



For Immediate Release

February 28, 2006

Media Contact: John Dakin
(970) 949-1999
jdakin@vfv.org

**LEGENDS AND CELEBRITIES TEAM UP FOR COUNTRYWIDE FORD CUP
CELEBRITY TEAM RACES AT 2006 COUNTRYWIDE AMERICAN SKI
CLASSIC, MARCH 24 & 25**

VAIL, Colorado-- Hollywood celebrities and sports stars will join forces with some of ski racing's biggest names March 23 and 24 in Vail as the Countrywide Ford Cup Celebrity Team competition segment of the 2006 Countrywide American Ski Classic takes Vail Mountain's Golden Peak by storm.

Sponsored by Countrywide Financial Corporation, the nation's leading home loan lender*, the original element of the Countrywide American Ski Classic, the Ford Cup debuted in 1981 as the Jerry Ford Celebrity Cup, a winter version of the already successful Jerry Ford Invitational Golf Tournament, and the first event ever hosted at the newly-opened resort of Beaver Creek.

"The Countrywide Ford Cup is truly the heart of everything that the Countrywide American Ski Classic has evolved into," explained Ceil Folz, president of the Vail Valley Foundation. "Over the years, it has introduced so many people to skiing in the Vail Valley and helped set the stage for everything from World Cup to World Championships."

Contested over two days, the Countrywide Ford Cup features head-to-head competition, with teams captained by some of the greatest names in ski racing history and comprised of celebrities, sponsors and paid participants.

Heading up the list of entertainment and sports celebrities slated to participate in the 2006 Countrywide Ford Cup are actor Keith Carradine, Olympic gymnast Trent Dimas, NASCAR racing legend Bill Elliott, Olympic figure skater Nancy Kerrigan, Olympic speed skater Johann Olav Koss and actor Joe Pantoliano.

- More -

2006 Countrywide Ford Cup

2-2-2

Additional stars will include actor Giancarlo Esposito, environmentalist Robert Kennedy, Jr., Olympic freestyler Nikki Stone and Heisman Trophy winner Gino Torretta.

“It’s really amazing just how competitive the celebrities are once they hit the racecourse,” Folz continued. “No matter what their skiing ability, they all have a tremendous amount of fun with the Ford Cup and they are a great reminder that the main ingredient of skiing is the enjoyment that it brings.”

The skiing legends, former Olympic, World Championship and World Cup medalists spanning the past three decades, will serve as Countrywide Ford Cup team captains, in addition to competing in the Legends Giant Slalom and Downhill earlier in the week.

The 2006 Countrywide American Ski Classic is a project of the Vail Valley Foundation. For additional information on the Countrywide American Ski Classic, contact (970) 949-1999 or visit <http://www.vvf.org>.

- 30 -

***About Countrywide Financial Corporation**

Founded in 1969, Countrywide Financial Corporation (NYSE: CFC) – America’s #1 home loan lender as ranked for 2005 by Inside Mortgage Finance (Jan. 27, 2006), Copyright 2006 – is a member of the S&P 500 and Fortune 500. Countrywide, through its subsidiaries, provides mortgage banking and diversified financial services in domestic and international markets. Mortgage banking businesses include loan production and servicing principally through Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., which originates, purchases, securitizes, sells, and services residential loans. The company is headquartered in Calabasas, California and has a workforce of more than 54,000 individuals and over 800 offices worldwide. For more information about the company, visit Countrywide’s Web site at <http://www.countrywide.com>.