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Auction Napa Valley raises \$15.7 Million Coppola family hosts 2017 event to fund local charities

by Paul Franson



Lot winners celebrate their success at Auction Napa Valley on June 3. Photo: Briana Marie Photography for Napa Valley Vintners

St. Helena, Calif.—The 37th annual Auction Napa Valley, the annual charity benefit held by the Napa Valley Vintners, raised \$15.7 million.

The total was \$1.4 million higher than last year's \$14.3 million and topped the \$12.2 million raised by the Naples (Fla.) Winter Wine Festival, the nation's second-largest charity wine auction, in February.

Proceeds from the auction benefit Napa County community health and children's education. This

year's proceeds raised the total to more than \$185 million. Last year alone, the auction's proceeds benefitted more than 100,000 clients of 27 different nonprofit organizations.

The honorary chairs of this year's four-day auction were Eleanor and Francis Ford Coppola of Inglenook, their son Roman, daughter Sofia and granddaughter Gia.

Each Coppola organized one event during the auction weekend.

Film director Sofia Coppola, who recently won the Best Director award for "Beguiled" at the Cannes Film Festival, hosted a dinner June 1.

Eleanor Coppola, who recently debuted her film "Paris Can Wait," directed the barrel auction and wine and food pairing June 2 at the Inglenook estate, which drew 2,200 people.

Roman Coppola, co-creator of the Amazon Prime TV series "Mozart in the Jungle," designed the live auction theme, décor and entertainment.

Film writer and director Francis Ford Coppola prepared an alfresco dinner of Italian family favorites with help from local chef (and St. Helena fire chief) John Sorensen along with Alejandro Ayala and the Meadowood events culinary team.

"Napa Valley is our family's home, and we're grateful for the generosity of our bidders, fellow vintners, partners and donors, local chefs, volunteers and every member of the community that comes together to make Auction Napa Valley a success year after year," said Roman Coppola. "The funds we raised this weekend will help strengthen families and make the seemingly impossible possible for tens of thousands of our neighbors."

The festivities officially started June 1 with dinners at wineries and vintners' estates.

The barrel auction was held June 2 at Inglenook. Inside the winery's caves, bidders tasted from barrels with winemakers and bid for the 108 lots, each split into 10 single cases of futures of Napa Valley wines.

Outside, surrounding the iconic Inglenook fountain, a new format for wine and food pairings included six pavilions featuring Napa Valley's most popular wine varieties paired with food prepared by six of the Coppola family's favorite Napa Valley restaurants and chefs.

On June 3, some guests undertook activities including helping Francis Coppola prepare gnocchi for the dinner that night.

The following day saw the live auction at Meadowood Napa Valley, which has hosted it every year since 1981. The bidding was vigorous inside the big white tent decorated like a 1930s nightclub, complete with a live jazz band and nostalgic dance troupe.

The top single bid of the day was \$720,000 for Dalla Valle Vineyards' lot that included a 6-liter bottle of the winery's red wine blend 'Maya,' named for proprietor Naoko Dalla Valle's daughter, and a week-long excursion with the Dalla Valles to some of their favorite spots in Naoko's native Japan.

"Auction Napa Valley brings Napa Valley's vintners together to raise funds for worthy causes," said Naoko Dalla Valle. "Our winery has been a supporter for close to 30 years, and I am proud that my daughter Maya has joined me in carrying on this tradition that is so meaningful to our community. Giving back is very important and close to our hearts."

Colgin Cellars contributed the day's top fundraising lot, which included a horizontal collection of large format bottles of their 2007 wines combined with trips to Napa Valley and Champagne. The \$700,000 lot was tripled, raising a total of \$2.1 million.

A joint lot from Antica Napa Valley-Antinori Family Wine Estate/Staglin Family Vineyard featuring 10 large-format bottles of wine from the two vintners along with a guided trip to Tuscany was also tripled, bringing in \$1.5 million.

Following the live auction, more than 900 guests moved to the fairway for dinner, then returned to the big tent for dancing to a performance by soul singer-songwriter Leon Bridges.

A farewell brunch was held June 4 at Charles Krug winery. Next year's Auction Napa Valley is planned for May 31-June 3, and will be chaired by the four Mondavi sisters, daughters of Marc Mondavi of the Peter Mondavi Sr. family that owns Krug. Tickets will go on sale in early February at auctionnapavalley.org.

Top-Selling Live Auction Lots

Colgin Cellars: \$2,100,000*

Collaborative Vintner Lot (Antica Napa Valley - Antinori Family Wine Estate and Staglin Family Vineyard): \$1,500,000*

Dalla Valle Vineyards: \$720,000
Viader Vineyards & Winery: \$520,000*
Chairs' Lot (Inglenook): \$460,000
Screaming Eagle: \$440,000
Raymond Vineyards: \$400,000
Chappellet Vineyard: \$340,000
Collaborative Vintner Lot (Far Niente, Dolce, Nickel & Nickel, Bella Union): \$320,000
Spottswoode Estate Vineyard & Winery: \$310,000
Collaborative Vintner Lot (Accendo Cellars, Cardinale, Chappellet Vineyard, Dalle Valle Vineyards, Diamond Creek Vineyards, Far Niente, Lail Vineyards, Lokoya, Nickel & Nickel, Trefethen Family Vineyards): \$300,000
Collaborative Vintner Lot (Alejandro Bulgheroni Estate, Cliff Lede Vineyards, Jones Family Vineyards, Melka Wines, Quintessa, Yao Family Wines): \$300,000
Vineyard 7&8: \$300,000
Blackbird Vineyards: \$300,000
Grgich Hills Estate: \$300,000*
Promontory: \$300,000
*Fundraising total reflects lot being replicated for multiple bidders.

Top-Selling Barrel Auction Lots

The Mascot: \$73,550
Cardinale: \$65,050
Melka Wines: \$62,600
Shafer Vineyards: \$52,600
Chappellet Vineyard: \$41,750
Joseph Phelps Vineyards: \$38,700
Continuum Estate: \$36,700
Alpha Omega: \$35,050
Paul Hobbs: \$33,750
Covert Estate: \$32,900

Top-Selling E-Auction Lots

TOR Wines: \$20,000
Collaborative Vintner Lot (Gamble Family Vineyards, Amuse Bouche, Vineyard 7&8, Gemstone):
\$16,150
QTR: \$14,050
Collaborative Vintner Lot (Howell Mountain Vintners & Growers Association): \$13,050

Sherwin Family Vineyards: \$12,050

St. Supéry Estate Vineyards & Winery: \$11,550*

HALL: \$10,850

Shafer Vineyards: \$10,050

Amizetta Vineyard and Winery: \$9,300

ZIATA: \$9,050

*Fundraising total reflects lot being replicated for multiple bidders.