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ST. HELENA STAR

V Foundation raises more than \$4 million for cancer research at Wine Celebration

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The 13th Annual V Foundation Wine Celebration took place last weekend and raised more than \$4.1 million for cancer research. Pictured: Past Vinter Grant Recipients. Back row from left: Dave Mine, Robin Baggett, Cyril Chappellet, Blakesley Chappellet, Mark Beringer, Mitch Cosentino, Garen Staglin, Julie Constantin, Teri Kuhn, Ron Kuhn. Front row from left: Robin Lail, Michelle Fields, Koerner Rombauer, Anne McMinn, Chuck McMinn, Bob Lloyd, Beth Nickel, Neil Aldoroty, Karen Aldoroty. Submitted photo

The 13th annual V Foundation Wine Celebration took place Aug. 5 and 6 in the Napa Valley, and raised more than \$4 million for critical cancer research. The event is a signature fund-raiser for The V Foundation, started by legendary sportscaster and coach Jim Valvano.

The 2011 V Wine Celebration weekend began with the Friday Night “Let’s Get it Started” party at The Pavilion at The Vintage Estates. Guests gathered to enjoy an evening of delicious food offered by renowned restaurateurs and chefs, accompanied by a broad selection of wines from legendary wineries. The inaugural BBQ Vintner Cook Off took place with vintners Cyril Chappellet, Robin Baggett, Jeff Gargiulo and Dave Miner preparing an assortment of grilled delights. Guests sang and danced along to a high-energy performance by band and concert act David Martin’s House Party.

Saturday morning began with the Research Symposium, where the latest breakthroughs in cancer research were presented. Attendees were able to ask questions of The V Foundation Scientific Advisory Board, which is composed of leading cancer physicians from across the country.

Guests soaked up the sunshine and relaxed Saturday afternoon at The Villagio Inn & Spa, where they savored boutique and legendary wines and sampled food at the Innovators & Icons Marketplace.

Saturday’s activities culminated with the Gala Dinner and Live Auction at Nickel & Nickel Winery. As guests sipped glasses of single vineyard Nickel & Nickel Cabernet and dined on an elaborate dinner created by McCall’s Catering, Chairman Bob Lloyd and Duke coaching legend Mike “Coach K” Krzyzewski livened up the crowd and implored the guests to give generously. Dr. Neil Aldoroty, Napa icon and four-time non-Hodgkins Lymphoma survivor, spoke of the severe need for money for cancer research and the extraordinary support from his wife, Karen. A Vintner Grant to benefit stomach cancer was named in honor of Robin Baggett and Michelle Fields of Alpha Omega Winery.

This year’s Fund A Need benefited brain cancer research and a special, touching speech, via video, was given by Olympic gold medalist and U.S. and world champion figure skater Scott Hamilton. Over \$1 million was raised specifically for brain cancer research with the help of a \$500,000 matching pledge from Accelerated Brain Cancer Cure.

During the live auction, guests bid on popular lots, like a trip via private jet from Napa to New York City to attend private fashion week events with legendary female vintners

Beth Nickel and Teri Kuhn; a luxury vacation to Tuscany, including a winemaking session with super-Tuscan vintner Alessandro Landini; a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the London Olympics with VIP access; and an adorable Australian Labradoodle puppy named Vern. The Bentley Raffle earned \$325,000 and one of the strongest “V” supporters, Nancy Probst, was the lucky winner of a new 2012 Bentley Continental GT Coupe. The evening finished with a private performance by the rock band legacy, The Doobie Brothers.

The 14th V Foundation Wine Celebration will be held again Aug. 3-4, 2012, with 100 percent of all net proceeds and new cash donations from events applied directly to innovative cancer research grants and opportunities. For more information or tickets to the 2012 event, visit www.winecelebration.org

The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1993 by ESPN and the late Jim Valvano, legendary North Carolina State basketball coach and ESPN commentator. Since 1993, The Foundation has raised more than \$100 million to fund cancer research grants nationwide. It awards 100 percent of all direct cash donations and net proceeds of events directly to cancer research and related programs. The Foundation, which has received seven consecutive top 4-star ratings from Charity Navigator, awards grants through a competitive awards process strictly supervised by a Scientific Advisory Board.

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