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Pictures That Speak A Thousand Words

*New Murals Throughout Monterey County
Put a Face on Wine, Sustainable Vineyard Practices, and Touring Activities*

March 7, 2011 (Monterey, CA) – Everyone knows that a picture speaks a thousand words, but in Monterey County, there are now *eight* pictures – each extending 12 feet tall – to tell of the region’s winemaking and grape-growing legacy.

Spanning thirty miles through the third most agriculturally productive county in California, eight wooden murals have recently been installed under the auspices of the **Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association** to highlight the region’s wine culture and direct guests to the local tasting rooms. The eight murals follow the first viticulture mural created five years ago, capturing the image of Monterey County viticulture pioneer, Al Scheid of Scheid Vineyards.

“The murals reflect the uniqueness of Monterey Wine Country,” says **Rhonda Motil**, Executive Director of the MCVGA. “The goal of the murals is to build broader brand awareness to those traveling on Highway 101 who might not grasp the impact of grapes and wine on the County and California, and to direct them to any one of the 35 tasting rooms across the region.”

A recent study for the County of Monterey reinforces the economic impact of agriculture on the region, showing that an overall \$2 billion crop production sales value translates to about \$5.2 billion in direct, indirect and induced economic activity. In 2009, Monterey County’s agricultural production was over \$4 billion.

Furthermore, the County’s 42 grape varieties play a key role in the industry’s economic value, yet most people traveling along Highway 101 only see a portion of the beauty and vastness of the viticulture area from the freeway. The new murals announce to everyone – whether people passing through on the journey from Los Angeles to San Francisco, tourists who are specifically visiting the region, and even local residents – that they are in Monterey Wine Country.

The murals were completed with funds from the **Rural Business Enterprise Grant**, awarded to the MCVGA last year by the Rural Business Cooperative Service, an agency within the USDA Rural Development under the provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The painted murals, created by artists **Dong Sun Kim** and **John Cerney**, include portraits of critical people who have shaped and influenced the County’s wine culture:

- **Jeff Meier**, Winemaker and Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer of **J Lohr Vineyards & Wines**. Since 1984, Jeff has championed Monterey County wine, particularly as an early pioneer of the Arroyo Seco AVA. The image of Jeff drawing a barrel sample is a testament to his natural gifts, work ethic and commitment to producing excellent wines, as well as to the integral role he has played in the history of Monterey County winemaking.
- Fifth-generation winegrape-grower and winemaker **Karl Wente** of **Wente Vineyards**. With a very traditional, hands-on approach both in the vineyard and in the cellar, Karl pays homage to his family’s legacy in Monterey County by nurturing over 33 different grape varieties on nearly 3,000 acres of sustainably certified vineyards in the Livermore Valley and Arroyo Seco AVAs.

- Director of Hospitality for **Delicato Family Vineyards, Cheryl Indelicato**. As part of one of California's oldest winemaking families, Cheryl ensures that every visitor to San Bernabe Vineyard in Monterey County has an unforgettable experience. Warm, personable and polished, Cheryl sets the stage for guests to relax, take in a majestic view of the surrounding vineyards and enjoy meals prepared on site from the bounty of her organic garden.

The remaining murals depict key aspects of life in Monterey Wine Country:

- **Touring Monterey Wine Country**. As one of the most diversely beautiful regions on earth, Monterey County has three unique wine trail itineraries for its 8.5 million annual tourists and locals alike to enjoy. Developed and promoted by the MCVGA, these trails are the "Coastal Connoisseur Itinerary" along the Monterey and Carmel-by-the-Sea coastline, the "Country Charm Trip" to Carmel Valley, and the "Vineyard Ventures Exploration" along River Road. The "Touring" mural depicts the pleasure and wonder that visitors and residents experience along these trails.
- **Tribute to Grape Growers**. Winegrape growing is a significant component of Monterey County's agriculture industry and has experienced tremendous growth in the last few decades. That growth can be attributed to the dedication and hard work of numerous local farmers and ranchers, who themselves in most cases, have been part of the fabric of California agriculture for generations. Honoring the grape grower on this mural speaks to the importance they play not only in the wine industry but to the local economy and community as well.
- **A Toast to Monterey Wine Country**. That there are over 35 tasting rooms in Monterey Wine Country clearly indicates the importance of the tasting room experience. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the youngest generation of wine enthusiasts, whose interest lies in the social experience of tasting and learning about wine. Lauren and John, a young couple depicted in this mural set in a tasting room, are raising a toast to the wines that come from Monterey County's emerging wine region.
- **Silhouettes**. Another depiction of wine's appeal to the Millennial Generation, this more modern mural shows a silhouetted social scene of friends partaking in the pleasures of good wine and good company.
- **In the Vineyard**. This mural captures the beauty of the vineyards, the rolling hills, and the incoming fog coming over the vineyards in the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA of Monterey County. Over 42 varietals are grown across Monterey County's nine distinct American Viticulture Areas (AVAs). The Thermal Rainbow™, which references the viticulture impact of the forty degree temperature swing from north to south on a summer day, dictates the proper varietal planting choices for each sub appellation. Varietals in this mural are reflective of the cool climate region in the Santa Lucia Highlands area –Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, which are also the two largest varietal plantings in Monterey County.

For more information on the Monterey Wine Country murals, please contact the MCVGA at rmotil@montereywines.org or 831.375.9400. Pictures are available upon request.

About the Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association

Bringing together the talents and resources of its members, partners and the community, the MCVGA promotes and supports their leadership in the art, science and business of wine. Founded in 1974, the Association is a non-profit organization representing over 85 vintners and growers in Monterey, California. Additional details are available by visiting www.montereywines.org or by calling 831.375.9400.