

26th Annual Auction Napa Valley

By Jeff Morgan



Film and television star Geena Davis.

Under clear, blue skies and surrounded by picture-perfect vineyard landscapes, some 3,000 wine lovers flocked to the 26th annual Auction Napa Valley in early June. The four-day event raised \$8.4 million dollars for local charities. To open the festivities, the grounds at Trinchero Family Estates (aka Sutter Home Winery) were transformed into a European-style marketplace with café-inspired al fresco seating arrangements. Bidders and guests enjoyed Napa Valley wines paired with a dazzling array of comestibles prepared by many of the valley's best-known chefs. Among them

was The French Laundry's celebrity chef/owner Thomas Keller, who strolled among the crowd bearing a tray of delicious shortbread cookies.

Geena Davis

Keller's hungry fans included film and television star, Geena Davis, who paired up with Hollywood film executive and Napa vintner Rich Frank of Frank Family Vineyards to collaborate on a live auction lot. The lot featured a walk-on role in her upcoming television film, *Commander in Chief*, based on the television show in which she plays America's first woman president.

Davis gave a stellar auction performance as she mingled easily among bidders and danced late into the night following the live auction. During the bidding, she took to the stage to promote her auction lot. "I'm the fake president of the United States," Davis declared with mock gravity. "Now is the time to come to the aid of your country. Let's start [the bidding] at \$100,000." Striding across the stage, the tall, impressive actress effectively used her thespian skill to bring in a winning bid of \$300,000. Koerner Rombauer, of Rombauer Vineyards, beat out the competition and landed the walk-on part in Davis' upcoming movie with the \$300,000 bid, prompting auctioneer Ursula Hermacinski to remark, "Geena, you'll have to make him Secretary of Defense!"