



## CELEBRITY CHEFS AND LUMINARIES JOIN TOGETHER IN A CELEBRATION OF FOOD AND WINE HONORING BELLE AND BARNEY RHODES

**NAPA, CA (April 16, 2010)** – A veritable who's who in Napa Valley food and wine will join A Celebration of Food and Wine honoring the late Belle and Barney Rhodes on Saturday, May 8 at **The Culinary Institute of America (CIA)**. In addition to the celebrity chefs and vintners participating in the evening's festivities presented by Napa Valley College (NVC) and CIA, a special tribute to a couple whose encouragement and promotion of the culinary arts left an everlasting mark on Napa Valley make this a not-to-be-missed event.

NVC Foundation president Kathleen Lucier will lead a tribute to the Rhodes, including the presentation of the *Spirit of Napa Valley College* award to Valerie Gargiulo of Gargiulo Vineyards, who will accept on behalf of her aunt and uncle.

A pre-event for special ticket holders features a once-in-a-lifetime vertical tasting of wines from the famed Bella Oaks vineyard originally owned by the Rhodes and the source of grapes for Heitz's famous estate bottling. Limited to 36 individuals who pre-purchase Bella Oaks Patron tickets, this special tasting with Kathleen Heitz includes 14 vintages: 1977, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2004 and 2005.

The walk-around dinner in the CIA's 15,000 square-foot Teaching Kitchens features a menu prepared by celebrity chefs including Michael Chiarello, Bottega, Yountville; Gary Danko, Gary Danko, San Francisco; Ken Frank, La Toque, Napa; Perry Hoffman, étoile at Domaine Chandon, Yountville; Cindy Pawlcyn, Mustards Grill, Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen, Go Fish; Stephen Rogers, Press, St. Helena; Sally Schmitt, Philo Apple Farm, Anderson Valley and original owner of the French Laundry and Barbara Alexander and Laura Lee, Napa Valley College.

An esteemed collection of wines complements the high profile chefs preparing the gala dinner. The Heitz family has graciously donated bottles of the rare 1980 Heitz Cellar "Bella Oaks" Cabernet, as well as the more current 2005 vintage. Additionally, guests will enjoy wines from Cakebread Cellars, Corison, Gallica, Gargiulo Vineyards, Heitz Cellar, Napa Valley College Estate Wines, Narsai David Estates, Rombauer Vineyards, Shafer Vineyards, Spottswoode Estate Vineyard & Winery, Staglin Family Vineyard, TOR Wines and Trefethen Family Vineyards.

A handful of priceless auction lots will be available this evening including a vertical celebration of Heitz "Bella Oaks" Vineyard Cabernet. This lot includes six top vintages from the 1990s—to be tasted in the private Bella and Barney Rhodes Tasting Room at the CIA with Karen MacNeil, chairman of the Rudd Center for Professional Wine Studies at the CIA and author of *The Wine Bible*, who will lead the historic tasting.

The evening concludes with dessert and dancing in the Barrel Room to Kate Hanni and the Toasted Heads featuring vocalist Kate Hanni with Reed Fromer on lead vocals and keyboards, Tim Hanni MW on guitar and Tony Langford on drums.

The Celebration Committee is headed up by honorary chair Cindy Pawlcyn with members Bart and Daphne Araujo, Liz and Bruce Boulware, Jack and Dolores Cakebread, Darrell Corti, Joe and Ashley Criscione, Narsai and Venus David, Bill and Lona Hardy, Tor and Susan Kenward, Frank and Kathleen Lucier, David and Cathy Marsten, Thomas and Martha May, Bob and Sylvia Pestoni, Koerner and Sandy Rombauer, Leslie and Susan Rudd, Bob and Verna Steinhauer and Diane Woodruff.

Tickets are \$250 per person and include the reception, dinner and dancing. A limited number of Bella Oaks Patron Tickets are available for \$750, which include a vertical tasting of wines from the famed Bella Oaks vineyard. All proceeds benefit the Napa Valley College and The Culinary Institute of America. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 707-256-3200 or visit [RhodesCelebration.com](http://RhodesCelebration.com).

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