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ONE THING I AM MOST PROUD OF IS MY FAMILY: MY FABULOUS HUSBAND OF 45 YEARS AND TWO BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS, WHO ARE NOW MY BEST FRIENDS.”

JOAN CLIFFORD | *Philanthropist*

“I’m really looking to take some time for myself,” Joan Clifford says. “Every year, that’s my New Year’s resolution. I still haven’t gotten there.”

This dream of solace and relaxation was on Clifford’s mind back in 1985 when she and her husband, Bob, bought their first home in Naples. At the time, the couple saw the sleepy town as a place where they could escape their hectic lives in Chicago. “But as the years went on, that changed,” she says. “As Naples grew, so did everything else here. And our involvement grew.”

It all started when they attended the Naples Children & Education Foundation’s Naples Winter Wine Festival in 2005. They became NCEF trustees in 2007 and chaired the NWWF in 2012. “When we chaired the festival, we began a vision initiative for children in Collier County,” Clifford says. “It was a need not being addressed. Now we screen 20,000 children a year from all Title I schools. It’s one of the things I’m really proud of.”

When she initially came to Naples with her now-grown daughters, Erin and Tracy, there were few places to take kids. She supports the Golisano Children’s Museum of Naples “because when you have young children and there are rainy days, you need somewhere to go.” Along with Simone and Scott Lutgert, the Cliffords recently co-chaired the museum’s Party Like a Rockstar gala, where she sported flowing blond locks à la Stevie Nicks, and Bob dressed in lamé, sequins, and gaudy spectacles as Elton John.

Another organization she’s long loved is the Naples Botanical Garden, where she serves as a member of the Sustaining Leadership Council. “I’ve seen it from the very beginning, so the way it’s grown is really incredible,” she says.

When not busy with philanthropic commitments, Clifford enjoys golf, travel, and walking on the beach. And one of these days, she just might stick to her resolution to take more time for herself.