

# Honor Winery Comes to Aid of Veterans

Plus, more wineries helping military charities, a Napa lawsuit alleges winemaker negligence, and Moët & Chandon raises \$200,000 for AIDS research

Posted: May 29, 2014

- This past Memorial Day weekend, Unfiltered caught a [CNN segment](#) on [Honor](#) winery, a Napa- and Sonoma-based wine brand that sells for \$50 to \$175 a bottle and raises funds for a range of charities that benefit veterans of the armed services and their families. Started in January 2013, Honor is a partnership between retired U.S. Army **Lt. Col. Allen Cage, Jr.**, Destination Cellars founder and CEO **David Keuhner** and winemaker **Sean Meyer**. The brand gained momentum this past year when Keuhner received a phone call from **Amanda Sheek**, requesting a bottle of the wine that had "My Jacob's" boots on it (the Honor label features a pair of military-issue boots created by a design firm), and Keuhner quickly realized he was speaking to the mother of a fallen soldier, **Lance Cpl. Christopher Jacob Levy**, killed in Afghanistan in 2011. Keuhner sent her a free bottle, and the two stayed in touch, and Sheek asked him to accompany her to the Silver Star ceremony of **Cpl. Christian Brown**, who had carried the wounded Levy on his back, under fire from Al Qaeda, to an awaiting helicopter. Levy died three days later, but not before his mother was able to say goodbye. Three days after Levy's death, Brown stepped on an improvised explosive device, losing both of his legs. Keuhner was floored by Brown's bravery and will to overcome his injuries—Brown remains an avid hunter and fisher—and presented him with a bottle of Honor Cabernet as well. Brown, along with many other veterans, has since become an important member of the Honor family, which has thus far raised about \$80,000 for a long list of military charities, including Operation Ward 57, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Luke's Wings, and many more. "We know we can't help everybody," Keuhner told Unfiltered, "but we *can* make a difference."

Keuhner's and his partners' efforts have caught the attention of the California wine community as well, and this year winemaker **Michael Browne** and **Dan Kosta** donated a barrel of 2012 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir to create a run of large-format Honor-[Kosta Browne](#) 2012 bottles to be sold for the benefit of military charities. The first 3-liter bottle sold for \$34,000 in February, benefiting the Silent Warrior Scholarship Fund. A 5-liter bottle will be auctioned at the Brian Bill Memorial Golf Tournament in Stamford, Conn., June 16, benefiting the Norwich University scholarship fund for **Navy Seal Brian Bill**, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2011. Keuhner has revealed to Unfiltered that Honor will have a 2013 vintage partnership with [Realm Cellars](#), whose managing partner, **Scott Becker**, served in the Air Force and whose founder, **Juan Mercado**, served in the Army.

- Elsewhere in wine and military aid, [Beringer Vineyards](#) announced this month that it will team with Birdies for the Brave, a military outreach program supporting combat-wounded veterans. The charity was founded by golfer **Phil Mickelson** and his wife, **Amy**, in 2006, and is now supported by the PGA Tour, of which Beringer is the official wine. Throughout this month and next, Beringer is donating \$1 for every bottle of Founders' Estate sold to Birdies for the Brave, up to \$50,000. "We're honored to be able to contribute to such an important charitable organization, and thank the brave men and women of our country who have and continue to sacrifice on our behalf," said Beringer VP **Barry Sheridan** in a press release.

- Also this month, Liberty Creek Wines announced a text-to-donate fund-raising effort for Operation Homefront, which provides emergency and financial assistance to wounded veterans and their families. The goal of the Liberty Creek initiative is to present five military families with mortgage-free homes. Now through Nov. 31, supporters can text the word "LIBERTY" to 313131 and Liberty Creek will donate \$5 for each verified text, up to \$48,000.