



Contact:

Lana Gersten | 312.846.1655 | lgersten@groupgordon.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Excitement is Palpable as Seasoned and New Trustees Come Together to Chair  
the 2017 Naples Winter Wine Festival**

***First Time in Organization's History that Four Couples will take the Helm***

Naples, FL – March 29, 2016 – The convergence of experience and fresh ideas promises an exhilarating 2017 Naples Winter Wine Festival (NWWF), set for January 27-29, 2017 at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples, Fl. For the first time ever, the NWWF will be chaired by four couples, three of whom were founding Trustees and past Chairs of the Naples Winter Wine Festival, and one couple who recently joined. Together, they are igniting passion and excitement among the Festival Trustees and the larger Collier County community.

Lifelong Floridians Valerie Boyd and Jeff Gargiulo were among those instrumental in the establishment of the Naples Winter Wine Festival, with Jeff serving as the very first Chairman. The couple splits their time between Florida and California, where they are owners of Gargiulo Vineyards, a prominent wine estate located in Oakville, Napa Valley that is known for its world-class Cabernet Sauvignons. The two have continuously supported the Festival as Trustees and Featured Vintners, and Valerie serves on the Grant Committee as Vice Chair.

Denise and Brian Cobb were also among the group of founding Trustees. Brian served as the second Chairman of the NWWF in 2002, and Denise has been the longtime Chair of the Public Relations Committee. Both Denise and Brian have enjoyed careers in the broadcast industry, Denise as an award winning television producer, on-air talent, and one of the original anchors of CNN, and Brian as founder of CobbCorp, where he has been involved in the brokerage of more television stations than any other individual in the industry.

Simone and Scott Lutgert have a long history of charitable involvement in Naples, lending their talent and support to such organizations as the Golisano Children's Museum, Naples Community Hospital, Shelter for Abused Women & Children and others. Scott was the fifth Chairman of the NWWF, and Simone has served as Auction Day Co-Chair and Marketing and Creative Director. The Lutgert name is ubiquitous for real estate development in Southwest Florida, developing luxury golf course communities, beachfront high-rises, shopping centers, office buildings, and mixed-use properties.

Debra and Bill Cary first attended the Naples Winter Wine Festival in 2013 and were blown away by the impact the Festival had on thousands of children in need. Since then, they have been active supporters and joined as Trustees in 2015. Now retired as the President and Chief Operating Officer of GE Capital, Bill currently serves as a director of Synchrony Financial (SYF-NYSE) and Rush Enterprises (RUSHA-NASDAQ). Debra is a former community banker and has been active in philanthropy, now serving on the NCEF Grant Committee.

“We have watched the Naples Winter Wine Festival grow from a small gathering of friends into the finest wine festival in the world, attracting vintners and chefs at the top of their game,” said Simone Lutgert. “This outstanding group of Co-Chairs, with a combination of years of experience and new, creative ideas, will help our team push the envelope even more and have a lasting effect on the children who need our help the most.”

The 2017 Co-Chairs selected “Bright Sunshiny Day” as the Festival’s theme, shining a light on the needs of underprivileged, at-risk children and the event’s mission of changing thousands of lives for the better. Since the event’s inception in 2001, the Naples Winter Wine Festival has raised more than \$146 million for its founding organization, the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), which has awarded grants to more than 40 non-profit organizations that have impacted the lives of over 200,000 children. Guests to the Festival will enjoy the finest wines and food from around the world, and have the opportunity to bid on thrilling auction lots unavailable to the general public.

Ticket packages to this exclusive event, limited to 580 guests, start at \$10,000 per couple. A \$25,000 package is also available that includes reserved seating for a party of four at a vintner dinner and under the tent. To inquire about tickets to the Naples Winter Wine Festival, please contact Barrett Farmer at [barrett@napleswinefestival.com](mailto:barrett@napleswinefestival.com) or 239-514-2239.

#### About the Naples Winter Wine Festival

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is the most successful international charity wine auction in the world, bringing together renowned vintners and chefs with wine enthusiasts and philanthropists for a three-day Festival that raises millions of dollars for underprivileged and at-risk children. Every dollar raised under the tent funds the Festival’s founding organization, the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), whose annual grants and strategic initiatives have provided more than 200,000 children with the services and resources they need to excel. For more information, please visit [Napleswinefestival.com](http://Napleswinefestival.com).

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