



EVENT RECAP

Contact: Carol Brejot, carol@elmorepr.com, 713-503-3885

The Periwinkle Foundation crowns Chris Havens from Pappas Bros. Steakhouse the 2023 *Iron Sommelier* Champion at The Post Oak Hotel on Nov. 9

Iron Sommelier, Houston's premier sommelier competition and wine tasting event, presented by AUTOSOL®, raised \$380,000

WHAT: The Periwinkle Foundation's *Iron Sommelier 2023*, presented by AUTOSOL®

WHEN: Thursday, November 9, 2023

WHERE: The Post Oak Hotel at Uptown Park Houston

WHO: The event was chaired by **Sean Beck**, Wine Chair and **Lara Lack**, Sommelier Chair.

DETAILS: A toast to **Chris Havens** of Pappas Bros. Steakhouse, the new 2023 Iron Sommelier! Presented by AUTOSOL®, *Iron Sommelier* was held at The Post Oak Hotel at Uptown Park on Thursday, Nov. 9, 2023 and welcomed 13 of Houston's top sommeliers in the city's premier wine tasting and competition benefiting The Periwinkle Foundation.

More than 450 Houston wine aficionados raised over \$380,000 for Periwinkle's Camps, Arts and Survivor programs for children, teens and their families challenged by cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. A special moment during the presentations was when Periwinkle Executive Director **Doug Suggitt** introduced 18-year-old leukemia survivor **Sara Agrawal**. She spoke about her cancer journey and how Periwinkle has positively impacted her life, including attending camps and making life-long friends. She is now looking forward to attending college.

Each competing sommelier selected three wines—which focused on a particular wine region, grape or style, and a panel of judges rated wine choice, presentation, creativity, and knowledge of their wine selections.

In addition to bringing together sommeliers from the top restaurants in Houston, four Master Sommeliers presented rare, premium wines to underwriters in the Masters Tasting Room.

Sommeliers competing in the 2023 competition include:

Adele Corrigan Wade, 13 celsius wine bar; **Meagan Van Til**, AOC Selections; **Corey Peterson**, Blutorn; **Daisy Durham**, Doris Metropolitan; **Matthew McLaughlin**, Guard and Grace; **Zach Newman**, Georgia James; **Rachel Van Til**,

Houston Oaks Country Club; **Andres Blanco**, Le Jardinier; **Coleman Mason**, MAD; **Cody Vela**, March; **Joshua Ponthieux**, Mastros; **Chris Havens**, Pappas Bros. Steakhouse; and **Dennis Vawter**, River Oaks Country Club.

The competing sommeliers were judged by: **Mark Rashap** – Broadbent Selections; **Joseph Samso** – Raventos Winery Americas Ambassador/Director and **Alison Smith Story** – Co-Founder, Smith Story Wine Cellars.

Other awards included:

1st Runner Up: Meagan Van Til, AOC Selections

2nd Runner Up: Zach Newman, Georgia James

People's Choice: Rachel Van Til, The Clubs at Houston Oaks

Best Wine: **Cody Vela**, March

Best Table Décor: **Meagan Van Til**, AOC Selection

Unique Auction Items included:

- A Special Dinner With James Beard Winning Chef Chris Shepherd and Rare Ridge Wines for 10
- Rare Bourbon and Whiskey Lots featuring never released bottles of Willett and iconic offerings like Pappy Van Winkle, Wild Turkey from the 1980's and single-barrel collections.
- A curated 40 bottle Wine Collection/Cellar Lot by Sommelier Sean Beck featuring the favorite wines he tasted in 2023.
- Curated Food and Wine Experiences at iconic American wineries like Paul Hobbs.

GUESTS:

Doug and Julie Osburn
Stacie and Scott Covington
Guy Stout
Jenny Koehler & Jason Wells
Debbie and Ozzie Bauer
Dr. ZoAnn Dryer
Laurie and Mark Boyer
Janet and Brian Franklin
Dr. Tim Porea
Dr. Frank Lin
Natalie and Justin Goodman
Carol and Joe Birkofer
Ben Hildreth, Jenifer and Dr. Scott Jarriel
Drs. Jayne Finkowski-Rivera and Carlos Rivera
Melinda and Matt Mogas
Lara Lack, Sommelier Chair
Sean Beck, Event Chair
Jill and Josh Lack
Jay Lack
Leah and Seth Abrams
Leslie and Frank Dragna
Melissa Ferstl

Monica and Hubert Ho
Donna and Mike Hemmi
Megan and Britt Mitchell
Pat and Peter Bagnato
Irena and Clint Midgett
Craig and Donna Drachman
Tessa Barrera of *Houston Life*
Travis Zimmerman
Melissa and David Kulkarney
Tara and William Green

STAFF:

Doug Suggitt, Executive Director
Alice Rohrman, Development Director
Ann Massey, Development Director
Erin Locke, Community Programs Director
Larry Geiger, Program Director
Jared Walton, Community Engagement Coordinator

PHOTOS: Dave Rossman

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