



## Winning the Fight for Charities

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### FACT SHEET

- WHAT:** Celebrity Fight Night is a star-studded evening presented in honor of featured guest, Muhammad Ali. Celebrities and professional athletes from all over the U.S. unite for an action-packed night filled with incredible live auction items and musical performances by many of today's brightest stars. Celebrating its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, the Celebrity Fight Night gala is held to raise money for charities.
- WHY:** To benefit the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center at Barrow Neurological Institute as well as numerous other charities.
- WHO:** Celebrity Fight Night is proud to announce Grammy Award-winning leading lady of country music **Reba McEntire** will return as the evening's emcee for the 11<sup>th</sup> year. Performances by **Carrie Underwood, Reba, Brooks & Dunn, The Tenors, Carly Paoli** and **Sinbad**. In addition, 16-time Grammy Award-winning songwriter and producer, **David Foster**, will serve as Musical Director for his 16<sup>th</sup> year.
- HONOREES:** Honorees include Arizona Cardinals Quarterback **Carson Palmer**, multi-Grammy winner **Carrie Underwood**, and philanthropists **Yank Barry, George, Julia and Stephanie Argyros**, and **Dr. Francis Yeoh**.
- HISTORY:** In 1994, long-time Arizona resident and businessman, Jimmy Walker founded Celebrity Fight Night in hopes of raising money for local charities through a premier event. Each year, Celebrity Fight Night attracts first-class celebrities from the sports and entertainment worlds.
- Recognized as one of the nation's elite charity events, this power-packed evening leaves a lasting impression on attendees and provides significant dollars for various charities. In 21 years, Celebrity Fight Night has raised more than \$118 million.
- WHEN:** Saturday, April 9, 2016  
5 p.m.
- WHERE:** JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa
- TICKETS:** Individual tickets range from \$2,000 - \$5,000
- RESERVATIONS:** (602) 956-1121

*Celebrity Fight Night Foundation is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1994 by Jimmy Walker to support the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center at Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix, as well as numerous other charities. For more information, visit [www.celebrityfightnight.org](http://www.celebrityfightnight.org).*

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# CELEBRITY FIGHTNIGHT®

## Winning the Fight for Charities

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### Backgrounder

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When Muhammad Ali knocked out Sonny Liston in 1964, Ali pronounced himself “the Greatest” boxer of all time. Now, 47 years later, Ali finds himself in the fight of his life against Parkinson’s disease, a neurological disorder that affects more than one million Americans. But unlike his former fights, this time Ali is not alone.

Long-time Arizona resident and businessman, Jimmy Walker started Celebrity Fight Night in 1994 in hopes of raising money for local charities through a celebrity charity event. Since its inception, Celebrity Fight Night has raised more than \$118 million to benefit the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center at the Barrow Neurological Institute as well as numerous other charities. It is also one of Phoenix’s most star-studded events.

At the first Celebrity Fight Night, Phoenix Suns basketball stars Charles Barkley and Dan Majerle were enlisted to enter the ring and spar with boxing champion Michael Carbajal. When Muhammad Ali became involved in 1996, the event’s reputation grew and became known as one of the country’s premier fundraising events. The event no longer features celebrity boxing, but by attending the event and bidding on live and silent auction items, each guest does their part to help win the fight against Parkinson’s disease.

Some recent entertainers and celebrities have included Jennifer Lopez, Andrea Bocelli, Rascal Flatts, Kelly Clarkson, Jon Bon Jovi, Robin Williams, The Band Perry, Jim Carrey, Donald Trump, Celine Dion, Faith Hill, Whitney Houston, Randy Jackson, Sharon Stone, Rod Stewart, Michael Bublé, Josh Groban, Diana Ross, John Mellencamp, Lionel Richie, Chris Tucker, Forest Whitaker, Larry King, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jack Nicklaus to name a few. Reba McEntire will be returning to host the event for her 11<sup>th</sup> year. Plus, 16-time Grammy winner David Foster will be returning as Musical Director for his 16<sup>th</sup> year in a row!

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**C E L E B R I T Y**  
**FIGHTNIGHT**®  
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**Biography**  
**Jimmy Walker**

Jimmy Walker is the CEO of Walker Financial, LLC in Phoenix. The Estate Planning and Wealth Management firm has over 3,000 clients and has approximately 250 professional athletes and various entertainers as clients.

In 1994, Walker founded the Celebrity Fight Night Foundation. Over the past 16 years the charity has raised approximately \$65 million for the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Research Center and other worthy charities. Some of the celebrities who have participated in previous Celebrity Fight Night events include: Muhammad Ali, Billy Crystal, Celine Dion, Garth Brooks, Reba McEntire, Jon Bon Jovi, Robin Williams, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jim Carrey, Rod Stewart, Donald Trump, Sharon Stone, Diana Ross, Michael Buble, Josh Groban, Michael J. Fox, Magic Johnson, Tony Hawk, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Clive Davis, Whitney Houston, Lionel Ritchie, Gloria Estefan, Larry King, Emmitt Smith, Neil Sedaka, John Elway, Wayne Gretzky, Steve Nash, Joe Montana, Shaquille O'Neal, David Foster, Randy Johnson, Phil Mickelson, Chris Evert, Mark McGwire, Evander Holyfield, Barry Bonds, Charles Barkley, Glen Frye, etc...

Throughout the years, Walker has helped various Valley charities raise money and has invited celebrities to participate in the events. One of Walker's favorite charities is Bicycles for Kids. During the last 27 years, Bicycles for Kids has provided approximately 5,500 bicycles for inner city children along with food baskets provided by the generous donations from many families, businesses and organizations. The Walker family started Bicycles for Kids in 1982.

In addition, in 2007 Walker founded a program with the homeless at St. Vincent de Paul called "Never Give Up." Walker speaks every Monday morning to approximately 400 homeless men and women primarily on the subject of encouraging them to "Never Give Up."

In 1974, Walker was one of a group of investors with Reggie Jackson that purchased the Denver Racquets and moved the team to Phoenix. The following year Walker purchased controlling interest in the Phoenix Racquets. In November of 1975, Walker signed Chris Evert, the number one tennis player in the world, to a three-year contract. In 1976, World Team Tennis chose Walker as WTT's Executive of the Year.

Walker is a Trustee on the Barrow Neurological Foundation Board. He also served on the Board of the Phoenix Boys and Girls Club. Walker has also been acknowledged in Phoenix as Muscular Dystrophy Association's Man of the Year in 1995 and Crisis Nursery's Honorary Chairman for their 2000 charity event. In November 2000, Mr. Walker received the "National Association of Fund-Raising Executives Spirit of Philanthropy Award" in Phoenix from St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center and Barrow Neurological Institute. In 2003, he and his wife Nancy were honored by the Arizona Chapter of the American Jewish Committee with their National Human Relations Award for advancing plurality and democracy. In 2004, Walker hosted President George Bush Sr. during a political fundraiser for Senator Jon Kyl for a dinner party in his home. In 2005, Jimmy was awarded the Golden Karma Award for Outstanding Community Philanthropy in Metropolitan Phoenix.

Jimmy and Nancy Walker have three children and seven grandchildren. Walker has resided in Arizona since 1957; he attended Phoenix Central High School and received his education from Arizona State University on a basketball scholarship.

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**Biography**  
**Sean Currie**

Sean Currie has more than more than 25 years of exemplary customer and guest satisfaction experience, including the last 19 years in his leadership role as the Executive Director of the Celebrity Fight Night Foundation. Celebrity Fight Night is nationally recognized as an elite charity event attended by today's biggest and brightest celebrities and professional athletes. The power-packed night is highlighted by an unparalleled live auction and jaw-dropping musical entertainment. Under Sean's direction, Celebrity Fight Night has raised more than \$118 million for charities.

While working closely with a diverse group of business leaders that join forces to present an event of Celebrity Fight Night's caliber, Sean has earned the respect of event producers, agents, public relations leaders, media personalities, executives of *Fortune 500* and *Forbes 400* companies, stage managers, travel coordinators, hotel managers, Hollywood actors and entertainers, professional athletes and event volunteers.

Sean has a proven record of exceptional production as indicated by the remarkable growth of Celebrity Fight Night under his skilled guidance. Celebrity Fight Night evolved from a local charity event raising \$400,000 with 300 guests before Sean was hired in 1997, to an event with national appeal attended by 1200 guests and raising as much as \$7,000,000 in one night! Sean's solid leadership skills are realized through his extraordinary ability to organize the efforts of the most respected leaders in the business world, coordinating their expertise cohesively toward a common goal. Perhaps most important to Sean is that through his hands-on approach with such a vast group of professionals, he maintains strong relationships based on mutual admiration.

Before directing the Celebrity Fight Night Foundation, Sean built a foundation of experience earned from the most elite customer and guest satisfaction businesses in the world, including world-renowned resorts like the Stein Eriksen Lodge in Park City, Utah; The Phoenician Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona and the customer satisfaction driven retail chain, REI in Tempe, Arizona. Sean's managerial leadership roles in these environments molded him into a professional that expects the most from himself, by portraying the highest level of integrity while exceeding the expectations of everyone he meets.

Sean graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University while achieving a dual major in Business Management and Commercial Recreation. He enjoys traveling around the world and camping in the outdoors with his family. He lives in a suburb of Phoenix, Arizona with his wife, three boys ages 20, 14, and 12, along with his 9-year old girl who was welcomed into the family from St. Petersburg, Russia in 2008.

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