



THE NEWS-PRESS LOCAL

LEE COUNTY

Ethics, inspector general plan dead

Review board keeps proposals to change makeup of county commission, streamline charter referendums

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The Lee County charter board Thursday spiked proposals to create an ethics board and an inspector general's office to monitor the actions and financial dealings of local government.

A majority of the 15-member board appeared to like the ideas, but couldn't find a way, legally or politically, to give an ethics board or inspector general's office the independence and the power that commissioners believe they need to truly serve as watchdog agencies.

"We want to have a check on the politi-

cal body, but they would have the right to appoint the ones who will create the rules," said commissioner Ismael Hernandez, founder of the Freedom and Virtue Institute and former director of the African Caribbean American Catholic Center in Fort Myers.

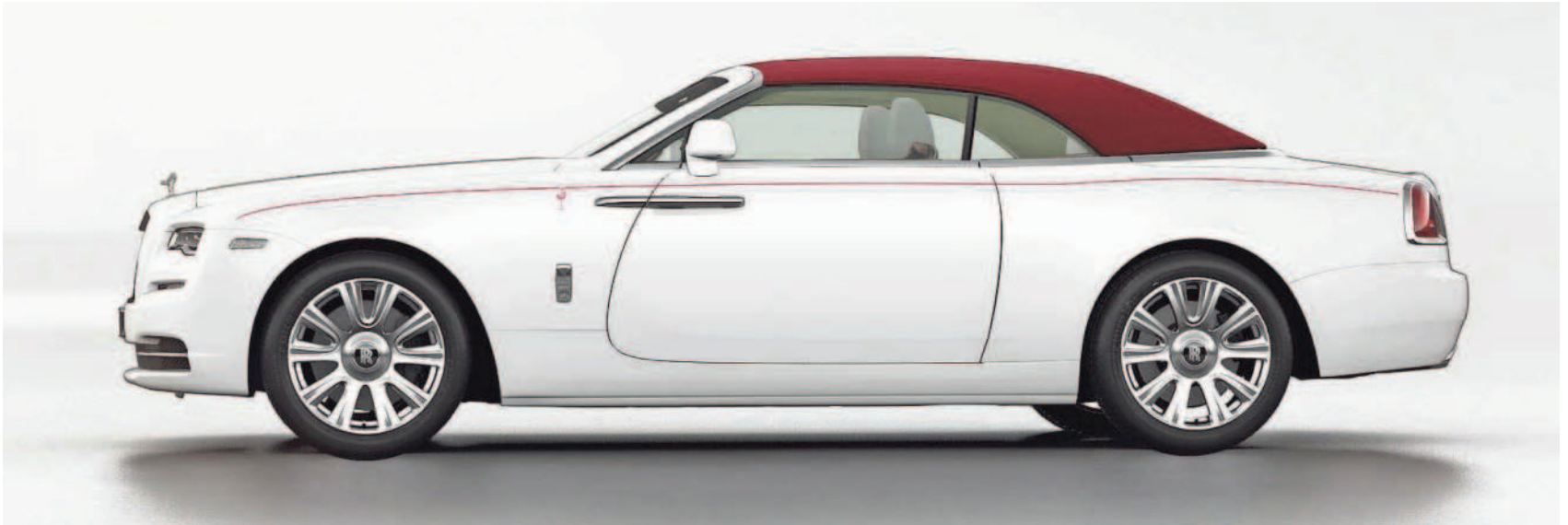
The board had previously supported the proposals, which seemed destined for a final round of public hearings before a final charter board vote and possibly a referendum vote in the fall. Commission-

ers had wanted to find a way to audit and monitor the activities of constitutional officers without their permission as well as cities within the county, but board members were frustrated by state law and the political nature of the approval process.

The charter board stuck by its plan to change the county commission to include five members elected by residents living

See Charter, Page 5A

NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL



One lucky bidder will win the first Rolls-Royce Dawn in the U.S. at the Naples Winter Wine Festival.

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-PRESS

Fun and fundraising

Events include tastings, chefs and chance at new Rolls-Royce

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World-class wine, all-star chefs and over-the-top auction lots are coming to Naples this weekend. The Naples Winter Wine Fest, the most successful international wine auction in the world, kicks off festivities Friday with auction previews and vintner dinners leading up to Saturday's live auction.

Before the paddles fly and the bottles go dry, here are five things to know about the festival.

See Festival, Page 10A



SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-PRESS

Emily and Paul Michael of the Peter Michael Winery are this year's honored vintners at the Naples Winter Wine Festival.



When: Through Sunday

Where: The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples

Cost: packages begin at \$10,000 per couple

Benefits: Naples Children & Education Foundation

Website: napleswinefestival.com

TRINKET TROUBLE

Mayor calls for tossing festival's bead tradition

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No beads at the Shrimp Festival? With Mardi Gras-style beads turning up in underground drains on Fort Myers Beach, officials are asking the public to rethink a popular tradition at town festivals.

There will be no bead-tossing from the town float this year "because we have witnessed the negative effects they have on our community," Mayor

Anita Cereceda said, and officials are asking everyone else to follow suit for the upcoming Shrimp Festival on March 12.

To be clear, there is no town ban on beads, she said. No one will get arrested, ticketed or reprimanded in any way if they decide to throw necklaces at the festival.

But as Town Manager Don Stilwell said, it's more like "social pressure."

See Beads, Page 5A



TERRY ALLEN WILLIAMS / THE NEWS-PRESS

Leelynn Krekeler, 2, and her mother, Kyle Durham, celebrate the Shrimp Festival Parade in March 2012 on Fort Myers Beach. The town says it will not toss beads from its float this year.

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Festival

Continued from Page 3A

Judgment of Paris

The Vintage Cellar Wine Tasting and Luncheon on Thursday celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Judgment of Paris and kicked off the wine festival.

In May 1976, Steven Spurrier, a wine shop owner in Paris, held a blind tasting for French tasters. The wines were made from the same kind of grapes; the difference was where the wines were grown. Some were French in origin from historic stock, and others were from newer vines in California. The surprise winners were American wines: a 1973 Chateau Montelena chardonnay and a 1973 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars cabernet sauvignon.

Proprietors of the two winning wineries, Bo Barrett of Chateau Montelena and Ted Baseler of Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, hosted the tasting along with George Taber, author of the best-selling book the historic event, and Spurrier.

Live auction

On Saturday, 600 people are expected to attend the live auction at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples.

Items up for bid include private access to Bulgari's High Jewelry Event and a private preview of Bulgari's latest High Jewelry Collection; 14 nights aboard *The World*, the largest privately owned residential yacht in the world; an exclusive dinner with country music superstar Martina McBride; and a private tour of Versailles followed by a rare dinner in the apartments of Louis XV.

The lot to watch is the all-new Rolls-Royce Dawn, commissioned specifically for the Naples Winter Wine Festival. The entire first model year of the Dawn is sold out and the winning bidder will receive the first Dawn in North America. Bespoke tread plates commemorate "Build No. 1 for Dawn in North America." Build is scheduled for March with an April delivery.

Wine and food

2500 wine glasses are awaiting Saturday's event, which will feature the talents of over 20 world-renowned chefs.

Chef Rick Tramonto will return for his sixth year, this time in the role of honored Chef de Cuisine. Tramonto, a James Beard Award winner, partnered with chef John Folse to open Restaurant R'evolution in New Orleans and Seafood R'evolution in Mississippi. The two will team up to prepare a meal for one of the festival's private vintner dinners in addition to participating in Saturday's tastings.

This year's honored vintners are Paul and Emily Michael of the Peter Michael Winery in California. Along with wines that are some of the most highly rated in the world, the Peter Michael Winery has a connection to the Judgment of Paris, the re-enactment of which is being held Thursday. In 1976, Sir Peter Michael tasted a bottle of Chateau Montelena, the same wine that won the blind tasting in Paris. Instead of enjoying the California wines from afar, he purchased a plot of land and founded his California winery.

Along with wines from the honored vintners, 40 wineries will participate in this year's festival.

Online auction

For those who aren't able to nab an item at the live auction, or didn't attend the festival but still want to contribute to the Naples Children & Education Foundation, the online auction has over 50 lots for you.

Go ice driving in an Aston Martin, golfing at Torrey Pines or attend the James Beard Foundation Awards. For those that want to stay closer to home, choose dining experiences from local restaurants including Angelina's Ristorante, Barbatella Restaurant and Cote D'Azur Restaurant. Bid on pieces from A. Jaron Fine Jewelry and William Boyajian for Port Royal Jewelers cre-

PORT ROYAL
 JEWELERS



Custom designed by William Boyajian

The online auction for the Naples Winter Wine Festival ends Sunday at 11 a.m. Lots include these earrings from Port Royal Jewelers designed for the event.

ated exclusively for this event. Wine lots include offerings from Chateau Suduiraut and Dalla Valle Vineyards.

The online auction closes Sunday at 11 a.m. Online bidding is open to all; visit napleswinefestival.com for details.

Funds raised

Last year, the Naples Winter Wine Festival raised \$12.32 million, bringing the total raised since 2001 to \$135 million.

The Naples Children & Education Foundation, the founding organization

By the numbers

1

The first Rolls-Royce Dawn to be delivered in the U.S. will be up for auction Saturday.

40

The 40th anniversary of The Judgment of Paris, a legendary blind taste test where California wines bested their French counterparts, will be re-enacted at a tasting and luncheon Thursday.

60

Approximate number of chefs and vintners showcased at this year's event.

2500

Wine glasses on hand for Saturday's live auction.

11.8 million

Total amount distributed to 30 non-profits and three initiatives through the Naples Children & Education Foundation in 2015.

135 million

The amount raised by the festival since it began in 2001.

of the festival, distributed the funds to area non-profits and three strategic initiatives in March. Boys & Girls Club of Collier County, Golisano Children's Hospital of SWFL-Naples Clinic, Immo-kalee Childcare Center and Redlands Christian Migrant Association were among 30 non-profits that received grants totaling \$8 million. \$3.8 million funded three strategic initiatives: the Children's Vision Initiative, the Children's Out of School Initiative and Children's Hunger Initiative. A committee of eleven trustees works throughout the year to decide how to distribute the funds in a manner that impacts as many children as possible.

Dillard's

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