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Tickets are now on sale for WSRE's 33rd annual Wine & Food Classic fundraiser

Two culinary events will celebrate legendary chefs and rising stars of PBS and the region



PENSACOLA, Fla., Sept. 12, 2023 — This fall's 33rd annual WSRE Wine & Food Classic will celebrate the iconic chefs and rising culinary stars of both PBS and the local region. Two events are planned: A Legendary Dinner at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 14, in the station's Jean & Paul Amos Performance Studio, and the event's marquee Walkabout Tasting at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 21, at the SCI Building downtown. Tickets can be purchased online at wsre.org/events.

Local philanthropists Jan and Ron Miller are the honorary event chairs of this year's Culinary Legends Wine & Food Classic. Longtime friends and past board members of the WSRE-TV Foundation — Jan Miller served as the 2001-2002 board chair — the Millers are known for supporting local education initiatives and organizations, most notably with a substantial legacy gift to Pensacola State College, WSRE's licensee, in 2018.

“With their big-hearted and generous support of this event, the Millers are demonstrating their belief in the educational mission of WSRE to positively impact local communities through programming, community engagement and essential learning activities that are accessible for free to all local families and schools,” said Jill Hubbs, WSRE general manager.

It was Jan Miller's vision to kick off this year's Wine & Food Classic with an elegant culinary experience that will appeal to the station's longtime benefactors and sponsors.

A Legendary Dinner

Billed as A Legendary Dinner, the October 14 gala will include a champagne reception, five-course meal with free-flowing wine service, performances by Holly Shelton and John Link and by the Pensacola State College Jazz Ensemble, and a live auction led by Marty Stanovich.

Chefs Darian Hernandez from Brother Fox and Sister Hen, Edward Lordman from Southern GRIT Culinary, Rusty Strain from A Rustyc Spoon, Laura Bernardi Piovesana from The Italian Wooden Spoon and Jordan Hewes from Craft Gourmet Bakery will be joined by Brad Mahlof, winner of this year's "The Great American Recipe" competition on PBS, along with the show's finalists Salmah Hack and Leanna Pierre, to present a culinary experience inspired by the legendary chefs of PBS.

Since the 1970s, WSRE has been the region's broadcast home to culinary legends and cooking show pioneers like Julia Child, Jacques Pépin and Pensacola's own Earl Peyroux. WSRE produced more than 600 episodes of Peyroux's "Gourmet Cooking" show, which was picked up by PBS in 1982 and aired through the early 1990s.

Today, WSRE carries a vast lineup of PBS Food programming with "The Great American Recipe" added to the primetime lineup last summer. With its third season nearing production, "The Great American Recipe" is an uplifting cooking competition that celebrates the multiculturalism that makes American food unique and iconic. Mahlof was named the Season 2 winner during the season finale broadcast on August 7.

Culinary Legends Walkabout Tasting

The Culinary Legends Walkabout Tasting will spotlight local chefs and restaurants serving small-portion dishes inspired by favorite PBS chefs and competing for the Earl Peyroux Best Chef Award and People's Choice Award. Live music will be performed by the band Nobius.

Among this year's participating chefs and restaurants are Kenny Anderson from Juan's Flying Burrito, Jere Doyle from McGuire's Irish Pub, Aaron Fitch from Parlor Doughnuts, Jennifer Lowry from Conchita's Catering, Arturo Paz from The Grand Marlin, George Rudolph from Pensacola Yacht Club, Jesse Sproles from Scenic Hills Country Club, Mike Tilton from Legends Café at Andrews Institute and Josh Warner from The District Seville Steak & Seafood.

"This year's event will pay tribute to culinary legends with the local chefs putting their own twists on dishes inspired by iconic PBS chefs," said event coordinator Jennifer Knisbell, WSRE development and community engagement director. "Our food programs have a loyal following, and we hope local fans will come enjoy this fun food event while supporting the public television shows and services they love."

Tickets to A Legendary Dinner are \$150. Tickets to the Culinary Legends Walkabout Tasting are \$65. More information and links to Eventbrite ticket sales can be found at wsre.org/events.

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