



## Celebrations Of Life by Forté Events: Our Beginning In 2010

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### **The Inspiration**

The Miracle Party Foundation is a charity in Denver, Colorado started by mothers who have children being treated for cancer. Each year they host a "Miracle Party" for those children who have completed a year of treatments. It is usually held in September and local event planners take turns coordinating the logistics for the party as a way of supporting their cause.

In 2009, Forté Events offered to help with the Miracle Party. Planning for the event began months prior and involved organizing all the activities that would take place. There was everything you could think of that a child would love. There were limo rides, bouncy castles, makeup artists, video games, bands, every kind of food, and much more. Vendors and sponsors that provided the funds for the party were very excited. Children and their families looked forward to the Miracle Party as being a milestone in their treatment and in their journey toward healing. It was definitely a time to celebrate life in a big way.

During the months it took to plan an event of this scale, a number of children passed away. It was a very difficult time for each of the families as they dealt with their losses, and had their hopes and dreams of healing come to an end. During those times of devastating heartbreak, we noticed some commonalities among the families:

- 1) The families felt alone. Most of the families had moved to Denver because of the great medical care their child was able to receive or they were part of the military or they were transferred to the area with jobs. Whatever the reason, their immediate family often lived miles away.

2) The friends that they had made in the Denver area were mostly families of other children who were also being treated for cancer. Those that had become closest to them were others who also were facing the mortality of their own children.

3) The death of their children came suddenly and unexpected. Even though there was an awareness of cancer, there was the hope of treatment and often it was an unexpected turn of events that caused the death.

4) Because their child's death was unexpected, there were no preparations made for a funeral or memorial service. In the worst moments of their lives, they had to now plan an "event".

### **The Decision**

As we watched families struggle to coordinate the logistics of a funeral that would celebrate the life of their child, we wondered, "where is the event industry?" It seemed logical for event planners who have the resources and the contacts needed to plan celebrations of life that were personalized to honor the individual. As a result, Forté Events established its "Celebrations Of Life" division.

### **Inspired Again**

In 2009, a young boy passed away.

Throughout his cancer treatments, he was always pulled around the hospital in a little red "Radio Flyer" wagon. He felt comfortable and safe in that wagon...it made him brave. Sometimes he even let other children use his Radio Flyer when they needed it to face treatments. The community loved this kid...the hospital staff, other patients, and their families wanted to do something in his honor...but what? It was suggested that all the families who were attending the celebration of life arrive by pulling their children in red Radio Flyer wagons. It was an amazing sight for the family to see hundreds of people walking toward the church pulling the red wagons that symbolized the hope and encouragement their son offered to so many.

Since 2010, we have been honored to work with families around the country to create and execute truly unique and personal celebrations. We planned an Italian garden party for an 87 year old opera singer, a memorial hike for a 60 year old doctor, hosted a southern cook out for a 73 year old Veteran, and held an ash scattering service at sea for a 23 year old surfer just to name a few.

### **The Commitment**

After these touching experiences, we at Forté Events made a commitment to make available our resources and our national and international network of professionals to help those who have lost a loved one. We work with individuals and families to make their

celebrations of life personal and unique. By taking care of the logistics, we hope to help families devote their energy and attention to their emotional and spiritual needs.

Our clients are those who long to celebrate the life of a loved one in a personal way. The events themselves range from the traditional to the very unique that enable people to seek conversation and interaction with family and friends so that they may move forward from hurt, sadness and loss toward hope, acceptance and peace. This is what takes place and is accomplished by our team. This now, has become the passion and purpose of Celebrations of Life by Forté Events.