



SVHWA Main Release

NEWS - For Immediate Release: June 15, 2001

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Note to Editors: Color Digital Images, Photos and Poster Artwork immediately available online, via email or overnight.

Sonoma Valley Wine Auction To Cast Away This Labor Day Weekend

(SONOMA, Calif.) - Surf's up for the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers who will cast away their inhibitions for charity at the ninth annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction on Labor Day weekend September 1 - 3, 2001. The three-day event, which includes wine tastings, winery dinners and a barbeque picnic, is centered around the Main Event Live Auction on Sunday, September 2, 2001 at Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa.

The 2001 auction theme "An Oasis of Irreverence" features castaways, survivors, surfers, islanders and beach lovers. More than 40 Sonoma Valley wineries will be featured throughout the event. Per tradition, vintners and winemakers will catch the spirit and dress the part on stage in wild Hawaiian prints, wet suits, grass skirts and coconut bras to help auction off more than 80 lots of fine wine, travel packages and ultimate dining experiences.

"Castaways to the oasis of Sonoma Valley won't want to be rescued," said Jonnie McCormick, Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction (SVHWA) Director, "they can sip, taste, be entertained and enjoy being stranded in paradise while we raise thousands of dollars for local charities." To date, the SVHWA has raised \$1.9 million for Sonoma Valley charities.

A preview of the SVHWA 2001 antics was captured in the event's annual promotional poster which features nearly 30 named vintners, or islanders, with pineapples, pink flamingos and floral leis, cavorting on the sand beneath palm trees with a large bottle of wine. The one item they are missing in their island paradise-a corkscrew. The collector's item poster, with the tag line of, "Now all we need is a corkscrew" can be viewed and downloaded at <http://sonomavalleywine.com/01prposter.html> and is available for purchase.

Main Event Live Auction - Auctioneer David Reynolds and Event Chair Anthony Dias Blue of Bon Appetit magazine will preside over the irreverent and upscale Main Event Live Auction, Sunday, September 2 on the beaches of the world-renown Sonoma Mission



VINTNERS & GROWERS

Inn & Spa. Wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction begin the event at 1:00 p.m. and then the lively auction begins with a parade of vintners. Appearances throughout the afternoon will include local celebrities and industry insiders such as Tommy Smothers, Toy Story Director John Lassiter, KPIX Channel 5's Roberta Gonzales, KGO radio's Gene Burns and KABL radio's Mike Cleary. The day concludes with a sumptuous islander buffet, fit for a tribal king, prepared by Sonoma Mission Inn Chef Toni Robertson.

Picnic - SVHWA 2001 will be kicked off on Saturday afternoon, September 1, 2001 with the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers BBQ Picnic at Beltane Ranch in Glen Ellen. The relaxing preview to Sunday's main event includes a home-style barbeque, silent and mini live auctions and live entertainment by yodeling country entertainer Wylie and The Wild West.

Winery Dinners - Sonoma Valley Winery Dinners are also scheduled for Saturday. The intimate evening dinner parties at wineries and vineyard sites will be prepared by some of Sonoma's finest chefs and caterers. Barrel tastings, moonlit meals, Polynesian feasts and tropical fare are on the menus of the 18 space-limited dinners.

Wine Tasting Panels - Bon Appetit Wine Tasting Panel and Lunch events, will be moderated by Auction Chair Anthony Dias Blue on Sunday, September 2 at Gundlach Bundschu to taste and talk Merlot and on Monday, September 3 at Atwood Ranch to focus upon Zinfandel.

Tickets - Event tickets, which sell out early, range in price from \$90 to \$225. A "Special All Events Package" is available for \$600 per person. To purchase tickets visit www.sonomavalleywine.com or call (707) 935-0803.

The 2001 Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction benefits the Sonoma Valley Hospital Foundation, Valley of the Moon Boys & Girls Club, Vineyard Workers Services, Sonoma Valley Education Foundation, La Luz Center, El Nido Teen Center and Sonoma Ecology Center. In eight years the event has raised more than \$1.9 million for local charities. Sponsors for the ninth annual event include American Airlines, KPIX-TV, Renaissance Cruises, The Santa Rosa Press Democrat, Triton Funding, Lexus of Marin and Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa. To request an invitation or for more information call (707) 935-0803 or visit www.sonomavalleywine.com.

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