



# Stu News Laguna

Stu Saffer's Laguna Beach News and Community Forum



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## Tony's Treehouse has found generosity within the community for their December 12 fundraiser

By BECKY MARTINEZ

In preparation for our Dec 12 Holiday Silent Auction/Fundraiser, we've been "boots on the ground" hitting all the businesses in Laguna with the opportunity to participate in our event. As you may know, we are a very small, grass roots group, so any size donation helps our cause. We are 100 percent volunteer operated, and have no paid staff, so donations go directly to our cause – helping families and youth in need.

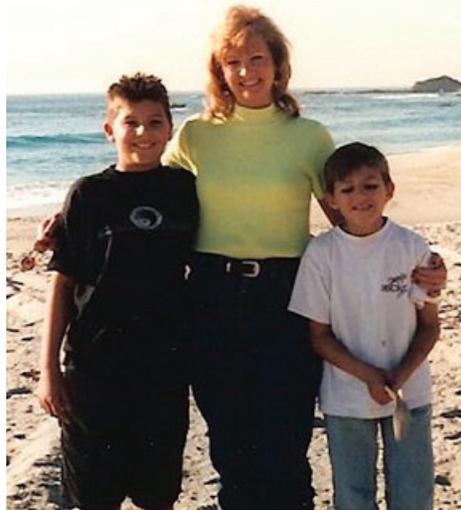
For 16 years Tony's Treehouse (named for Tony Martinez, my son who passed away Dec 23, 1999) has been true to its mission: "Continuing the compassionate spirit of Tony Martinez by uniting family, friends and community who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for families in need."

Here's the story I wanted to share with you:

Our Fundraiser Coordinator, Sue Bottassi, has been visiting the many lovely restaurants, shops and galleries along our beautiful Laguna Beach coastline. We have a few regulars we can count on, but she decided to reach out to those that haven't participated lately. Las Brisas was one of those.

In years past, they have declined to participate in any charity events, but that's okay. Everyone has their own charity or cause that they like to support, and we are grateful regardless of whether they give to the Treehouse or to other charities. (It's all good). Sue dropped into Las Brisas and asked for the manager, who happened to have the day off. She left our brochure and "Request for Donation" letter with all of our information, along with an invite to our event. She had hoped for a \$25 or \$50 gift certificate that we could include in our Silent Auction, hoping to package it with the oceanfront overnight stay provided from the Inn at Laguna.

The next day I received an email from Carly Ward, Executive Manager of Las Brisas with a most wonderful offer. Carly offered a gift certificate for our auction, but also volunteered her crew at the restaurant to sponsor two of our families for our Adopt A Family Holiday event. Wow, that was way more than we ever anticipated!



*Aliso Beach – 1999 – Danny (L),  
Becky and Tony Martinez*

I quickly replied, sent her bio's and photos of two identified needy families that would benefit from their generosity. These two families have pulled themselves from homelessness to becoming independent, self sufficient, working, tax-paying individuals. As we know, living in this County is expensive, especially on minimum wage. I told her how very grateful we were for her very kind offer and would work on the 'Wish Lists' for the families.

The next day I was surprised yet again with an email from Carly, inviting both of the families to Christmas Dinner at Las Brisas, compliments of the restaurant. These families have never been invited to such a splendid event as dinner at this beautiful cliff side restaurant – true treat. Of course I arranged the reservations and times for each of the families for their Christmas Dinner and to tell the truth, they were overwhelmed with the generosity.

Friday afternoon I stopped in to meet Carly in person. We had exchanged emails and she shared with me that she has two boys and understands the challenges of raising a family and providing during the holidays. I have two boys: one with me, who is 26 now, and one who is waiting for me on the other side.

Laguna Beach continues to 'wow' me with their overwhelming spirit of generosity, not just during the holidays but all year long. We currently have, in hand, gift certificates from BJ's Restaurant and Brewery, Massage Envy, Valinda's Art for the Soul, Romeo Cucina Restaurant, Eden Spa and Salon, Brussels Bistro, Hand and Stone Massage and Facial Spa, The Rooftop, Pacific Edge Resort, Hennessey's Tavern, Whole Foods, Ruth Mayer Art Gallery – all to raise money for our Holiday Adopt Program.

We are just a small, grass roots group inspired by the love of one amazing 9 year-old boy, who loved handing out his pocket change to the homeless in our community. Never be surprised by the inspiration that deep love creates.

The Holiday Fundraiser is Saturday, December 12, from 3 – 8 p.m. at a private residence. Please find the information and how to donate at this website: <https://tonystreehousedotorg.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/holiday-trunk-show-and-boutique-invite-nov-20152.pdf>