

Lisa Andre August 1, 2023

Alma Rosa Winery's Fundraising Walk Raises \$200K For Mental Health Awareness



Alma Rosa Winery held its fourth annual "Peace of Mind: 10,000 Steps in the Right Direction" fundraising walk for mental health awareness on July 22 which raised \$200,463, a 12% increase over last year's event, according to Debra Eagle, Alama Rosa's general manager.

"I am proud to announce that the total funds raised from this year's walk are the highest to date and eagerly anticipate the possibilities that lie ahead in the coming years," Eagle said.

One-hundred percent of funds raised will be distributed to event beneficiaries, One Mind and Santa Barbara's Mental Wellness Center.

Participants gathered at the base of Alma Rosa's 628-acre estate the morning of the event and were greeted with coffee and breakfast treats from local Santa Ynez' Pony Espresso and Good Seed Coffee Boutique, both official event sponsors.

The event kicked off with personal and inspiring speeches about the importance of mental health awareness and support, given by Eagle, One Mind's President Brandon Staglin, Mental Wellness Center's CEO Annmarie Cameron and California State Assemblymember Gregg Hart.

"This year, we witnessed an unprecedented outpouring of compassion and generosity from individuals and businesses within our community," said Eagle.

More than 200 people walked a 4.5-mile course located on the Sta. Rita Hills estate in Buellton, which features three rigorous quarter-mile inclines with sweeping hilltop views of the region.

While completing the course, walkers were fueled by complimentary snacks and beverages from Peace of Mind food and drink sponsors. And at the summit of the Attente block, the highest point of the estate, participants enjoyed a splash of Alma Rosa sparkling wine before returning to the winery's historic Ranch House for an intimate reception featuring a tasting of the latest releases from Alma Rosa's Winemaker Samra Morris and Sauvignon Blanc and Bordeaux-based blends from Brave & Maiden Estate, a winery spokeswoman said.

Richard Sanford, Alma Rosa Winery's original founder, current winery ambassador and pioneering Central Coast vintner, was also present during the reception to mingle with guests, the spokeswoman added.

Following the reception, 20 of the top Peace of Mind donors who secured advance tickets enjoyed a delicious three-course catered lunch from First & Oak Restaurant paired with Alma Rosa wines.

"Considering the significant and ongoing impact of depression and anxiety on our society, we are grateful to be able to be a part of the solution and support the critical work of these two organizations," Eagle said, referring to event beneficiaries that conduct mental health research and offer treatment services.

In addition to funds raised, Bob and Barb Zorich, owners of Alma Rosa, matched individual donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$35,000 for each charity, for a total of \$70,000, the winery reported, noting that corporate donations were matched up to \$25,000.

Peace of Mind was first launched in 2020 by Bob and Barb Zorich and Eagle, to boost mental health services in the community, and expand research to find causes, treatments, and potential cures for anxiety and depression.

Since then, the event has raised over \$740,000 for One Mind and Mental Wellness Center, the spokeswoman said.

"We are humbled by the unwavering support of our community both near and far for our annual Peace of Mind fundraising walk," Bob Zorich said.

"We are confident that the proceeds from this year's event will significantly contribute to the Mental Wellness Center's programming and One Mind's ongoing commitment to brain-related research. We could not have done it without you!"