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*A Northern Liberties couple combine their brewing talents, and call the fruit of their single vine Chateau Baqueyard.*

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## A sweet match of grapes and love

By Deborah Scoblionkov  
*Special to The Inquirer*

A vineyard grows in Northern Liberties. And each year, a couple of urban pioneers, Sally McCabe and Stanley Pokras, harvest the grapes to make home-grown Philadelphia wine. Their wine, which they affectionately call Chateau Baqueyard, is available exclusively to their friends, many of whom pitch in each year to pick the bountiful crop and crush the concord grapes of the *single* vine that is their vineyard.

But what a grapevine it is! Pokras estimates that it is older than his 42 years. Ten years ago, when Pokras, a veteran of early South Street and one of the pioneers of Northern Liberties, moved into his rowhouse in the 400 block of Poplar Street, the vine completely covered his house, as well as two neighboring homes, and threatened to engulf a fourth building around the corner.

That first year, Pokras, a computer consult-



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*Sally McCabe and Stanley Pokras playfully sample Chateau Baqueyard.*

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### On wine

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ing at the monster vine, when they decided to make jams and jellies from the bumper crop. Soon afterward, the friend sent him a book on home winemaking and inspired him to ferment the next year's harvest.

At the same time, unbeknown to Pokras, McCabe was living on a 98-acre farm in Kimberton (near her home town of Phoenixville) and was learning to make wines from fruits and berries from a colleague at Penn State's agricultural extension service.

McCabe says of her mentor: "She was making wine from potatoes and beets. I swear she could make wine from dirty socks! I stick to fruits," McCabe adds, very emphatically.

McCabe has experimented with an unusual

very bubbly"), grapefruit ("Ghastly, very bitter") and cantaloupe ("Disgusting! It started growing slime").

When McCabe and Pokras met six years ago at a friend's wedding, they quickly realized that if only they combined their talents, they could make beautiful wine together. "Ours was a marriage of art and science," McCabe, now 32, relates. Pokras agrees: "There was a real relationship there. She was actually making much better quality wine than I. She had a better understanding of it all."

Two years ago, they married and christened their wine Chateau Baqueyard. The rowhouse winery is most successful with raspberry and peach wines. Occasionally, the couple are inspired by whim or availability to create a special vintage. Last year, they came up with a 1986 "Camping Trip," made from a blend of raspberries, red and white currants and blueberries, and fortified with vodka. McCabe's