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Naples Winter Wine Festival Raises over \$12.1 Million for Children's Charities at Live Auction

***Krug Auction Lot Takes Winning Bid at \$500,000;
Fund-A-Need Donations Still Coming in***

Naples, FL – January 24, 2015 – At the close of an energy-packed afternoon, the tally for the 2015 Naples Winter Wine Festival's live auction stood at more than \$12.1 million and was expected to continue rising as Fund-A-Need donations pour in overnight. Saturday's big outcome brings the total dollars raised since the Festival's inception in 2001 to over \$135 million in support of initiatives to help children in need in Collier County.

More guests than ever before gathered under the tent this year to bid on 63 exclusive auction items ranging from exceptional wine and culinary experiences to limited edition cars and exotic travel packages. All auction lots were generously donated, and all proceeds from the Festival support the Naples Winter Wine Festival's founding organization, the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), which has given out annual grants to over 40 non-profit agencies and has impacted the lives of about 200,000 children.

"We couldn't be happier with the generosity, enthusiasm, and energy under the tent this year," said Sharon Hallberg, Co-Chair of the 2015 Festival along with her husband, Chuck, and Sandi and Tom Moran. "The turnout was spectacular, and we were thrilled to see so many bidders step up to help children in our community. That's what this Festival is all about."

This year's Fund-A-Need, which supports "Now You See It," NCEF's initiative to address pediatric vision challenges among at-risk youth, drew an emotional response from the crowd with on-the-spot donations ranging from \$1,000 to \$100,000.

The auction's top single bid of \$500,000 went for the ultimate "Krug Experience," complete with a collection of Krug's most notable bottles and a private, multi-day visit to the champagne house's French estate.

Additional auction highlights:

- Two fantastic cars together fetched nearly \$900,000; **\$450,000** for the 2015 Huracán LP 610-4 and **\$420,000** for the 2015 Mercedes SLS AMG GT Final Edition.
- **\$440,000** was the winning bid for a 23-day around the world trip for two on a luxury jet with travel to Korea, Chia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Oman, Kenya and the Canary Islands.
- A private tour of the Battle of Gettysburg with legendary filmmaker Ken Burns raised **\$340,000**.
- Tickets to the Golden Globes and an invitation to Harvey Weinstein's private after party went for a whopping **\$330,000**.

The weekend began with a historic tasting seminar and luncheon featuring older vintages of the greatest Krug champagnes, moderated by Olivier Krug himself. Krug was joined by special guest and Master Sommelier Larry Stone, who provided attendees with fascinating insight into Krug and the Champagne region.

The accomplished vintners who attended the Festival came from the 15 global wine-producing regions, five countries, and two continents, and included Honored Vintner Marchese Piero Antinori, one of the most prestigious names in Italian winemaking. These celebrated vintners were joined by over a dozen Master Sommeliers, a distinction that only 219 wine professionals worldwide have earned. Renowned Master Sommelier Larry Stone returned to the Festival for his third year, this time as Honored Sommelier.

Festival attendees enjoyed meals prepared by the best culinary talent from across the United States, including celebrity chefs Tom Colicchio, Paul Bartolotta, and Curtis Duffy, who just earned a coveted three Michelin stars for his Chicago restaurant, Grace.

“We are so thankful to the wonderful vintners, chefs, and sommeliers who traveled to Naples to support our Festival, and to all the staff, partners, sponsors, and volunteers, all of whom worked tirelessly to make the weekend truly special,” added Tom Moran. “Their hard work and generosity are helping us make a lasting impact in this community.”

Using the funds raised from this year’s auction, NCEF will award grants to local organizations serving Collier County children in need on March 9.

About the Naples Winter Wine Festival

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is one of the world’s most prestigious charity wine auctions, 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 around 200,000 children with the services and resources they need to excel. For more information, please visit Napleswinefestival.com.

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