Keep All Charities in Mind as you ‘Wine’ Down Your Summer

Summer is officially coming to a close and Ocean Reef Members all over the world are beginning to think about heading back to the Florida Keys for winter. As your summer winds down we hope you’ll consider bringing your wine down when you return to benefit local charities.

As you may know, rare and vintage bottles of wine and spirits donated by our generous Members are a big attraction in our All Charities auction each year. Last year these sales made up about 8.5 percent of our final Silent Auction total, generating close to $60,000. The “Patriotic Pour” wine auction lot sold at the highest bid of the All Charities Silent auction history. A unique five-liter of 1990 Chateau Mouton Rothschild, the Big Beautiful Bordeaux, sold for nearly $6,500.

That’s not even considering the Live Auction. A Harlan Estate Vertical, an 18-bottle collection containing all the vintages from the day the winery opened, sold twice in 2012 generating $67,000. Bidders have battled for a seat at John and Mary Lee's Cult Wine Dinner in the Live Auction every year since 2011. And the multitude of celebrity chef dinners, pouring wines from Napa to Grand Cru, has raised millions of dollars over the years.

Making History
The Ocean Reef Community Foundation Wine Auction Dinner, precursor to the All Charities Auction, actually began back in 1999 with the donation of an extraordinary wine collection helping to get the annual event off its feet. Since then wine has always been a major part of the auction history.

And not every bottle donated has to be expensive. According to the book “On The Reef – The Legendary Ocean Reef Club And People Who Made It Great,” at one of the early auctions, the late Herb Matthews made a bottle of Ripple famous when he put it up for bid enthusiastically singing the bottle’s praises to the tickled crowd. The book goes on to state, “Amid raucous laughter, the bidding reached $1,800 just as Patty Matthews was returning from the ladies’ room. She heard her husband say, ‘Do I have $2,000 here?’ and she responded, ‘Yes!’ Herb had successfully auctioned the humble wine to his own wife.’ That same bottle of Ripple was donated back to the auction year after year, eventually raising over $20,000 without a drop drunk.

As you clean out your wine cellars this fall, keep us in mind. We’ll be happy to add your generous donation to our 2019 slate of auction offerings. We’ll send the appropriate shipping boxes to your home and even pay for the shipping.

If you’re interested in donating wine to the 2019 All Charities Auction, to be held February 8 and 9, contact Lesa Crayne or Amy Corinaire in the All Charities office by calling 305-367-5963 or emailing allcharities@oceanreef.com.