

GIVING

Strengthening Southwest Florida through collaboration

BY CAROL MCLAUGHLIN

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Southwest Florida Community Foundation

The Southwest Florida Community Foundation supports the non-profit community in many ways. Our donors are philanthropic in nature and provide millions of dollars to area organizations who serve special populations and needs throughout our community. As more residents flock to this area, the needs of the community continue to grow exponentially. Our funding has to be leveraged as efficiently as possible to meet these rising needs in Southwest Florida.

One way to leverage these funds is through collaboration. The foundation urges non-profit organizations to find creative, strategic ways to collaborate to provide their programs and services in a less costly more efficient manner.

These collaborations can be short term - just one program that runs for a certain length of time in order to reach an immediate, one-time need such as the collaborative efforts between the community foundation and The United Way immediately following a disaster. While our relationship with this organization is long-term, our program to administer the necessary funding as efficiently as possible within hours of a local disaster is short-term and put in place as needed. The collaboration is to ensure a better quality of life for those we all serve. There is no thought to "my program" or "my project." It is the combined effort and results that matter.

Other collaborations can be long term in nature. If a collaborative program between two non-profit organizations allows them to continue to better meet the needs of those they are serving through an ongoing program, it may continue indefinitely.

Two non-profit organizations who have teamed up to provide a winning, long-term solution for the entire community are Abuse Counseling and Treatment and Island Coast AIDS Network. This collaborative effort is designed to help local businesses and

individuals who want to give back to their community. Businesses and individuals purchase gift certificates to Second ACT Thrift Store and ICANstruction Junction and donate the certificates to a local charity of their choice. The certificates are distributed to the charity's clients who redeem them for goods and materials. Purchases from ACT and ICAN support client programs benefiting domestic and sexual assault victims and HIV/AIDS infected and affected individuals, respectively.

Second ACT offers used clothing, furniture, housewares and more. ICANstruction Junction specializes in home improvement and building materials, including large appliances, plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, flooring, cabinets, doors, windows and much more.

This collaborative program offers a winning solution for the entire community. It's an economical and effective way for businesses and individuals to support their charity during these challenging economic times. Non-profits are able to help their clients access supplies and materials

they need in an efficient and time-saving manner, and clients get more for their money by acquiring merchandise at a fraction of the retail price.

ACT and ICAN have found a way to collaborate without the fear of "stepping on the toes" of another non-profit or worrying about "stealing" fundraising ideas. Agencies need to work together. They need to network and learn from each other's successes and failures. Through cooperative efforts, the non-profit community will meet the growing needs of an ever-increasing population. It is a win-win solution for our whole community.

The Southwest Florida Community Foundation has been supporting the communities of Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Glades and Hendry through endowed funds for more than 30 years. With assets of more than \$57 million and 314 endowed funds, the community foundation has provided more than \$30 million in grants and scholarships to the communities it serves.

For more information, please call 274-5900, or visit their web site at www.floridacommunity.com. ■



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PUZZLE ANSWERS

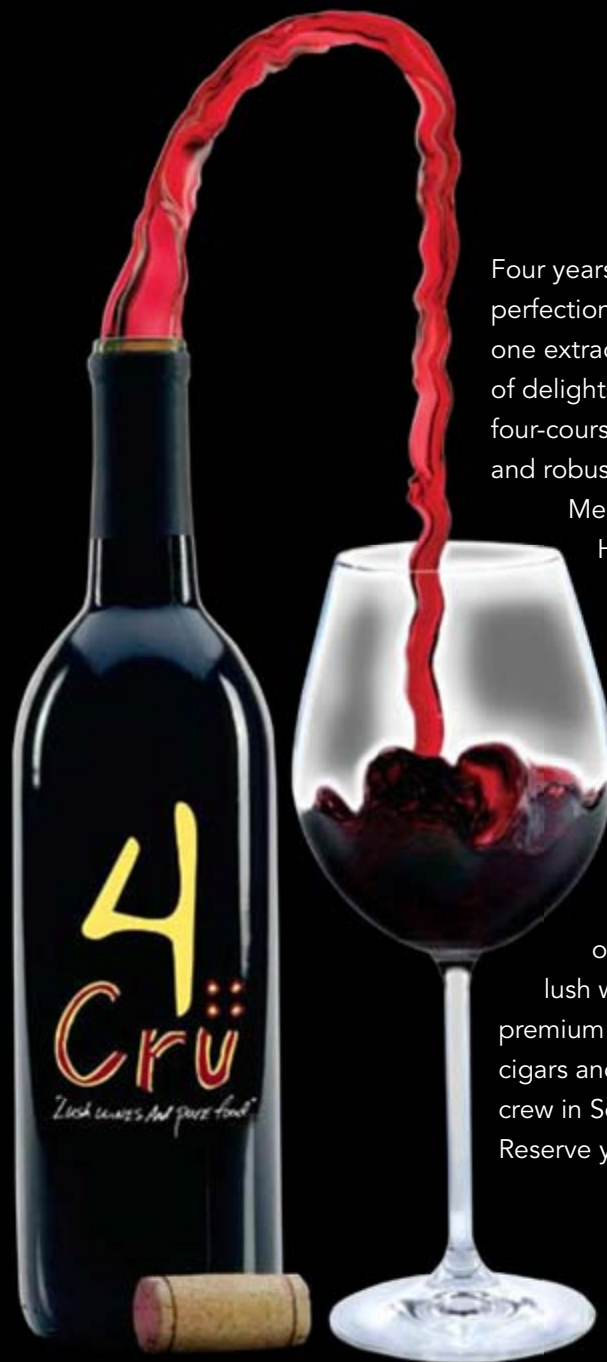
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TURN ON THE TASTE

4TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT
MARCH 29, 2008 | 5:30 PM TO CLOSE



Four years of culinary perfection culminate in one extraordinary evening of delights. A sumptuous four-course dinner. Rare and robust varietals from Meeker Vineyard. High-energy music by DJ 007 on the patio. And pianist, singer and songwriter Chris Workman inside. Don't miss this 4th Anniversary Celebration of pure foods, lush wines and spirits, premium hand-rolled cigars and the hippest crew in Southwest Florida. Reserve your spot today!

Crush Magazine | Kettle One | Rémy Martin | Meeker Vineyard



RESERVE
Cigar and Wine Bar

"Lush Wines And pure food"

Located in the Bell Tower Shops
Reservations 239.466.3663 | crufoodandwine.com

