The King George Chapter (Va) met on May 9th, in the Oak Crest Vineyard and Winery tasting room for a tasting featuring Austrian wines. Approximately 35 members and 3 guests were present. Not many of us have experienced Austrian wine so this was definitely an educational and enlightening presentation. Austrian wine making dates back to 700 BC, it continued to flourish until the war in the 17th century, when beer became popular. It was then revitalized by monarchs in the 18th century. The most popular indigenous varietals in Austria are Gruner Veltliner, St. Laurent, Zweigelt and Blaufrankisch. Most Wine grapes are grown in the eastern portion of the country. Soil types vary from steep slopes with dry stone wall terraces in Wachu to chalk based slopes and sandy soil in Burgenland. There are 35 varietals; 22 white and 13 red. During this meeting we tasted Sauvignon Blanc from Steiermark, Gruner Veltliner, Riesling from Wachu, Pinot Noir from Burgenland, Zweigelt from Niederosterrich and Blaufrankisch from Mittelburgenland. The wines we tasted are listed below as is the score of favorites (in parens):

2012 Strauss Sauvignon from Steiermark $18 (12)

2012 Ewald Gruber Gruner Veltliner $12.99 (16)

2012 Tegernseerhoff Riesling from Wachu $18 (4)

2011 Hillinger Pinot Noir from Burgenland $18.50 (14)

2012 Kellermeister Privat Zweigelt from Niederosterrrich $18 (15)

2010 Anton Iby Blaufrankisch from Mittelburgenland $15.99 (4)