

FLETCHER BENTON
KATIE BUNDSCHU
RON AND JEANIE CARSON
NAOKO DALLA VALLE
MARKO KARAKASEVIC
MARK KUHNHAUSEN
ALYCIA MONDAVI
HERB ROWLAND
& MORE

CAPTURE

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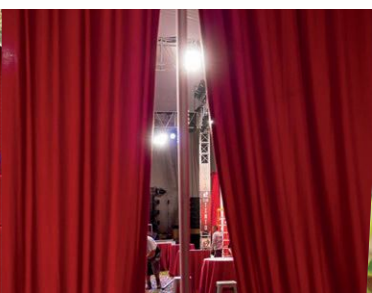


CULTURE

AUCTION NAPA VALLEY 360°

Meet the inspiring people behind the
world's most celebrated charity wine event

by Amalia McGibbon





Founded in 1981 by a small group of winery owners, including Robert and Margrit Mondavi, Auction Napa Valley has become the world's most celebrated charity wine event. The four-day fete, from June 1-June 4, combines Napa Valley wine, the region's iconic scenery, vintner hospitality, creative culinary expressions and the chance for bidders to acquire rare collections of Napa Valley wine and once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

This year's Honorary Auction Napa Valley chairs include Eleanor, Francis, Sofia, Roman and Gia Coppola. Highlights include private, vintner-hosted parties; the world's only single-case auction of 100 or more lots that includes tasting wine directly with the winemakers straight from the barrel; the E-Auction, open to wine lovers and bidders anywhere in the world; and the grand Live Auction Celebration, which has been hosted every year since inception on the grounds of the exclusive Meadowood Napa Valley resort.

Capture Magazine interviewed individuals from every corner of the event - the charity beneficiary, the winery participant, the high bidder, and event organizer - to bring you the rarely told full story of this world-famous event.



the organizer

ALYCIA

MONDAVI

CAPTURE: What inspired you to get involved in Auction Napa Valley?

ALYCIA MONDAVI: Over the years, I have watched the community come to life the first week in June. It is humbling and an inspiration to experience the strength of the Napa Valley community. Auction Napa Valley generously contributes and fosters community health and children's education. This feeling is positively intoxicating and worth every moment. I truly look forward to helping for years to come.

C: What's the most challenging thing about overseeing the E-Auction? What are some of the behind-the-scenes responsibilities?

AM: This is a very rewarding committee to be a part of, but there are also many moving parts. I am fortunate to be part of a strong E-Auction committee this year. Together we review, edit, market and communicate with the donors to create auction lots unique to the Napa Valley and each vintner. The saying "It takes a village..." is quite true. The committee consists of the incredible Napa Valley Vintner team, myself, Justin Preiser of Shadowbox Cellars, Jenna Sanders and Chelsea Hoff of Fantesca Estate & Winery.

C: What is the 2017 fundraising goal, and what kinds of charities will it benefit?

AM: Every little contribution counts, so we strive to create opportunities that will help each of the charities selected, which is now up to approximately 25 local nonprofit organizations. These organizations vary from community health to children's education. Each year, the goal of the Napa Valley Vintners and the Auction Napa Valley Committees is to raise awareness for these organizations.

C: What can people do if they want to support the effort but can't attend the event?

AM: If you are unable to attend the actual Auction Napa Valley, this year held June 1-4, you can visit the E-Auction Napa Valley website at e-auction.auctionnapavalley.org. Nearly 200 E-Auc-



tion Lots will go live at noon PDT on May 28, 2017 and will be available to anyone worldwide from their own homes or offices.

C: Napa Valley and the Mondavis go way back. What is your favorite thing about working and living in this corner of the world?

AM: It is true my family roots run deep in the Napa Valley. Dating back to the early 1940's my grandfather Peter Mondavi Sr. and his brother Robert were innovators and leaders in the Wine Industry. They left very large shoes to fill and are missed every day.

I am beyond in love with the land, the people, and the wines the Valley has to offer. As a fourth generation family member, I could not be more excited to continue the family legacy with the same passion and dedication as the generations before me.

C: How do you plan on celebrating being finished with the Auction on Sunday night, June 4th!?

AM: My three sisters and I are incredibly excited to have been selected as the Honorary Chairs for Auction Napa Valley 2018, so we plan to hit the ground running to diligently start on next year's auction. We will, however, put our feet up with a cold glass of wine and enjoy a family dinner. Much of dinner, I am sure, will be enthusiastically brainstorming for 2018.

the beneficiary

MARK KUHNHAUSEN

CAPTURE: What is the mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Napa Valley?

MARK KUHNHAUSEN: To inspire and enable all young people - especially those who need us most - to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

C: What is the Clubs' annual operating budget? Number of employees?

MK: Our operating budget is \$2.6 million, and I work with a team of eighty employees that operate afterschool programs at eleven locations throughout Napa and American Canyon. We average more than 1,300 kids every day in our afterschool programs (with more on the waiting list).

C: What has been the biggest challenge of your job as Executive Director?

MK: The biggest challenge for us as an organization is recruiting and retaining part-time staff. The high cost of living and robust competition have made it extremely challenging the past couple of years

C: For those who don't know much about at-risk youth and after-school programs, what would you say are the 2-3 things we as a community really need to be aware of?

MK: First, I would say every kid is at-risk. Sure, some may have more contributing factors but in today's world far too many kids are left home unsupervised.



Unfortunately, unsupervised kids don't always make good decisions and the hours after school are critical. During these hours juvenile crime escalates. It is also the time when kids are most likely to become victims of crime, be in, or cause a car crash, get hooked on cigarettes, experiment with drugs and sex, surf the internet, and play video games that too often provide training for violent behavior.

Afterschool programs help protect kids. We help them get along with others, and develop values and skill needed to become good neighbors and contributing citizens. We offer afterschool homework assistance, provide them with healthy snacks (for some it is their dinner) and a wide variety programs and activities including social recreation, art, and sports and fitness. We give kids hope and an alternative to being alone at home or hanging out unsupervised. Mostly, we give kids a place to be a kid.

C: How has the Auction Napa Valley benefitted the charity in the past?

MK: The support from Auction Napa Valley and the partnership with Napa Valley Vintners is incredible. Very few places in the country have an event of this magnitude with the proceeds benefiting non-profits.

Auction Napa Valley touches every one of our programs and has allowed us to continue to grow and add programs. Moreover, it helps guarantee that no child will ever be turned away for an inability to pay our low annual fees. Last year alone we provided more than \$150,000 in scholarships.

Most recently Auction Napa Valley provided a \$2 million lead gift to embark on a capital campaign to build a new Clubhouse in American Canyon. The 15,000 square foot state of the art Boys & Girls Club will open in spring of 2018.

C: What's the greatest thing a child could say to you as they're leaving?

MK: "I had so much fun, I can't wait to come back tomorrow!"

the winter

NAOKO DALLA VALLE

CAPTURE: What was the genesis for your love of wine, and how did you decide to enter the winemaking profession?

NAOKO DALLA VALLE: Growing up in Kobe, Japan, in the area known for Kobe beef and Sake, it came naturally. The people of Japan have a tremendous love of food and wine.

My late husband was born on an Italian winery, and I was born to a Sake-making family – these origins certainly had something to do with it. As for how my late husband and I personally got into the wine business, it's a long story starting with a plan to open a spa and restaurant in Napa Valley. You'll have to stop by the winery to hear the rest!

C: What is it that makes the Dalla Valle vineyard so special?

NDV: Our unique terroir. An ideal hillside location with perfect exposure to sun and the afternoon breeze combined with our meticulous farming practices and winemaking enables us to produce world class wines.

C: How would you describe the wines themselves to the uninitiated?

NDV: Our wines have a strong sense of place. They display beautiful fruit, balance and complexity and can age gracefully while maintaining power and complexity.

C: You are a longtime Auction supporter/donor and serve on the Steering Committee. How did you first become involved with this charity event?

NDV: I first attended the auction in 1981, and became a donor as a winery soon after. It has been a pleasure to participate in one of the greatest charity wine auctions in the world and to help raise so much money for the worthy causes.

C: Which beneficiary non-profits are closest to your heart?

NDV: OLE Health Foundation, previously known as Clinic Ole, is first and foremost. It's the only nonprofit community clinic in Napa County, and it's dedicated to providing high-quality primary

health care on a sliding fee scale. Then Aldea Children & Family Services, which improves people's mental health through critical mental health, treatment foster care and adoption, and support services. Auction Napa Valley also invests in children's education through a variety of non-profits, which is very important to me, and I try to support all the schools in Napa Valley - public and private - by donating at least a bottle of our wines.



C: During Auction Napa Valley, ten lucky guests will be treated to an elegant dinner at your home, with a menu from chef Richard Reddington. What wine will be poured during your dinner? What can guests look forward to at the event?

NDV: I always include an older vintage of Maya around 20 years or older, as they age so beautifully. I hope our guests look forward to an intimate evening in my home overlooking the gorgeous valley with exceptional food and wine.

C: Favorite food pairing for your wines?

NDV: An older vintage of Maya or Cabernet Sauvignon paired with squab.

C: What's the most memorable glass of wine you've ever had?

NDV: There are so many memorable ones, but if I must choose, a glass of La Tache in my birth year I had about 10 years ago. Not a great vintage but it showed the strength and pedigree of the terroir.

the guests

RON AND JEANIE CARSON

CAPTURE: In a few sentences, please tell us a little bit about where you're from, what your life looks like there, and how you came to learn about Auction Napa Valley.

RON AND JEANIE CARSON: Ron and I both grew up on farms in Nebraska and now live in Omaha. Ron is the CEO of Carson Group, and I have been fortunate enough to be a stay-at-home Mom for our three children -- two daughters and one son. With the children grown, I now stay busy with our Foundation, The Dreamweaver Foundation, granting Dreams for the terminally-ill elderly in need, and taking our lab, Nelly, to local hospitals and nursing homes as a therapy dog.

We had heard about Auction Napa Valley for years and thought it was like the auctions we grew up with in Nebraska -- the local farm auctions. We didn't realize what it was all about and how special it was until Delia Viader, owner and winemaker of Viader Vineyards, explained it to us.

C: I understand that you first came to the Auction in 2014 and were so enthusiastic about it, you returned the next year with a group! What is it about this weekend that keeps you coming back for more?

R & J C: We truly fell in love with Auction Napa Valley after our first time attending. We love how the wine community comes out and supports the cause. The passion and energy of the activities and every-

one involved is fabulous! We truly love to share the experience with our friends and hope to continue to introduce new friends to the Auction each year.

C: In a nutshell, what is your philosophy on giving back? Why do you do it?

R & J C: We feel that we have been so blessed and fortunate in our lives that we love to give back to worthwhile causes. We have worked hard to teach our children this as well. When they were young, we would sit down as a family with each one bringing a foundation or charity to the table that was important to them and have them explain why it was important. At that time, if everyone agreed, those were the charities that we would donate to.

C: Why does this cause matter to you? Why now?

R & J C: We are at a point in our lives where we are able to give back and love what Auction Napa Valley does with the funds raised. We believe that it is everyone's responsibility to help those less fortunate than they are.

C: If you were to make one suggestion to the organizers planning next year's event, what would it be?

R & J C: The one suggestion that we would have would be for the organizers to make sure there is plenty of food available prior to the Saturday night auction so we can keep our energy up for bidding. Other than that, everything has always been PERFECT!

