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**Third-Annual Willamette: The Pinot Noir Auction raises over $800,000**

(April 7, 2018; Portland, OR)—The Willamette Valley Wineries Association celebrated the conclusion of the third annual Willamette: The Pinot Noir Auction on Saturday, April 7 at the Allison Inn & Spa in Newberg, OR, where 81 lots of Willamette Valley wine sold to the national and international trade for a record setting $737,000, exceeding the 2017 auction totals by 56%. The sale brought in over $800,000 including revenue from ticket sales and sponsorship. All money raised will fund future marketing and educational initiatives of the Willamette Valley Wineries Association.

The auction presented 78 lots of one-of-a-kind Pinot noir wines and three collaborative lots of Chardonnay from the 2016 vintage. Each wine was produced in quantities of five, 10 or 20 cases, and will only be available to the public through resale by the winning bidder.

“The 2018 auction exceeded our highest expectations. There was tremendous enthusiasm among the trade for the Willamette Valley region, as well as for the 2016 vintage, which we expect to go down in history as a benchmark year for Oregon,” said Laurent Montalieu, 2018 auction chair and owner and winemaker for Soléna Estate and Hyland Estates.

Overseen by veteran wine auctioneer Fritz Hatton, the excitement in the room was palpable. Opening bids throughout the auction were greeted by a flurry of raised paddles, resulting in frequent bidding wars and rapid price escalation. Anxious vintners watched on from the back, cheering for bidders to “do it" in moments of hesitation.

Now in its third year, the 2018 auction saw a 13% increase in winery participation from 2017, which was more than offset by the 48% increase in attendance by registered bidders. The auctionwide average price paid per lot was $9,099, up 33% from the prior year, with an average bottle price of $124.

The top selling Pinot noir came from winemaker Maggie Harrison and Antica Terra. The 5-case lot produced entirely from the Antica Terra Vineyard, sold for $33,000. The collaborative Chardonnay, “Nautical Dawn,” produced by Bethel Heights and Walter Scott Wines, fetched $12,000 for a five-case lot.

The top five auction lots were:

* Lot 26: Five cases of Antica Terra “Alder Creek” Pinot noir: $33,000
* Lot 82: Five cases of Zena Crown Vineyard “Barrel and Foot” Pinot noir: $24,000
* Lot 11:Five cases of Alexana Estate Winery “By A Landslide” Pinot noir: $20,000
* Lot 83: 10 cases of Hyland Estates “The Perfect Pair” Pinot noir: $20,000
* Lot 75: Five cases of Bethel Heights “Vesper Bell” Pinot noir: $19,000

At the conclusion of the auction, 2019 co-chairs Eugenia Keegan and Shirley Brooks offered a tribute to Elizabeth Chambers of Chambers Cellars and Silvan Ridge, and winemaker Patricia Green of Patricia Green Cellars, who sadly both passed away this year.

The 2019 Willamette: The Pinot Auction will be held April 6. Attendees are licensed wine sellers, including retailers, restaurateurs and wholesalers. For more information or to request a ticket, visit www.willamettewines.auction.

**About The Willamette Valley Wineries Association**

The Willamette Valley Wineries Association (WVWA) is a non-profit industry association dedicated to achieving recognition for Oregon's acclaimed Willamette Valley as a premier Pinot noir-producing region. Currently, the WVWA has nearly 250 members representing wineries and tasting rooms throughout the Willamette Valley region from Portland to Eugene. To learn more about The Willamette Valley Wineries Association visit: [willamettewines.com](http://willamettewines.com/)

**Photos:**[2018 Willamette: The Pinot Noir Auction](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ZdbPV_Lw5fnqCeZan3ePmTqIL5zQu0jt?usp=sharing)Additional photos will be added as they become available.

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