

SAN FRANCISCO | PENINSULA | SILICON VALLEY

GENTRY

GIVING NOW

*Silicon Valley's
Innovative Philanthropy*

BUILDING OPPORTUNITY

Lisa and Case Swenson Focus
on Empowerment + Education
for Children

EPACENTER RISES

Fostering the Arts in East Palo Alto

PARTNERSHIP FOR THE BAY'S FUTURE

Interviews with stakeholders including:

San Francisco Foundation
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation

GENTRY DESTINATIONS

*Oahu, Italy, the O.C.,
Costa Rica, and more*

JUNE 2019

WWW.GENTRYMAGAZINE.COM

\$4.99 US



Case Swenson

Arts for All

FORMER DISNEY PRESIDENT RICH FRANK AND EMMY-AWARD-WINNING BROADCAST JOURNALIST LESLIE FRANK ARE SET TO CHAIR FESTIVAL NAPA VALLEY'S ARTS FOR ALL GALA NEXT MONTH. GENTRY CATCHES UP WITH THE DYNAMIC PAIR TO DISCOVER THEIR SHARED PASSION FOR THE SPECIAL COMMUNITY THEY CALL HOME.

Rich and Leslie Frank fell in love with Napa Valley separately, and fell in love in the Valley together. Rich's Hollywood career has included time as President of Paramount Television Group and President of Disney Studios. Under his leadership, television and movie properties such as *Cheers*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Golden Girls*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *Dead Poet's Society*, *Pretty Woman*, *Aladdin*, and many others achieved phenomenal success. Rich was the longest serving president of The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (the organization behind the Emmy Awards) and is currently Vice Chairman and Executive Board Member of the American Film Institute. Seeking a refuge from the craziness of L.A., Rich discovered Napa and bought a summer house. "In 1992 I bought the Larkmead Winery, where Hanns Kornell introduced Napa to the *Champenoise méthode* back in 1958, just for fun," he recalls. "It was a vanity purchase I thought it would be great to send wine to friends and colleagues at Christmas."

Fast forward to 2006. "It all started at Bouchon," recalls Rich. Leslie adds, "I was in Napa with a girlfriend for a vacation. I'd been covering the Michael Jackson trial for KABC and living and working in Santa Maria for five long months. I was exhausted and in need of a getaway. On that special evening my friend and I were having dinner at the bar."

Rich continues, "I came in alone for dinner and all the tables were full, but Tony the *maître d'* at Bouchon said, 'I think you're going to like the seat I have for you tonight.'" With a twinkle in his eye, Rich says emphatically, "He was right."

While the pair was on their honeymoon in Italy they purchased another vineyard in Rutherford. They returned to Napa Valley and threw themselves into turning Frank Family Vineyards from that initial vanity project into a world-class winery. "It doesn't happen without a great winemaker and we have that in Todd Graff," says Rich. Leslie has poured



Rich and Leslie Frank

“I knew it was an incredible two-week festival with world class performers, but I didn’t know the depth and breadth of FNV’s work. Besides the Festival itself, FNV brings the arts to the youth of our community in the form of rich school programs and outreach. It also brings performances to people who might never get the opportunity to see and hear world-class performers through a series of free concerts—6,000 free tickets each year. That’s really what impressed me most.”

her time and talent into marketing. “We really don’t advertise,” notes Rich. “We just let the word spread.” The word has spread indeed. Presently, their winery produces nearly 75,000 cases of award-winning wine each year.

Along the way, Leslie and Rich have become even more passionate about the Napa Valley. “This is a fascinating place,” relates Rich. “It is the most charitable, hospitable little community.”

When Leslie was approached to join the Board of Directors of Festival Napa Valley, she did her homework. “I knew it was an incredible two-week festival with world-class performers, but I didn’t know the depth and breadth of FNV’s work. Besides the Festival itself, FNV brings the arts to the youth of our community in the form of rich school programs and outreach. It also brings performances to people who might never get the opportunity to see and hear world-class performers through a series of free concerts—6,000 free tickets each year. That’s really what impressed me most.”

Rich echoes Leslie’s enthusiasm: “For

so many folks in life, you don’t know what you like until you are exposed to it. Festival Napa Valley brings the arts to kids early on—and those concert experiences can change your life forever.”

The Franks will chair Festival Napa Valley’s “Arts for All” Gala at HALL Napa Valley on July 14th this summer with a special performance by international recording artist Seal. “It’s going to be an incredible evening,” says Leslie, “with lots of surprises.” When asked about standout moments from past festivals, the couple recalls performances by Kristin Chenoweth, Bill Murray, and Joshua Bell, but a particular favorite moment came last summer during one of the FNV events at Frank Family Vineyards. “Opera star Larisa Martinez performed without a microphone, walking through the original winery on the property,” notes Leslie. “To hear that gorgeous voice reverberating off the stone walls built back in 1884 was absolutely captivating. The guests were mesmerized.”

Rich chimes in, “About the only thing more special than that is to hear the kids from our own community performing on the lawn at Meadowood—there are so many of them that they take turns. That’s really when you realize how special this community and Festival is. There are other great music festivals around the world, but this is different—just about everyone in the Valley participates in some way. The fact that so many of the wineries host events for FNV makes it incredibly personal. There’s no competition—we’re all working to the same goal to impact our Napa Valley community.” ♦ —STEFANIE LINGLE BEASLEY

Festival Napa Valley

Friday, July 12 – Sunday, July 21

Over a dozen performances and events will take place at this year’s Festival Napa Valley, including such performers as opera stars **Francesco Demuro**, **Lucas Meacham**, and **Joyce El-Khoury**, British cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** (who performed at the Royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle), Jazz artists **Sunday Buzz** and **the Yellow Jackets**, and Grammy-Award winner **Seal**. For a full schedule and tickets, visit www.festivalnapavalley.org.

