

# In Loving Memory of Cheryl Kellert

We are grieved to announce the loss of Cheryl Kellert on March 31, 2026.

Cheryl and her husband, Al, moved to Amissville in December of 1986, transplanting 160 vines from their backyard in Dale City. In addition to planting a total of 14 acres, the Kellerts transformed an abandoned horse farm into the winery you see today. Gray Ghost opened July 9, 1994.

Not one for the limelight, Cheryl was the heart, soul and glue of Gray Ghost. Her first love was in the vineyard, where in addition to planting, training and maintaining the vines, she mentored countless high school and college students throughout over three decades of summers. Up until a couple years ago, she pruned the entire vineyard by herself each winter and proudly told guests, "I know every vine by name."

Cheryl was a constant smiling presence in the tasting room where she warmly greeted guests and was excited for each special event – including the hosting of annual harvest parties. A promoter of the benefits of food and wine, she cooked for the winery events – including the famous Chocolates and Cabernet, Vertical Wine Tasting dinners and the Annual Christmas Open House. And her easy-to-follow, delicious newsletter recipes were anticipated by so many.

Behind the scenes, Cheryl served as Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable, bookkeeper, payroll, HR department and copy editor. She frequently said she loved "all her jobs", she just wished there were more time!

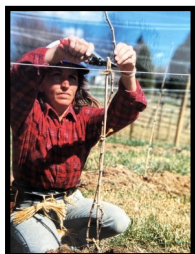
In the winemaking department, she and Al worked as a team to make blending decisions and determine the direction of the portfolio. She is even credited with the naming of Gray Ghost's famous dessert wine "Adieu", a nod to Mosby's farewell to his men and the conclusion of a meal.

And as if all this is not enough, Cheryl stole the show in Gray Ghost's weekly Happy Half Hour Facebook program during Covid. With a wine glass in each hand, she required no coaching when it came to sipping her glass or rolling her eyes at Al's antics.

Cheryl's commitment to Gray Ghost led to a host of awards over the years including - Virginia Professional Woman of the Year, awarded by the Governor; Lifetime Achievement Award from the Eastern Wineries Exposition sponsored by Wine Business Monthly Magazine, the Mid-Atlantic Wine Grape Productivity Award from the Atlantic Seaboard Wine Association and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Southern Illinois University.

While a company newsletter is about a company, our readership is family and we would be doing Cheryl a disservice without mentioning her first commitment – family. She loved her husband, children and grandchildren. There was nothing that gave her greater joy than time spent with them.

We thank you for the outpouring of love we have received in this difficult time. We look forward to your continued visits and your shared memories of Cheryl. It is your stories that are providing us so much comfort. And if you want to raise a toast to Cheryl, Reserve Chardonnay was her favorite!



## New Releases

### 2025 Vidal Blanc

Bright and refreshing, Gray Ghost's "summer in a bottle" bursts with aromas and flavors of honeydew melon, juicy mango and a hint of lime zest. With a whisper of sweetness on the finish, this pairs well with spicy ethnic dishes, blue cheese, light picnics or all by itself on the porch after work. This is a summer staple! Currently available.

**\$28 bottle**



### 2025 Riesling

Fresh, fruity and bursting with character, the 2025 Riesling exhibits an incredible density of fruit both in the aroma and on the palate. Bright citrus notes burst forth from the glass greeting the nose like a fresh cut fruit salad. The palate displays layered notes of green apple, lime zest, juicy white peach and subtle undertone of minerality. This off-dry Riesling explodes in the mouth with zippy acidity and finishes with a whisper of sweetness on the finish. Our favorite summer sipper, this is a lovely wine paired with spicy Thai or Indian dishes, fatty fish, roasted chicken and cheeses like Brie, Havarti and Gouda. Currently available.

**\$28 bottle**

### 2025 Gewürztraminer

Spice and fruit mingle into a taste sensation with a hint of sweetness on the finish. Interwoven notes of white pepper, ginger and jasmine mingle with juicy mango and star fruit to deliver a complex, rich white wine. Always a favorite for Thanksgiving, the Gewürztraminer also pairs beautifully with powerful cheeses like Gorgonzola and Stilton, spicy ethnic cuisine and roasted poultry. Release date: May 9

**\$28 bottle**



### 2025 Seyval Blanc

Lean and austere, the Seyval Blanc exhibits a lovely blend of mineral notes intertwined with crisp citrus highlights. Hungarian oak fermentation and aging provides the subtle smoothness on the finish, balancing the bright acidity on the mid-palate. A perfect pairing with oysters, light flaky fish or chicken piccata. Release date: Summer.

**\$28 bottle**

### 2025 Chardonnay

Gray Ghost has long been applauded for its three incredible Chardonnay offerings and this release is no different! An elegant marrying of fruit and oak, luscious notes of tropical fruit and ripe pear mingle with subtle hints of vanilla. Fruity and smooth, the Chardonnay is a lovely wine to enjoy with seafood, poultry, Asiago and fettuccine Alfredo. Release date: Summer.

**\$28 bottle**



## New Releases

### Victorian Red

A customer favorite! A unique blend of Cabernet Franc and Chardonnay delivers this "meaty" rose with a hint of sweetness. Luscious flavors of strawberry and raspberry preserves are balanced with a lingering off-dry finish. Refreshing on a hot summer day, the Victorian Red pairs beautifully with pizza, wings, grilled veggies, burgers and picnics. Currently available.

**\$28 bottle**

### Romantic Rosé

Very limited in production, Gray Ghost's rosé bursts with vibrant notes of Bing cherry, ripe raspberry and cranberry with a bright, zesty finish. Fruity and tart, the rosé is a fun pairing with tomato-based dishes, Mediterranean cuisine, charcuterie and goat cheese. Release date: Summer.

**\$28 bottle**

### 2025 Cabernet Franc

The Cabernet Franc delivers rich and juicy notes of black cherry and blackberries with a hint of subtle spice on the finish. Aged less than a year in French oak, the wine finishes with subtle toasty oak notes. This medium-bodied, dry red is a lovely complement to grilled meats, lamb, duck and tomato-based pasta dishes. Release date: June 20.

**\$38 bottle**



### 2025 Adieu (Late Harvest Vidal Blanc)

Gray Ghost's famous dessert wine bursts with notes of candied orange peel, honey and dried apricot. Refreshingly sweet without being overpowering. Enjoy this balanced dessert wine by itself, with cheesecake, fruit-based desserts or a decadent cheese tray. Release date: Summer.

**\$35 bottle**

## Vintage 2025

Another "Reserve" vintage for the record books! An unseasonably wet summer broke forth to a hot, intense August and early September with no measurable rainfall. After maintaining healthy, disease-free vineyards during the early part of the growing season, we were rewarded with exceptionally intense fruit with the late summer/early fall drought.



The new fresh and fruity white releases are already available and showing the wonderful concentration of the 2025 growing season.

This is the last recipe Cheryl put together. She so enjoyed creating these as a way of adding to everyone's enjoyment of wine.

## Wines with Food



This is a quick and delicious way to prepare a great meal with tons of flavor. Enjoy it with a side of asparagus and either Gray Ghost Reserve Chardonnay or Chardonnay. You can't miss either way. Enjoy! Cheryl

## Awesome Chicken in Gravy

- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 2 chicken breasts cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 Medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 lb mushrooms, diced
- ¼ cup salted butter
- 3 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 cup Gray Ghost Chardonnay
- 1 tsp sea salt, or to taste
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper, or to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp parsley, for garnish (optional)

### Directions

Heat the olive oil in a nonstick pan. Once hot, cook up chicken breasts until tender. Add mushrooms and onions and sauté until onions are soft and golden, about 5 to 8 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.

In the same pan add butter. Once melted, whisk in flour. Cook, whisking constantly until golden brown. Whisk in the chicken broth and Gray Ghost Chardonnay. Once simmering, add salt and pepper to taste.

Now add back chicken, mushrooms and onions to pan. Stir until heated through. Add parsley as garnish. Serve over mashed potatoes or white rice. Serves 4 to 6.

Newsletter Copyright 2026.

## What is in Store for 2026

No doubt everyone has heard and seen the Spotted Lantern Fly, an invasive species care of China. Gray Ghost was not immune to these little pests in 2025. Although sprays seemed to help control the population, only time will tell if they were effective enough to protect the vineyard from damage.

Then came the "Great Snow/Ice of February". The problem was not the precipitation as much as the absolute cold temperatures we faced over a two plus week period. Vines can withstand cold, but once temperatures drop to 10 degrees or below, damage to the primary buds become possible. Since these are the only fruit bearing buds, we run the risk of a drastically reduced crop this fall. Even more concerning is damage to the vine itself. Cold weather can actually kill vines by causing split trunks.

And finally, the devastating freeze on April 21 has resulted in massive damage to the young shoots in all blocks.

Now it is a waiting game to see what 2026 will bring.

# Gray Ghost Events

## May 9 and 10, 2026: Mother's Day Weekend

NEW RELEASE 2025 Gewürztraminer

Saturday: Live music by Some Guy 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Sunday: Live music by Kirsten Haze 1:00 to 4:00 pm

## May 23, 24 and 25, 2026: Memorial Day Weekend

Live Music Saturday by Some Guy 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Live music Sunday and Monday  
by John Sweet 1:00 to 4:00 pm

**Sunday, June 7: Wine Library Tasting** 1:00 to 4:00 pm

## Sunday, June 14: Cousins Maine Lobster

## June 20 and 21, 2026: Father's Day Weekend

NEW RELEASE 2025 Cabernet Franc

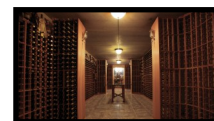
Saturday: Live music by Some Guy 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Sunday: Live music by John Sweet 1:00 to 4:00 pm

## July 11 and 12, 2026: 32nd Anniversary Celebration!

Live music all weekend  
by Kirsten Haze of Richmond fame!  
Cousins Maine Lobster on Sunday!

## Sun, August 16: Wine Library Tasting

1:00 to 4:00 pm



## September 5, 6 and 7, 2026: Labor Day Weekend

Saturday and Monday:  
Live music by John Sweet 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Sunday: Live music by Some Guy 1:00 to 4:00 pm

## September 19 and 20, 2026: Celebrate Fall!

Saturday: Live music by John Sweet 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Sunday: Live music by Some Guy 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
Cousins Maine Lobster on Sunday!

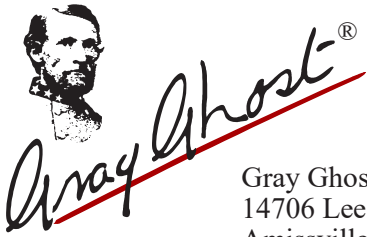
## Harvest at Gray Ghost! August, September, October (Register by August 30!)

Please check the website for food truck updates.

For more event information:  
[www.grayghostvineyards.com](http://www.grayghostvineyards.com)

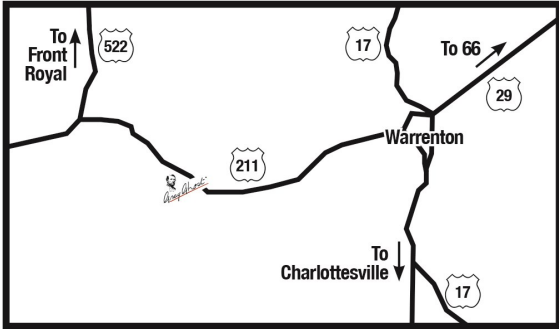
## Gray Ghost Represents Virginia at Regional Conference

Gray Ghost Vineyards was chosen out of a field of over 300 wineries to represent the Commonwealth of Virginia at the Eastern Wineries Exposition Conference (EWE) in Richmond, Virginia on March 24-26. The largest business to business industry conference east of the Pacific states, Gray Ghost poured a selection of its Gold medal winning wines to guests, highlighting the best that Virginia wineries have to offer.



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**TASTINGS & SALES Friday, Saturday & Sunday**  
**and Federal Monday Holidays 11:00 am to 5:00 pm**  
**Additional seasonal hours in summer and fall—see the website.**  
**January & February: Open Saturday, Sunday and Fed. Mon. Holidays**  
 Sales by appointment: Monday-Thursday.  
 Tours conducted Saturday and Sunday by appointment.  
**Closed:** Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day and Easter



VINTAGE SPRING 2026  
 Celebrating 32 Years!  
 1994-2026