

WINE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE / WEB 2012 / AUCTION NAPA VALLEY 2012 RAISES A HEALTHY \$8 MILLION

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Auction Napa Valley 2012 Raises a Healthy \$8 Million

The successful 32nd annual charity wine auction attracted more than 800 attendees, including musicians, celebrity chefs and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg's parents.

Published on Jun 5, 2012

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Auction Napa Valley, one of the most successful charity wine auctions in America, used to be all about the wine. But at the 32nd annual auction, which took place over the weekend from May 31 to June 3, 2012, music proved to be just as important. Country superstar trio Lady Antebellum featured a lot that included a private concert for 28 people that drew the single highest bid of the day, at \$460,000.

The winning bidder was none other than Barbara Banke of Jackson Family Wines, the parent company of Kendall-Jackson. In addition to winning the private concert, Banke won 3-liter bottles of Napa Valley wine from Chappellet Winery, Chateau Montelena, Gargiulo Vineyards, Raymond Vineyards, Shafer Vineyards and Silver Oak, as well as a preconcert dinner prepared by Raymond Vineyards chef Michel Cornu and Silver Oak chef Dominic Orsini, a two-night stay in London for another Lady Antebellum show and an Abbey Road Studios tour.

Banke's bid was just one at this year's very successful auction, which over three days of festivities, brought in approximately \$8 million to benefit a range of Napa Valley-based charities. To date, the auction has distributed more than \$100 million to dozens of healthcare, affordable housing and youth development nonprofit programs in the area.

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The live auction portion of the event, chaired by the Chappellet family, was held at Meadowood Napa Valley Resort in St. Helena on Saturday, June 2. More than 800 attendees enjoyed the signature fried-chicken picnic prior to filtering into the tents to bid on 40 lots of exclusive trips, wine-and-food pairing dinners and other over-the-top experiences. By the end of the day, a whopping \$6.1 million was raised, a sizeable increase over last year's \$5.8 million.

Lots included a chance to sail the course of this year's America's Cup race in San Francisco Bay, dinner for eight with Joe Montana and a South African safari with the Chappellet family. The impromptu offering of Emeril Lagasse's chef jacket, plus a specially cooked dinner by him served under the stars, brought in \$9,000.

Exciting moments to match the picture-perfect weather included the Chappellet family doubling their safari trip, turning dueling bids of \$360,000 into a top-dollar draw of \$720,000.

Buzz about Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg's parents being in attendance at this year's auction proved true; they put some of their wealth to good use, winning Lot 29, a seven-year vertical of Colgin Cellars Syrah, with dinner for six and a cellar consultation.

The lot that got the most laughs was Lot 6, a culinary trip to Singapore and Thailand with Raymond Vineyards's owner and renowned bon vivant Jean-Charles Boisset. During the frenzied bidding, auctioneer Fritz Hatton noted that many women were raising their paddles, then asked Boisset, "Where's [your wife] Gina [Gallo]?"

Gallo did not attend, but many of the who's who of Napa Valley vintners were present, including Gavin Newsom, California Lieutenant Governor and CADE Winery and PlumpJack Co-owner, Bill Harlan, Tim Mondavi, Heidi Barrett, Margrit Mondavi, Ann Colgin, Bill Phelps, Cliff Lede, Dan Duckhorn and Lee Hudson, who lost the bid on America's Cup lot, which had frothed up to \$170,000 by the time the gavel fell.

Here are *Wine Enthusiast's* top 10 grossing live auction lots:

1. Fund-A-Need for Children's Health & Wellness
2. Chappellet Vineyard & Winery Passage to Africa, On Safari with Chappellet (the lot was doubled)
3. Need You Now, Stars of Country and Cabernet Collide in an Epic Concert (Lady Antebellum)
4. Antica Napa Valley, Antinori Family Wine Estate and Dalla Valle Vineyards Esplorare Napa Valley via Toscana
5. Darioush The Best of Both Worlds
6. BURE Family Wines, Morlet Family Vineyards and Vineyard 7 & 8 Trio of Temptations
7. Harbison Estate Wines Just Enough Cruising San Francisco Bay in Style
8. Napa Valley Vintners Official America's Cup Experience
9. Napa Valley Vintners Laissez les Bon Temps Roulez with Emeril Lagasse
10. Lokoya The Rendez-vous: From Monaco to Mountains to Maui, in partnership with Robb Report

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