

## Party Time!

### The Wine Auction & Celebration gala fundraiser is back

The Wine Auction & Celebration returns this spring with another great lineup of epicurean events, including a champagne and caviar reception, celebrity chef dinners and the highly touted black tie gala and auction.

As the Arts Center's flagship fundraiser, the multi-day food and wine festival supports a wide range of the organization's education and outreach initiatives.

To kick off the Celebration, the Arts Center will host a champagne reception, followed by celebrity chef and vintner dinners held in some of the Lowcountry's most fabulous homes. These private dinners will feature haute cuisine prepared by top chefs with wine selected by premier vintners from around the world.

Capping off the festivities is the Wine Auction & Gala, taking place March 28 under three grand tents set up on the grounds of the Arts Center. The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa will be catering the gourmet dinner featuring wines specially selected by nationally renowned vintners.

Adding to the glitz and glamour is the indefatigable David Reynolds, the most sought after charity auctioneer in the country. Known for his relentless enthusiasm and quick wit, Reynolds has raised tens of millions of dollars for some of the top benefit auctions in the country. He'll be wielding his gavel over an extraordinary assortment of lots that will include unique wine collections, extravagant holiday getaways and original art.

Over the last 12 years, the Wine Auction & Celebration has raised almost \$1.5 million, allowing the Arts Center to participate in a number of nationally recognized educational

programs, including the Kennedy Center Partnership. As a founding partner, the Arts Center presents a number of professional development workshops each year designed to train teachers to integrate art into their core curriculum.

Proceeds from the Wine Auction also have allowed the Arts Center to expand its community workshop roster and offer students at Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts backstage learning experiences, art instruction and the chance to interact with touring artists as part of Beaufort County's Adopt-A-School program.

In addition, the fundraiser supports programs like ArtStart, an arts learning experience for 2 to 5 year olds; ArtsReach, which sends professional artists into schools and after-school centers to work with students and teachers; student field trip performances; and four annual community festivals including the *Christmas Tree Lighting*, *A Taste of Gullah*, *Youth ArtsFest* and *Flag Day*.

"The Wine Celebration is a big part of our budget," said Arts Center President and CEO Kathleen Bateson. "It's a wonderful way to contribute to programs that touch the lives of so many in our community."



*Auctioneer David Reynolds  
Photo by Rob Kaufman*