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### **Montezuma Winery 2018 Small Business of the Year Award**

(Waterloo, NY) - The Seneca County Chamber of Commerce and Sessler Companies recently presented the 2018 Small Business of the Year Award to Montezuma Winery (of Seneca Falls) during the Chamber's Annual Membership BBQ event held at Zugibe Vineyards.

"We congratulate Montezuma Winery on their well deserved recognition as the Chamber's 2018 Small Business of the Year," said Chamber president Jeff Shipley. "Their extraordinary contributions have positively impacted both our local economy and its food and beverage industry."

Other finalists for the Small Business of the Year Award included: Café XIX (Seneca Falls), Ovid Community Health (Ovid) and the Seneca Falls Historical Society (Seneca Falls).

Montezuma Winery opened in 2001, following the success of the Martin Family's Honey Farm and Meadery (a winery that produces honey wines). Looking to capitalize on their location in the "fruit belt of New York," the family business found its niche in the growing wine region with its focus on fruit wines.

Under the guidance of Bill Martin, the operation quickly developed a reputation for award-winning products. While their wine list does include high-quality, traditional grape varieties, its niche flavors are Blueberry, Rhubarb and Cranberry Bog (the award-winning, most popular flavor).

Over the past two decades, Montezuma Winery has experienced significant growth. They opened a 14,000 square foot building in Seneca Falls to house both its production facility and gift shop. Their success has also led the family to pursue additional business ventures. In 2010, the Martin's opened a satellite store in the historic town of Old Forge, NY and three years later Idol Ridge Winery opened on the east side of Seneca Lake in Lodi, NY. Shortly after opening Idol Ridge, they released their distillery brand, Alder Creek.

Within the past year the Martin's have purchased both Kings Garden Vineyards in Lodi, NY and Max's Custard in Seneca Falls, NY. Kings Garden Vineyards has been renamed to Fossenvue Winery with a brand new wine list. Max's Custard now bases it's brand off their brand mascot, Maxine the cow and still offers the same delicious food and ice cream.

After 18 years of success, the Martin Family continues to be very family orientated. You can find all of the owners, George and Virginia Martin along with son's Ed and Bill, at the Seneca Falls location daily working alongside a dedicated team of employees that include two of Ed's children, Zachery and Michaela.

"It is truly an honor to receive this great award. We are proud to be a part of the community and are flattered to be recognized as a driving force in the area." states co-owner Bill Martin "When we started in the wine business in 1999 we never would have dreamed that we would see such significant growth. One of the reasons for our success is our staff of dedicated professionals. Whether they are making award winning wine or providing five-star service they are what puts everything together".

Over 200 Chamber members and guests attended the event, sponsored by Generations Bank. The award was developed by the Chamber in 2007 to recognize and celebrate the impact that small businesses have on local communities. Small businesses account for nearly 98 percent of all businesses in New York State – providing nearly 4 million jobs and contributing over \$190 million in payroll.

For more information about this event or for details about Chamber membership, benefits and programs, please call (315) 568-2906 or visit [www.senecachamber.org](http://www.senecachamber.org).

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