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Food

How an 80-pound goldendoodle helped build a California wine brand

By **Dave McIntyre** Columnist, Food February 16

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When Eric Story and Alison Smith-Story started their winery in 2014, they didn't follow any conventional path. An old saw advises that to make a small fortune in the wine industry, you should start with a large one. That was not an option, so they went the modern way. "We didn't have an inheritance, and we hadn't started and sold a software company," Alison explains. So they turned to Kickstarter to create **Smith Story Wine Cellars**... "We are the first winery we know of to be crowdfunded."

account they had established for their dog, an improved goldendoodle.

In addition to the Lord Sandwich wine, they produce a delicious sauvignon blanc from Sonoma County, an elegant pinot noir from Anderson Valley in Mendocino County and a superb cabernet sauvignon from Pickberry Vineyard on Sonoma Mountain.

So in 2016, the Storys produced 600 cases of Lord Sandwich Red, a blend of zinfandel, syrah, pinot noir, carignan, grenache and petite sirah. The dog was prominent on the label, and there was a philanthropic twist. It's a nonvintage blend, with each release noted by a paw print on the back label. (The current release of 1,200 cases has two.) For each bottle of Lord Sandwich Red sold, they would donate a pair of socks to a charity. They dubbed the campaign Socks for Sandwich.

SMITH STORY
WINE CELLARS



Eric Story and Alison Smith-Story, with their goldendoodle, Lord Sandwich. (Smith Story Wines)



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