

INSPIRING. EMPOWERING. WOMEN.

BELLA[®]

NAPLES BONITA ESTERO

Bob & Terry Edwards

RAISE the Stakes

FOR THE WINTER
WINE FESTIVAL

WHAT'S AGING YOU

9 WAYS TO KEEP
TIME ON
YOUR SIDE

TANGLED WEB

IS FACEBOOK
RUINING
MARRIAGES?

PLUS!
Men of Distinction

FORMER HONOREES CHAMPION
LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Aligning the Stars

BOB AND TERRY EDWARDS ARE AT THE HELM OF THIS YEAR'S NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL—AND THEY'RE PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS TO ENSURE WILD SUCCESS.

STORY BY MOLLY MCGUIRE CALDARO

“**T**he Naples Children and Education Foundation has figured out a formula to philanthropy that’s really remarkable—people ask me when I travel, ‘How do you do it?’ Wherever I go, I meet people who want to know,” says Bob Edwards. Then he quips, “It’s the easiest thing in the world, just find 100 people who will each give you \$100,000 on the same day and you’re off to a very good start.”

There are certainly concrete elements that make the festival such a success, particularly



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROLAND SCARPA :: WWW.ROLANDSCARPA.COM

the due diligence undertaken to ensure that the money makes the greatest impact on the neediest children within our community. The detailed research and evaluation of each children’s charity within Collier County is unparalleled. Terry Edwards sits on the grants committee, which conducts the lion’s share of the due diligence during the grants process. Bob laughs as he adds that the detail-oriented committee members have meetings that last several

hours, so if the meeting’s at three o’clock, he knows he needs to make his own dinner plans.

“It’s really helped to keep things in perspective when things are stressful, when we have deadlines coming up, to be working on where the money is going, seeing the need in the applications,” says Terry.

“Because people know the dollars are very well spent, tracked and monitored, they’re more generous,” shares Bob. The organization



also leverages partnerships to stretch every dollar, such as a dental program partnership with Florida State University and collaboration with Harry Chapin Food Bank to create the Lunch Boxes of Love program.

A STAR IS BORN

The festival got its start 13 years ago, when the initial organizers approached Youth Haven about the idea. Youth Haven had been running its own wine event that raised several hundred thousand dollars, but after careful consideration decided to sign on to the nascent festival for

three years. The decision paid off—the two million dollars raised were split between Youth Haven and the Boys & Girls Club. “Everyone was beside themselves,” says Bob.

The trustees would put together unique wine lots and friends would bid on each other’s items. The event itself offered a great time with the opportunity to buy stellar wines and meet incredible chefs. Each year the festival raised more than the last, creeping up to three million, then four and five. The first object at the festival was a Ford Thunderbird, which was donated by Ford and raffled off.

Its success prompted the addition of unique objects and experiences to be added to the lineup. Although 50 percent of the lots are still wine, the objects and experiences are designed to be one of a kind things that aren’t available anywhere else. “I’ve been really impressed with how hard Bob has worked, with a full-time job and putting together all of the auction lots,” says Terry, who put her talents to work on the catalog showcasing them.

This year Bob began cultivating relationships with more corporate partners, which is how he secured some of this year’s very unique objects

like the brand new Ferrari F12, the fastest Ferrari ever made, months before it's available to buyers paired with a trip to Ferrari driving school and a Formula 1 race, and a special, wine-colored Maserati Quattroporte. For the wine lots, there are 100 bottles of 100-point wine and a complete

vertical of Château Mouton Rothschild featuring every bottle since 1945 in a custom table designed to showcase them all.

"He's called and persuaded all kinds of people—he's very good at making it happen when he puts his mind to it and persuading people to give big

when it's for a good cause," says Terry. Bob is quick to credit the people who have helped him secure the lots as well as the chefs and vintners that make the experience truly unique.

The couple thinks it's especially fun to invite young chefs just being recognized by the James Beach Foundation, chefs who will be making history in the coming years, and create a life-long relationship following their careers going forward. "Put the best chefs in America together with the best vintners, dedicated trustees and an incredible group of attendees and a great auction catalog and maybe something terrific happens," says Bob.



“As a chair you go to bed with a great responsibility, you wake up with it in the morning and you’ve dreamt about it through the evening... your mind is never too far from figuring out how to raise money for these kids.”

A HEART FOR NAPLES

Bob grew up in Naples and returned to the community after college. Early in his career he became involved in the P.O.L.O. Club and the American Heart Association, where he served as president of the local branch while still in his 20s. "I did some pretty cool things actually. As my career grew more and more I had less time, so I began to switch from giving time to giving treasure, which I think is a natural progression. After that, you begin to encourage others to give their treasure. It's a different commodity but it's important," says Bob.

THE COUPLE SUPPORTS A VARIETY OF CAUSES, BOTH LOCALLY AND ACROSS THE COUNTRY. HERE THEY ARE PICTURED AT A SHELTER FOR ABUSED WOMEN AND CHILDREN EVENT.

When the financial market crashed, charitable organizations saw their donations drop by 30 percent and their endowments were considerably lower. Expenses and needs were the same, or greater. "We looked at it as a moment for us to step forward and fill some gaps," says Bob.

The couple decided to considerably increase donations to the causes closest to their hearts: Naples Children and Education Foundation, The Shelter for Abused Women and Children and the Jay and Patty Baker Naples Museum of Art at the Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts, which they affectionately call "The Baker."

It was their shared love of art that brought the couple together. When Terry moved to the area from Chicago, she took a position as director of Eckert Fine Art. As she called to introduce herself to clients and invite them to visit her in the gallery, she telephoned Bob, who thought she sounded really cute. "It took me about 25 minutes to get there and I had to buy a Renoir and a Picasso before she'd go out with me—that's a true story," he laughs.

"The art has been a common passion and reason for travel together, and we have formed many wonderful friendships with other collectors," adds Terry, who encouraged Bob to show off their own collection more. The couple enjoys inviting artists and the occasional orchestra conductor or opera singer to visit their guest house and experience Naples. There are two rules: they must be gone in a week and the guest has to join the couple for dinner one evening. Sometimes they'll commission the artist to make a piece for the property.

Bob is active with the boards of several art organizations, including The Baker, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice and the International Sculpture Center, while Terry's board service is focused closer to home, at The Shelter for Abused Women & Children. "I've made some great friends through The Shelter.



BOB AND TERRY EDWARDS AT THE 2011 MEET THE KIDS DAY DURING THE NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL, PICTURED WITH VINTNERS GAREN AND SHARI STAGLIN.

It seems like most of the friends we have are always giving—just really generous people, and they're great role models for us and others. What little we do seems small in comparison to many others," she says.

"It's notable when I say, 'I'm going to give this money that could go to our kids to someone

else, and it's going to hurt,' to have Terry say, 'I'm OK with that.' It's enough money that it will hurt to give, but it will be very helpful to someone else," says Bob. The couple hopes to impart that giving spirit to their three children, Rob, Alex and Jack.

The first "teenage" year of the festival, the Edwardses are anxious to see what 2013 brings. While they always try to win a few lots, they also relish being successful under-bidders. "If there's something I don't think has gone high enough, I'll bid on it and if I own it, that's just how the game goes. I want to thank them for making that donation by bidding it high," he shares. After all, every dollar under the tent goes to the kids; everything else is paid for by tickets, sponsors or the trustees themselves.

"It's a great responsibility as a trustee," says Bob. "And as a chair, you go to bed with it at night, you wake up with it in the morning and you've dreamt about it through the evening. You go through and do all the other things you do in life with your family and your employment, but your mind is never too far from figuring out how to raise money for these kids." ☺

Rainmaker BY THE NUMBERS

Since inception, the Naples Winter Wine Festival has raised over **\$107** million, which through annual grants and collaborative strategic initiatives have impacted over **35** non-profit agencies and the lives of over **150,000** children. With **\$12.2** million raised last year, only time will tell what the Festival will raise in its **13th** year.

