



# Martha's :CONNECTION

VILLAGE & KITCHEN

A PARTNER OF FATHER JOE'S VILLAGES

Autumn 2013 Volume 3

CHANGING LIVES.

## A WORD FROM OUR 5K TITLE SPONSOR

**A**lmost a decade ago, when Brian Amidei met Father Joe Carroll for the first time at an event for Martha's Village & Kitchen, he had little idea that this chance encounter would lead him to become a champion for the cause and good work that Martha's has done every day since. Father Joe shared his vision on how to rehabilitate the homeless with dignity that



night, and led to an enduring partnership with Martha's to give aid to those in need. Brian felt compelled to get more involved and for the last eight

years has served as a member of the Martha's Village Board of Directors. "Martha's is much more than a free meal to people in need," Brian says. "They offer as much or as little assistance as any individual or family may need – when they need it most." It was the approach taken by Martha's to addressing the underlying cause of homelessness that spoke the loudest to Brian and the rest of his partners at HighTower where they found parallels to these strategies in their world of finance.

Martha's Village offers a gateway of hope for people to regain their lives - becoming more responsible, self-sufficient and productive citizens. HighTower Palm Desert's advisors seek to offer solutions to financial independence, community philanthropy and security within families. Because both groups believe that changing even one person's life can affect generations, increasing support for Martha's to the title sponsorship level for the Thanksgiving 5K was a good fit.

"Giving back is the right thing to do," says partner Joseph Romano. "This community is where we raise our families and it has provided well for us. Why wouldn't we give back?" We thank all of the partners and staff members at HighTower for their generous support of the Martha's Village mission. Visit the HighTower website for more information: <http://go.gl/ZDuR9d>



**For more information on the HighTower Thanksgiving Day 5K, visit: [MARTHASVILLAGE.ORG/new/5k.html](http://MARTHASVILLAGE.ORG/new/5k.html)**

## FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

First 5 Riverside, the Riverside County Children and Families Commission, has awarded the Children's Services Center at Martha's Village & Kitchen scholarships to provide early care and education services



for pre-kindergartners in the Coachella Valley. This initiative will result in significant positive benefits for children and



families in the community. Due to the dual benefits of these services; to help create a strong foundation for a child's future development, and improving their parents' ability to participate in the workforce, First 5 Riverside has increased its support for a substantially higher number of children in

Riverside County to access high quality early care and education services. The Commission is fully committed to achieving a successful outcome, and because scholarships represent a new approach to funding for First 5, they have attached rigorous reporting requirements to these funds. One of the reasons that Martha's was selected to receive this award was that through our existing reporting, we were able to show First 5 the ongoing success rate of our childcare and early education programs over time.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## Barbara Flores

BY LEE POWELL

**I don't think it takes a special gift to be a volunteer,"** observes Barbara Flores, wife of football legend and former Oakland Raiders head coach Tom Flores, who has worked at Martha's Village & Kitchen for about 14 years. "Find something that gives you pleasure and satisfaction, and then just do it. All it takes is a commitment and a passion."

Barbara says she is really amazed, though, that so many years have gone by "because it seems like a drop of water in a bucket. The people I work with make it all worthwhile, and enjoyable. Every day that I have spent at Martha's has been fulfilling."

And that's a lot of days because, every Tuesday from 10 AM to 1:30 PM and often on holidays like Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, you'll find Barbara – who calls herself "the salad lady" – in the kitchen helping to prepare and serve lunch to Martha's clients.

Barbara relates she first thought of Martha's as "only a soup kitchen." But when a friend who was already happily volunteering there encouraged Barbara to give it a try, she quickly learned that Martha's offers "an incredibly comprehensive program of services."

But how did a talented special education teacher, a reading specialist, wind up working in the kitchen? "Every once in a while, you just want to do something different. And I fell in love with it," Barbara states. She admits that it's hard work to be on your feet for all those hours; and often, particularly in the summer, the temperatures in the kitchen are punishingly hot. But Barbara says everyone on the Tuesday volunteer crew she works with "are all a lot of fun," and she very much enjoys the clients, too. "I feel like I have my friends there, on both sides of the steam table."

In fact, Barbara has come to know many of the clients over the years. They are invariably appreciative and grateful, saying, "Bless you!" as she puts food on their plate.

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And there are moments of laughter: Barbara fondly recalls one client "who jokes a lot" coming through the serving line one day and asking, "Are there carrots in that salad?" When Barbara replied yes, he asked, "Could you please pick them out because I'm on the Atkins

diet?" Smiling broadly, Barbara also recalls a client "who was trying to be very sweet" when he told her sincerely, "I bet you were really pretty when you were young."

Her favorite moments on the line, though, are when the children come through. When Barbara asks them if they would like a cookie, "No matter what language they speak, their eyes invariably light up to say yes. It just warms your heart!"

Above all, Barbara focuses on "validating" Martha's clients by treating them with dignity, calling them "sir" or "ma'am." She tries hard to give them the small choices that are often absent in their lives by asking what kind of salad dressing they would like or what she can get them for dessert. "I really do respect our clients. Just imagine how hard it is for them to get up and go through a day. It must be so difficult."

Believing that those who are fortunate have an obligation to help others, Barbara is a tireless advocate for Martha's. "It's about keeping a profile. People know I go there, so they just give me things," she says modestly.

For instance, Barbara encourages friends and acquaintances to give of their time, like a hairdresser who cuts the hair of clients to help them get ready for a job interview. Or she suggests to seasonal neighbors that they donate what's left in their pantries before they leave for the summer. One Thanksgiving when Martha's did not have enough turkeys, Barbara even motivated the staff at a favorite local restaurant to pitch in and show up unexpectedly in a car whose trunk was filled with frozen birds.

"This is a great facility that answers such a huge human need," Barbara asserts. "It extends a helping hand to people who need it. Martha's says, let me help you lift yourself up by offering you opportunity. I hope I can continue to work there for years to come."



***"I feel like I have my friends there, on both sides of the steam table."***

***– Barbara Flores***



## 2013 Volunteer Appreciation

Martha's Village & Kitchen honored the dedicated volunteers who donated 50 or more hours of time in the last year with brunch and awards at the La Quinta Embassy Suites. Over 150 volunteers, staff and their guests attended the event on that sunny Saturday in March. Maribel Pimentel, Volunteer Coordinator at Martha's, handed out awards for most hours served and

longest time served, while the program managers presented awards for volunteers in each of their departments.

We're grateful for the service provided by our dedicated corps of volunteers. Their devotion and passion for our mission is what has kept Martha's going for over two decades. *Thank you!*



*Henry Burdick (left), Chairman of the Board, presents Bill DeMucci with the Volunteer of the Year Award.*

## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### Palm Desert Rotary

Last April, Martha's was one of the beneficiaries of the Palm Desert Rotary Club's annual golf tournament at Palm Valley Country Club. This was only the latest example of the generosity of Palm Desert Rotarians and their partnership with Martha's Village & Kitchen to make a difference in the community.

Krissann Bacon, Palm Desert Rotary Club's Past President, had directed the club's philanthropic efforts on feeding the homeless and less fortunate in the Coachella Valley. Proceeds from the event benefitted Martha's and other local food pantries.

Formed in 1948, Palm Desert Rotary Club was the first civic organization in Palm



Desert and is a member of Rotary International – an organization of 1.2 million members, with clubs in over 200 countries, dedicated to helping where help is needed. Each club has worked to benefit the needy in their own ways, and Palm Desert Rotary is no different. In 2012, Palm Desert Rotary became a silver level sponsor of the Martha's Village Thanksgiving Day 5K, helping to make our biggest fundraising event of the year such a success.

Visit Palm Desert Rotary's website for more information on the great work they do: <http://palmdesertrotary.com/>

We thank them for their continued support!

## Take a Tour of Martha's!

Did you know that Martha's Village offers free tours of our facility in Indio to the public? Give us a call or drop us a line and we'll take you and your group on a tour through all of the programs at Martha's. From our commercial kitchen to our residential rooms, we'll show you what we do and answer any questions you might have. Call Maribel Pimentel at 760.347.4741 ext. 306 to schedule an appointment.







# Thanksgiving Day 5K Run/Walk

HighTower's Thanksgiving Day 5K benefitting Martha's Village & Kitchen is evolving into a great holiday tradition that only gets better each year. We must be doing something right since attendance continues to grow exponentially. Our 2012 event was the most attended 5K in the Coachella Valley and this year we project that over 4,000 participants, volunteers, and spectators will join in on our largest event of the year.

Thousands of people from across the country will descend on the Coachella Valley this Thanksgiving to share a meal and good times with family and friends.

Martha's Village provides nearly a quarter million meals to those in need every year and operates the largest, most successful transitional housing program for the homeless in Riverside County. Our mission is to help our neighbors in need break the cycle of poverty by attaining self-sufficiency. Our free services touch thousands of homeless and impoverished families, adults and children each year. We provide healthcare, licensed childcare, mental health and recovery services, career coaching case and continuing adult education. We also distribute clothing, rent and utility assistance to those most in need. Your support helps make all of this possible.



## TECHNOLOGY MATCH

### Giving Job Seekers a Technological Edge

When a business has a job opening, they post the listing on the Internet. When you fill out an application, nine times out of ten it's online as well. Need to brush up on a skill? Look up a word? Do some research on your new profession? It's all online.

The Career and Education department at Martha's has been equipped with online assisted learning labs, access to the Internet for the public, and specialized web-based job search assistance for years, but those old machines were well past their prime. Enter a group of donors who, while on a tour of our computer labs, noticed all of the old grey PCs and offered to fund their replacement.

With their generous support, we have upgraded the PCs in our computer lab

with all new hardware and learning software. Now residents at Martha's can spend more time working

on resumes and finding jobs, and less time waiting for the old machines to catch up.





# Have fun and give back on Thanksgiving Day!

## HIGHTOWER GIVING DAY 5K Benefiting Martha's Village & Kitchen

We thank each and every one of you in advance who will come out and participate on El Paseo this year. Also, we thank our sponsors and partners in the community, particularly our title sponsor, Hightower Advisors. Without their support we wouldn't be able to stage an event on this scale.

We also ask that you patronize the businesses that have helped us make this event such a success. They're good people who understand that giving back to the community helps everyone and have devoted substantial resources to assisting the needy. Martha's Village applauds that spirit and we hope you will too.

Hope to see you Thanksgiving Day Thursday, November 28, 2013 on El Paseo and Larkspur Day of registration begins at 6:30AM.

Remember to visit our website at [www.marthasvillage.org/new/5k.html](http://www.marthasvillage.org/new/5k.html) to view pre-register dates and locations, register online for the event, and see race results and photos from the 2012 5K.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to register online today!



### FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

## Employees Community Fund of the Boeing Company



The Employees Community Fund of The Boeing Company is a unique employee-owned and directed giving program that allows Boeing employees to support those in need within their local communities.

Employee contributions are either directed to a pooled fund or to an eligible nonprofit of the employee's choice through payroll deductions or one-time gifts. Boeing pays all administrative costs for the fund so that 100% of every employee dollar contributed goes to support the community. More than 4,000 nonprofit organizations benefit each year from the average \$31 million in employee contributions each year.



When Martha's contacted fund representative Charlene Calish, we were offered the opportunity to apply. Once the fund's managers, all employees who volunteer their time, reviewed our application, they decided to fully fund our request for \$5,000, which almost never happens for first time award recipients.

We're thrilled to have the Employee Community Fund as a new partner and look forward to working with this excited and engaged group for a long time to come.

*Magdalena Andrasevits, Executive Director, and Blair Moss, Director of Development, accept the Employees Community Fund gift.*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## October 2013

Wednesday	16	Oct	FIND Food Distribution at Martha's
Wednesday	16	Oct	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Sunday	27	Oct	Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce Golf Cart Parade
Tue-Thu	29-31	Oct	Coat Drive by Brooks Brothers
Thursday	31	Oct	Children Services - Trick or Treat

## November 2013

Fri-Mon	1-4	Nov	Coat Drive by Brooks Brothers
Sat-Sun	2-3	Nov	Booth at Desert ARC Italian Festival
Wednesday	6	Nov	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Saturday	9	Nov	Booth at College of the Desert Street Fair
Monday	11	Nov	Veteran's Day
Wednesday	13	Nov	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Thursday	14	Nov	Fill the Bus - Sunline Bus Event
Saturday	16	Nov	Booth at College of the Desert Street Fair
Saturday	16	Nov	The Joey English Show 94.3 FM KNews
Monday	18	Nov	Toy Drive Begins
Wednesday	20	Nov	FIND Food Distribution at Martha's
Fri-Sat	22-23	Nov	Thanksgiving Day 5K - Pre-registration
Tue-Wed	26-27	Nov	Thanksgiving Day 5K - Pre-registration
Thursday	28	Nov	Thanksgiving Day 5K on El Paseo (8:00A)

## December 2013

M-F	2-20	Dec	Food Basket Distribution
Wednesday	4	Dec	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Fri-Sun	6-8	Dec	Booth at Tamale Festival
Wednesday	11	Dec	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Saturday	14	Dec	Smart & Final One Day Food Drive
Wednesday	11	Dec	Volunteer Orientation (6:00P)
Wednesday	18	Dec	FIND Food Distribution at Martha's Booth at Palm Desert Mall Booth at College of the Desert Street Fair Booth at Palm Springs Village Fest

## FUNDER SPOTLIGHT



A generous \$10,000 core support grant received from Union Bank will be used to support the residential programs at Martha's Village & Kitchen. This type of support is essential in helping Martha's offset operating costs like utilities, insurance and staff salaries while maintaining our extraordinarily high success rate. Recent data from our program shows that over 90% of individuals and families exiting from our residential program leave for permanent housing. This is a remarkable accomplishment and is substantially higher than the national goal of 65%. We thank Union Bank for their ongoing support of our mission and becoming a Community Partner!

The Community Partnership Program is an opportunity for businesses to join with Martha's Village to help fight the problems surrounding poverty throughout the Coachella Valley. Homelessness affects the entire community not just one individual and we believe that it is everyone's responsibility as community members to come together for a solution.

Community Partners like Union Bank choose Martha's when they see the programs and services we provide to help homeless families and individuals become self-sufficient. We are grateful to have such wonderful supporters in our community.

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THANK  
YOU FOR  
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INDIO CA 92201-4737





# Welcome Magdalena Andrasevits

## Martha's Village and Kitchen Executive Director

In just a matter of months, Magdalena Andrasevits went from working on the development of oncology drugs for a clinical research organization, to directing one of the largest nonprofit organizations in the Coachella Valley. Whereas once biotechnology was her business, now it's the homeless and the underprivileged.

Andrasevits was appointed the new executive director of Martha's Village & Kitchen on Aug. 1. In her new position, the Redondo Beach native will oversee the dozens of employees and volunteers it takes to serve up to 600 meals a day and 250,000 meals per year to local residents. "If someone would've said to me a year ago that I would go from working for a health care corporation to working for a nonprofit, I would've said, 'Fantastic, but how exactly is that going to happen?'" Andrasevits said. "It's a godsend. God is in the details," she said. "I was ready for something else. It was time for me to



at such a young age, Andrasevits said she never thought twice about it. "What motivates me... is an inherent wish to serve others," she said.

After eight years in the desert, Andrasevits will serve the disadvantaged at Martha's. "We live in an area that is filled with so many resources money wise. I can't fathom why we have people walking around without a roof over their heads," she said.

transition." Though her previous job for Icon Clinical Research, based in Dublin, Ireland, required extensive travel with little community involvement, looking after others – and leading – has always been in her nature, according to Andrasevits.

When her mother died, Andrasevits, the eldest of four siblings, looked after her little sister, the youngest of the bunch. Andrasevits was 19. Though others questioned why she was raising her sister

Aside from providing hot lunches to the public 365 days a year, Martha's Village & Kitchen offers temporary single and family housing for up to 120 residents,

along with day care, job search centers, and ESL or GED classes, among other programs. With such a large

facility and wide array of services, Andrasevits will have her hands full.

*"I can't fathom why we have people walking around without a roof over their heads."*

– Magdalena Andrasevits

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## The Mysterious Case of the Easter Bunnies of Martha's



**T**hey work at night. Sometimes during the day. Every now and then, in the afternoon. They remain hidden, creating Easter baskets, filling Easter eggs with goodies and supplying fun decorations for the kids living at Martha's Village. They're never seen, but for the last two years, they've been supplying a much-needed dose of joy for families who are experiencing hard times.

They're called The Easter Bunnies of Martha's, and we thank them for everything they do to make life brighter during the holidays.



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Martha's Village & Kitchen  
83791 Date Avenue  
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[www.marthasvillage.org](http://www.marthasvillage.org)

## Sponsor a Room at Martha's

**G**ive the gift of safety, security and stability to those most in need. A limited number of sponsorship openings are still available to donors for residential rooms, classrooms and food pantry rooms. When you sponsor a room in your name, the name of your business or in honor of a loved one, an engraved plaque will show everyone using those facilities your commitment to serving the community. Call Blair Amidei at 760.347.4741 ext. 316 to discuss current openings.



## FUNDER SPOTLIGHT

### S.L. Gimbel Foundation

The S.L. Gimbel Foundation Advised Fund at The Community Foundation Serving the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino has awarded \$10,000 to Martha's Village & Kitchen to purchase perishable and non-perishable food items. This grant will help Martha's serve over 225,000 meals to thousands of homeless and impoverished men, women and children this year and we thank them for their continued support.

## Contact us:



@marthasvillage



Facebook/marthasvillage



[www.marthasvillage.org](http://www.marthasvillage.org)



[marthas@neighbor.org](mailto:marthas@neighbor.org)



(760) 347-4741

## Shop or donate to our Thrift Store.

Call for a free pick-up today!

Martha's Village Thrift Store  
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