

## PEOPLE OF POLO

# Barry Weisblatt

Owner, WhiteLeaf Events

By Abby Weingarten

For WhiteLeaf Events Founder Barry Weisblatt, the pastime of watching polo is jam-packed with nostalgia and a peaceful respite from his high-powered entertainment career.

“I have had a 37-year career in the music industry working as a talent agent and private event producer. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work with some of the greatest entertainers in the world, including Paul McCartney, Elton John, James Taylor, Bon Jovi, Sting, Jerry Seinfeld, Billy Crystal, Chris Rock, Alicia Keys, Cher, Maroon 5, Rod Stewart, Michael Bublé, and Bruno Mars,” Weisblatt said. “And everything that has happened in my career has led to my latest project here in Sarasota.”

That project is the WhiteLeaf Private Concert Club (WPCC), which is a membership-only concert club for music lovers and discerning private audiences. The club will present three exclusive, private events a year picking up where the great annual Firefly event left off, with a different direction and feel.

“The membership is purposefully being limited to only 275 members and their guests, so that the audience will be guaranteed an extremely unique and up-close-and-personal concert and entertainment experience,” Weisblatt said. “We will be featuring some of the biggest and most popular entertainers in the world. It will be a fully-catered private event filled with comedy, music and late-night dancing.”

Weisblatt looks forward to sharing WPCC with the Sarasota Polo community, which he has been a part of since moving south several years ago from North Salem, New York.

North Salem, where Weisblatt previously lived for 10 years, is also a vibrant equestrian community. There, he and his wife Caroline and son Zack, enjoyed a lifestyle filled with horses, and Weisblatt often reflects on that idyllic past.

“Whether it was the weekly ‘hunt’ that criss crossed through town, or the numerous horse farms that surrounded our home, or the amazing equestrian events at Old Salem Farm - it was an exceptional way to become immersed in that way of life,” Weisblatt said.

Today, Weisblatt immerses himself in the culture by attending Sarasota Polo Club’s Sunday Polo matches.

“Going to watch polo reminds me of attending a college or NFL



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tailgate event,” Weisblatt said, adding that his son, a senior at the Out Of Door Academy works at the Sarasota Polo Club to assist in the facilitation of the public matches. “Zack loves the experience and, at the same time, has benefited from learning what it means to have a job, be accountable, provide a service, and interact with the community and attendees. It’s been a great opportunity for him.”

Professional and personal opportunities in Weisblatt’s own life have been plentiful. Following a long career as a celebrity talent agent, he launched his world-renowned event production company, WhiteLeaf Entertainment, in 2002. But his career first began in the mailroom of the talent agency Associated Booking Corporation, where he made copies and brought coffee to the owner. Within 3 months, Weisblatt was given his own desk, phone, and rolodex, with instructions to start booking one of his heroes: blues musician B.B. King.

From there, Weisblatt began his talent agent journey, working with agency clients like Guns N’ Roses, Paul McCartney, Nine Inch Nails and many others. During this time, Weisblatt discovered soul singer Joan Osborne, whose debut album “Relish” was nominated for six Grammy Awards.

Weisblatt’s venture, WhiteLeaf Events, has since developed into one of the premier boutique event production companies in the country. Weisblatt specializes in hiring and producing celebrity entertainment for galas, fundraisers, social, private, and corporate events. Past and present clients include The United States Ski & Snowboard Foundation, Baron Funds, Choice Hotels, CNN, Harley-Davidson, Motorola, the New York Giants, Revlon, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Tiffany & Co., Help For Children, The Samuel Waxman Foundation, and Tommy Hilfiger.

As his portfolio continues to expand with the emergence of the WhiteLeaf Private Concert Club, Weisblatt will be relishing the entertainment he has come to know through the Sarasota Polo Club.

“It is all just a lot of fun,” Weisblatt said. “I love the sense of community here.” ●



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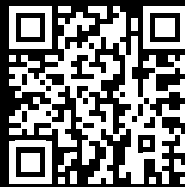
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