle Fourche at the same time -- the wine industry and the Roundup."