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Grand Vin! Wine Country Celebration Nets \$350,000

*Fourth Annual Grand Vin! Benefits Yakima Valley Chapter
American Red Cross and Washington Wine Country*

Yakima, WASH. - (July 20, 2004) - Ain't it swell? Ain't it grand? Fourth time around, and the Grand Vin! wine auction has cracked the \$350,000 mark for Columbia Valley charities.

Highlights of the inaugural three-day weekend celebration included a series of Friday evening winemaker's dinners hosted at Hedges Cellars, Sagelands Vineyard and Sheridan Vineyard; and Sunday brunch celebrations at the Barrel House, Cafe Melange and Greystone restaurants.

The main event was the Saturday evening auctions and dinner, held once again at Al and Pat DeAtley's baronial estate. Soft jazz provided background music as some 500 guests sauntered over the vast lawns and sweeping gardens to peruse auction items and visit wine-tasting tables before the bidding began.

Hand blown glass art centerpieces, crafted by artist Dehanna Jones of Totally Blown Glass were among the bidder's prized items. The special centerpieces marked the first edition of an inaugural collection of Grand Vin! glass art. Other works of Washington wine country's local artists were on display, adding a flavor of culture and raising \$6,000. Once the live auction began, there was lively competition for one-of-a-kind items. Some of the top bid items were:

- An 18-liter bottle of DeLille Cellars 2001 Chaleur Estate "Dixieme Anniversaire" Yakima Valley Red wine. This is only the second time in the winery's 12-year history that an 18-liter has been offered. **(Sold at \$9,500)**
- Dinner with icons of international winemaking at the home of Long Shadows Vintners founder Allen Shoup in The Highlands in Seattle. **(Sold to 15 couples raising \$19,000)**
- Two groups of 12 will savor the artistry of a five-course holiday dinner at the DeAtley Estate paired with ultra-premium handcrafted wines of Dunham Cellars. **(Sold twice at \$8,500 each)**
- Topping a number of art and wine combined items, this unique trip to Italy provides the experience of learning the art of making Murano glass beads, attending Italian cooking classes, studying art, history and wine. **(Sold at \$6,000)**
- Tango, Tapas & Wine - 21 couples will experience a hot summer night in Argentina at the Bookwalter Winery with elegant wines, Latin Tapas from Sapphire Kitchen & Bar and Tango lessons from Seattle Tango. **(Raised \$8,400)**

- Ten food and wine lovers will gather at the Columbia Tower Club for an evening of French and Northwest fusion cuisine paired with wines from the cellar of the late Seattle Times wine columnist and longtime collector Tom Stockley. (Sold for \$5,500)
- \$65,000 was raised during the 'Raise-the-Paddle' for victims of disaster and community preparedness. Contributions ranged from \$100 to \$5,000.

Grand Vin! proceeds will be shared by the Yakima Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross and Washington Wine Country. Wells Fargo bank was the event's lead sponsor.

Said Ray Dilschneider, chairman of the Yakima Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross, "The funds raised tonight will help us continue to employ our mission and create strong communities."

Washington Wine Country consultant Janet Leduc said, "This is an amazing response! The three-day wine country celebration now ranks as eastern Washington's premier fund-raising event, thanks to the enormous support from wine industry, restaurants, artists and community members. And thanks to the generosity of all those who attended and contributed."

Compared with similar charity events, Grand Vin! came from modest beginnings and is still in its infancy. Three years ago, the initial event raised \$45,000, advancing to \$75,000 and nearly \$300,000 last year. This year, thanks to increased community support, Grand Vin! raised \$350,000.

Since its inception in July 2000, proceeds from Grand Vin! Auctions & Dinner have quadrupled. The auction is the largest fundraiser for the Yakima Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross and Washington Wine Country.

Formed in 2003, Washington Wine Country is a non-profit association of Eastern Washington businesses promoting wine-related tourism, economic development and recognition of the world-class wine-growing region comprising the Yakima Valley, Columbia Valley, Walla Walla Valley and Red Mountain appellations. www.winecountrywashington.org

The Yakima Valley Chapter of The American Red Cross is dedicated to helping people in Yakima County prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters and emergencies. Last year, this chapter assisted more than 100 families affected by house fires in Yakima County, provided health and safety classes, performed more than 3,000 blood pressure screenings and served as an emergency communication link for the Armed Forces. www.yakimavalley.redcross.org

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Editors Note: Photos are available at www.yourphotoz.com

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SIDEBAR:

Chef Euteneier's Menu

At Saturday night's Grand Vin! dinner, Chef Jeff Euteneier from Yakima's Zesta Cucina restaurant served up an elegant menu accompanied by superb Washington wines:

Vegetable Puree with Brie and a Berry Infused Compote
Chilled Asparagus Soup with Gazpacho Garnish
Pontin Del Roza 2002 Pinot Grigio, Yakima Valley
L'Ecole No. 41 2002 Estate Semillon, Seven Hills Vineyard

Chilled Lobster Claw with Corn Compote
Lobster Medallions on a Bed of Frisée
2003 Eroica Riesling, Columbia Valley
Three Rivers 2002 Chardonnay, Columbia Valley

Tenderloin au Duxelles, Port and Marrow Reduction Sauce
Potato Gallette and Baby Seasonal Vegetables
Columbia Crest 2000 Walter Clore Private Reserve
Dunham Cellars 2000 Trutina, Columbia Valley

Custard Filled Poached Pear
Flourless Chocolate Cake, Spun Sugar Garnish
Hedges 2001 Three Vineyards Red, Red Mountain
Covey Run 2002 Semillon Ice Wine Reserve

James Durkee provided guitar music during dinner.

Earlier, guests nibbled hors d'oeuvres from Birchfield Manor and H&H catering while listening to pianist Danene Knudsen and the West Valley High School Jazz Combo.

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