

# T.I. Winery wins medals with 2 wines

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ALEXANDRIA BAY — Owners of the Thousand Islands Winery found gold in their wine last month when they won two medals at the 2006 New York Wine & Food Classic held in Canandaigua.

"We opened the winery three years ago, and we're still perfecting the craft," said winery president Stephen J. Conaway. "We thought this would be a competition to enter because it's only open to wineries in New York."

The winery has 12 varieties of wine but entered only three.

Seaway Blues, a dessert wine made from blueberries, won a Double Gold medal. Thirty wines out of a pool of 735 were given this distinction.

"That means that two panels of judges gave the wine a gold medal," Mr. Conaway said. "We're really excited about

See **WINERY B5**

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## Winery gold medals...

FROM PAGE B1

this."

Wellesley Island White, which is blended from Diamond, Catawba and Cayuga white grapes, won a bronze medal in the Blended Native Varietals Category.

Mr. Conaway said that business has been booming since the winery opened and that owners have recently bought a winery in Long Island whose owner wanted to get out of the business.

Two new 3,000-gallon tanks were also purchased to expand capacity.

"We're really putting our

hearts and souls into this," Mr. Conaway said. "We want to make sure we feel like we're doing this right."

Next year, the winery will enter six wines in the Wine and Food Classic, and he will begin entering competitions in Florida and California, Mr. Conaway said.

"If we can get in these and win, then we need to stop and hold on to our hats," he said.

The north country isn't traditionally known as a wine-producing region. Last year, Thousand Islands-Seaway Wine Trail was established to promote wineries in the region.