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JOE BUCK TO EMCEE VARIETY'S 45TH ANNUAL DINNER WITH THE STARS

***Charity's Signature Black-Tie Fundraiser Will Feature Patti LaBelle as Headliner,
Honor George H. (Bert) Walker III and Pat Mercurio as Man and Woman of the Year***

ST. LOUIS (January 26, 2011) – National sportscaster and native St. Louisan Joe Buck will emcee the 45th annual Dinner with the Stars on Saturday, May 7, 2011, at the Chase Park Plaza, benefiting Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis. The event, which annually raises more than \$1 million for Variety, will feature two-time Grammy Award winner Patti LaBelle as the headliner and also honor Ambassador George Herbert (Bert) Walker III and Pat Mercurio as the 2011 Man and Woman of the Year, respectively. For the fourteenth year in a row, Marilyn Fox will serve as honorary chairwoman of the gala.

Tickets for the event, beginning at \$500 for Gold Table seats, are now available via the Variety website at www.varietystl.org.

New this year, Variety is thanking its Facebook fan base with an opportunity to receive two *free* tickets to Dinner with the Stars. If Variety reaches 3,000 "likes" on Facebook by the kickoff of Variety Week (marked by the beginning of the Variety Parade in Downtown St. Louis on Saturday, April 30, 2011), Variety will randomly select one fan to receive two tickets to the event, a \$1,000 value. As of this morning, the organization needs approximately 1,500 more "likes" in the next two months to reach the 3,000 mark. Facebook users are eligible by visiting www.facebook.com/varietystl and "liking" Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis.

With past headliners including such talent as Vanessa Williams, Kenny Rogers, Ray Charles and Wynonna Judd, the Dinner with the Stars gala serves as the culmination of Variety Week to celebrate Variety's extensive impact on the St. Louis community. As part of the festivities, Variety's annual Man & Woman of the Year award recognizes St. Louis philanthropists who are playing an active role in shaping the local community. The list of winners is a veritable Who's Who of St. Louis through the years.

This year's Man of the Year, Walker, is a former U.S. ambassador to Hungary and the first cousin of former President George Herbert Walker Bush. A 1953 graduate of Yale University and 1956 graduate of

Harvard Law School, Walker is the former CEO of Stifel Nicolaus and resides as chairman emeritus on the company's board of directors. Walker played an integral role in the revitalization of St. Louis City, having served as chairman of Downtown St. Louis, and his civic involvement includes serving on the boards for the Urban League, the Missouri Historical Society, and the Saint Louis Science Center. In addition, Walker – father of eight and grandfather of 10 – has served as chairman of the board and is currently chairman emeritus for Webster University, which awarded Walker an honorary degree and whose George Herbert Walker School of Business is named in his honor. Walker also holds honorary degrees from Harris-Stowe University and Hungarian institutions the University of Pécs and Szent István University. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1956-1958 and as Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army from 1974-1977.

Mercurio, the 2011 Woman of the Year, is president of Bank of America in Missouri, where she is responsible for coordinating and integrating all product and service capabilities for all lines of business in Missouri, ensuring the delivery of the full resources of Bank of America to clients and communities across the state. A St. Louis native, Mercurio is extremely active in the local community. In addition to her role on the board of Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis, she has also been involved in the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, the St. Louis Children's Hospital board of trustees, the University of Missouri-St. Louis Chancellor's Council and the executive committee of the United Way Board of Directors.

Past Variety Men & Women of the Year:

Linda Martinez	2010	David Farr
Marsha Rusnack	2009	Hugh Grant
Nancy Kranzberg	2008	Walter Metcalfe
Cindy Brinkley	2007	Scott Schnuck
Peggy Ritter	2006	David Steward
*Georgia Frontiere	2005	Patrick Stokes
Mary Ann Lee	2004	Dennis Jones
Donna Wilkinson	2003	David Darnell
Emily Rauh Pulitzer	2002	Sam Fox
Barbara Jacob	2001	Kurt Warner
*Gloria Waters White	2000	*E. Desmond Lee
*Charmaine Chapman	1999	Senator Jack Danforth
*Janet McAfee Weakley	1998	John E. Jacob
Joanne Knight	1997	John W. Bachmann
Marilyn Fox	1996	Robert R. Hermann
Marion Black	1995	William Danforth
Mary Ann Krey	1994	*Ted C. Wetterau
Virginia L. Busch	1993	Edward E. Whitacre, Jr.
Kimmy Brauer	1992	*Benjamin F. Edwards III
Virginia Cornelius	1991	Andrew B. Craig III
Barbara Bridgewater	1990	Lee M. Liberman
*Marguerite Ross Barnett	1989	August A. Busch III

Priscilla McDonnell	1988	Stanley C. Pace
Patricia Bush	1987	Charles F. Knight
Ann Liberman	1986	Sanford N. McDonnell
Mary Strauss	1985	*Zane E. Barnes
Patty Battram	1984	*George Capps
Virginia Barnes	1983	Michael L. Pulitzer
*Margie Wolcott May	1982	Clarence C. Barksdale
*Mary Patricia Spence	1981	*G. Duncan Bauman
*Jane Harris	1980	John R. Weber, Sr.
Rosalie Ewing	1979	*Harry Bussman, Jr.
*Katherine Walsh	1978	*Joseph R. Marion
*Mary Benes	1977	*Milton Mandel
Gloria Weber	1976	*Leon Neuman
*Lillian Shenker	1975	*Tony Peluso
*Grace Lichtenstein	1974	Edwin D. Dorsey
*Nora Bauman	1973	*Frank Chevitz
	1972	*Joseph Simpkins
	1971	*John H. Londoff
* Deceased		

About Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis

For more than 75 years, **Variety the Children's Charity of St. Louis** has helped thousands of children with disabilities say "I can" by providing them with vital medical equipment, as well as educational, therapeutic and recreational programs such as the annual Adventure Camp and Variety Children's Theatre. An international leader in fundraising, Variety the Children's Charity also distributes grants to more than 80 qualified partner agencies throughout the St. Louis area to provide programs and/or services that directly impact the lives of children with physical and mental disabilities. David Steward, chairman and founder of World Wide Technology, Inc., is the organization's president. For more information on Variety, including upcoming events and volunteer opportunities, visit www.varietystl.org.

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