

### **INTRO**

As the story goes, 30 years ago three women sat in a kitchen on a beautiful Palm Springs evening, sipping scotch and chatting about how they could help others with little thought of furthering their own careers and agendas.

On that fateful night, Jeannette Rockefeller, Gloria Greene, and Joanna Jakway had a vision. A vision of a community where people living with HIV/AIDS would never go hungry, and from this selfless objective they created an organization that speaks to the needs of those with limited income who cannot afford enough food for themselves and their families.

And so the AIDS Assistance Program was born in 1991, a labor of love from this dedicated trio, our 'Founding Mothers,' providing food vouchers and a warm shoulder for those in need living with HIV/AIDS.

All three humanitarians – now unfortunately deceased – brought with them different qualities and experiences. They were joined by several other important community leaders and started working out of a tiny office in the back of Streebar on Arenas Road.

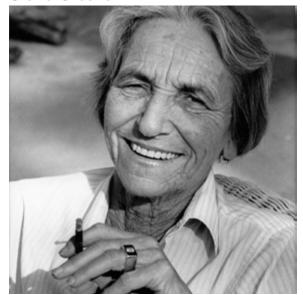




Clients Receiving Vouchers

### THE FOUNDING MOTHERS

### **Gloria Greene**



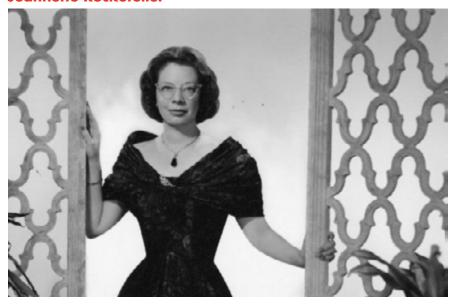
Gloria Greene was the owner of Gloria's, a Palm Springs restaurant popular with the desert's gay community.

Already struck by the suffering associated with HIV/AIDS, Gloria was known to feed those living with HIV from the back door of her restaurant. She operated from the belief that even though medicines may help you live longer, if you don't have proper nutrition and healthy food, your quality of life will suffer.

In a 1997 interview with Coachella Valley journalist Jim Quinlin, the aging humanitarian summed up the fledgling mission as only she could. "My philosophy has always been to make a little from a lot, and by generating just a few dollars from a whole lot of people, we will come up with sufficient funds for the AIDS Assistance Program for several months to come. From where I sit, feeding the hungry should be easy — effortless! Who can sit by and watch anyone starve?"

Gloria's work on behalf of persons with HIV/ AIDS was recognized in 1997 at AAP's Evening Under the Stars fundraising event, where she was the recipient of the Jeannette Rockefeller Humanitarian Award. Two years later, in May of 1999, Gloria rightfully received her star on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars.

### Jeannette Rockefeller



Jeannette Rockefeller was a woman who never knew what it was like to go hungry, but her empathy for those who did was legendary. In addition to being one of the sparks igniting AAP, she was also a tireless volunteer to that organization as well as others.

Jeannette was the widow of Winthrop Rockefeller, former governor of Arkansas and grandson of Standard Oil mogul John D. Rockefeller Sr. Prior to marrying into one of the richest families in the world, she was known as Jeannette Edris, hotel and theater heiress. Despite her old money upbringing, Jeannette was a defender of the downtrodden and a champion of social causes.

Former President Bill Clinton had this to say about her: "She helped lead women into the mainstream of political and public life. As a tireless campaigner, Jeannette Rockefeller was a strong force against discrimination, with an uncanny ability to relate to the common man and woman."

Mrs. Rockefeller was an important backer of a Martin Luther King Memorial Service on the State Capitol steps after Dr. King was assassinated in 1968. The rally, attended by thousands of people, helped defuse what might have been a tense situation in the state.

Over the years, she worked tirelessly to directly influence many lives. She was president of the National Mental Health Association and the Arkansas Association for Mental Health. She served on the national board of the Urban League and the White House Commission on Mental Health under Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon.

### Joanna Jakway



The third component to this spirited trio, Joanna Jakway, was always involved in some kind of community service or cause, according to her son, Palm Springs architect Thomas Jakway. In the early 1960s she worked with the Head Start program and was also one of the cofounders of the League of Women Voters in Palm Springs. She then served on the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission for several terms, including one term as that organization's chairperson.

Decades later, as Thomas began to lose friends to AIDS—people whom his mother had grown to love as well—Joanna was so moved by the anguish of those affected by the deadly disease that she decided to get involved with AIDS work. It was at that time that Joanna met Gloria and Jeannette, and the three became fast friends bound by a common cause that quickly grew into AAP.

"Mom did not have a lot of money to contribute, but she had time, experience, dedication, and emotion," Thomas recalls. "There were no paid employees at the time and Mom became the office 'staff.' One of her greatest rewards was dealing with the 'cold calls'—people who were calling because it was [at that time] the only listing in the phone book under 'AIDS,' usually people who were scared to death and had no idea where to turn."

Joanna would do her best to direct them to the appropriate organization, often Desert AIDS Project, and then follow up with a phone call or two just to see how they were doing.

"Mom especially loved the informal 'kitchen cabinet' meetings she would have with Gloria and Jeannette," he remembers. "Sitting in Jeannette's kitchen drinking scotch and smoking up a storm as they all dreamed about helping 'their boys.'"

Over the years, as the AIDS epidemic spread far beyond the gay community, those 'boys' have expanded to include men, women and children who were either directly or indirectly affected by HIV/AIDS.

### AAP - FOOD SAMARITANS TODAY

Following in its founders' footsteps, AAP expanded its mission in 2015 to include people suffering from cancer, MS, heart or liver disease, and other chronic illnesses. While there have been developments in treating these chronic illnesses, people who suffer from these are presented with daily challenges. AAP is there to provide comfort and support and improve the quality of life for its clients who are all getting by on less than \$18,735 per year.

Since its inception, AAP has distributed nearly \$13 million in direct client service to more than 2,750 clients. Most AAP clients rarely, if ever, make it off of the client list.

It remains a grass roots community-based organization led by a very small staff and a volunteer board of directors housed in a modest, no frills office, who work to assure that the largest percentage of every donated dollar goes directly to client services. AAP raises 100% of its operational budget through private donations, community and local business support, special events and foundation grants. It receives no Federal or State funding. As a grass roots organization, it looks to the community for ongoing support.

AAP – Food Samaritans' ongoing mission is to ensure that all AAP clients can continue to live their lives with dignity and self-respect. It provides nutritional support to improve the quality of the lives of low-income people living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses throughout the Coachella Valley.

Evening Under the Stars volunteers line up on the pink arrival carpet

# About the Jeannette Rockefeller Angel Program

Named in honor of philanthropist and activist Jeannette Rockefeller who helped establish the organization, the Angel Program helps to provide the necessary funds for AAP – Food Samaritans to sustain its nutritional support program. When supporters join the Angel program, they receive a wide range of benefits depending on the level of support. Top donors receive tickets to Evening Under the Stars, recognition at the event, and a special annual Appreciation Dinner just for Angels. Individuals or couples may pledge annual contributions starting at \$500 per year.



Angel Kickoff 2011 with Maxine Nightingale

Ruta Lee with Ann Walker, 2009



Hina and Walter Reed (former Executive Director of AAP), 2008

### **Evening Under the Stars**

What is now the primary fundraising event for AAP started modestly. Hoping to gather together committed community members, in 1993 the AAP founders asked supporter and local realtor Blair Alexander to host a small event in the backyard of his Palm Springs home. It featured acts like Les Dames du Soleil and raised enough money to provide food vouchers for many months.

The event grew in popularity and size, and eventually found a new home on the expansive lawns of the O'Donnell Golf Club.

In 2020 our Evening Under the Stars gala won "Best Fundraising Event" in the Desert Sun's "Best of the Valley" 2020 reader's poll. This makes the gala a three-time winner for this category. Evening Under the Stars was recently named "Most Fun Annual Event" and "Best Charity" in Desert Outlook magazine's "Ultimate Pride List" contest, "Best of the Valley" in Desert Magazine's competition and "Best Fundraising Event" in Palm Springs Life's 2016 Best of the Best awards.

In 1996, Desert Sun reporter Betty Francis covered the third annual Evening Under the Stars and said, "One of the valley's youngest charities could become one of the largest, judging by the sold-out turnout of 400." By 2014, the crowd at O'Donnell Golf Club in Palm Springs approached 1,500 and raised nearly \$1,000,000.



Jackie Lee Houston, Mark Anton, and Jim Houston 2011



Mark Anton and Harold Matzner 2015



Sanford Reed, Catharine Reed, guest, Sherrie Auen, and Ron Auen, 2018



Brooke Beare, Terri Ketover, Catharine McNaughton, Barbara Boxer, Mark Anton, Patrick Mundt, Jane Wagner, Lily Tomlin, 2016

### THE AWARDS

## Jeannette Rockefeller Humanitarian Award

To honor Mrs. Rockefeller's enduring legacy, the organization established The Jeannette Rockefeller Humanitarian Award in 1997, the most prestigious award given each year at Evening Under the Stars. This award honors the humanitarian efforts of outstanding community members such as Jeannette who have contributed their energy, commitment, and influence to raise awareness and funding for important issues including HIV/AIDS.

Previous recipients include Jim & Jackie Lee Houston, Earl Greenberg, and Jamie Kabler.

### Previous Recipients:

1997 Gloria Greene (inaugural)

1998 William Gillespie

1999 Jim & Jackie Lee Houston

2000 Tim Hanlon

2001 Tom Tews, Milan Tojagic, Jorge Villabona

2002 Earl Greenberg

2003 Russell Van Hooser

2004 Daniel Warn

2005 Tom Bombardier & John Fowler

2006 R. D. & Joan Dale Hubbard

2007 Martin McDonald & Robert Schroeder

2008 Wells Fargo Foundation

2009 Craig Simrell & Mark Greganti

2010 Jamie Kabler

2011 Michael Leppen

2012 Robert Archer and Charles Hilliar

2013 Helene Galen

2014 James Houston and Harold Matzner

2015 Betty Francis

2016 Senator Barbara Boxer

2017 Tim Jochen and Lee Erwin

2018 The Auen Foundation/Sherrie & Ron Auen

2019 Ruta Lee

# Gloria Green Inspiration Award

The Gloria Greene Inspiration Award celebrates Gloria's insight, commitment and passion, illustrating the difference that just one person can make in their community. Prior recipients include Barry Manilow, Dick Haskamp, and Ginger Carter.

Great movements often begin with one person's simple inspiration – such as when Gloria Greene began handing out food to those with HIV/AIDS from the back door of one of her restaurants right here in Palm Springs. Since 1999, The Gloria Greene Inspiration Award has celebrated Gloria's insight, commitment and passion, illustrating the difference that can be made in a community.

Previous Recipients:

1999 Vicki Oltean (inaugural)

2000 Maggie & Dick Debona

2001 Dr. Donald Northfelt

2002 Bob Hoven

2003 Barry Manilow

2004 Dick Haskamp

2005 Rev. Andrew Green

2006 The Art Wall Project - Streetbar

2007 Grace Fowler & Lorrie Eyerly

2008 Bill Jones

2009 Tami Low

2010 Ginger Carter

2011 John Bowab

2012 Tony Marchese & Mark Van Laanen – TRIO Restaurant

2013 Barbara & Jerry Keller

2014 John Stansell, M.D.

2015 Gloria Greer

2016 Terri Ketover

2017 Gregg Selleck

2018 The Desert Sun

2019 Glenn Johnson and Michael Melancon



Ron and Sherrie Auen, 2018



Tony Marchese and Mark Laanen, 2012



Gregg Selleck



Lee Erwin and Tim Jochen, 2017



Les Originales, 2010



Tim Hanlon, Bill Jones, Jim Murdock, Arlene Rosenthal, 2008



Rabbi Sally Olins, 2014



Michael Childers



Nabil Najjar and Mark Anton

# Herb Lazenby Community Service Award

The Herb Lazenby Community Service Award was created to recognize an individual's outstanding commitment to service within their community. The award carries the name of its inaugural recipient, Dr. Herb Lazenby, whose name became synonymous with Community Service here in the Coachella Valley. Honorees include Dick Taylor, Arlene Rosenthal, Michael Childers, Rabbi Sally Olins, and Joyce Shampeny.

Previous Recipients:

2000 Dr. Herb Lazenby (inaugural)

2001 Dick Taylor

2002 Marv & Carol Sholl

2003 Kevin Bass

2004 Tim Clark & Daniel Wright

2005 Lily Tomlin

2006 Guy Lawson

2007 Andy Linsky

2008 Arlene Rosenthal

2009 The Bottom Line Magazine

2010 Les Originales

2011 Michael Childers

2012 KPSP Local 2

2013 Brian Wanzek / Bella DaBall

2014 Rabbi Sally Olins and Joyce Shampeny

2015 Richard DeSantis & John Williams

2016 Cathy MacNaughton

2017 Laurie Weitz

2018 Desert Tennis Association represented by Nabil Najar

2019 Ron deHarte

# Joanna Jakway Community Hero Award

At the 2011 Evening Under the Stars, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the organization, the inaugural Joanna Jakway Community Hero Award was given to Jackie Lee and Jim Houston in honor of the countless lives they have impacted. Additional honorees include John Federbusch & Gary Frey, Steve Kaufer, and Jane Wagner.

Previous Recipients:

2011 Jackie Lee and Jim Houston

2012 John Federbusch and Gary Frey

2013 no award given

2014 Steve Kaufer

2015 no award given

2016 Jane Wagner

2017 Bob Pollock (posthumously)

2018 no award given

2019 no award given



Jane Wagner, Mark Anton, Lily Tomlin, Scott Histed, and Suzanne Somers, 2016

## Frank Jurczyk Volunteer Award

Without volunteers, no non-profit organization could survive, let alone thrive. AAP – Food Samaritans operates with only two full-time staff members and relies on the dedication and commitment of an amazing group of volunteers. This award is named after Frank Jurczyk, who was a volunteer and cornerstone of our Volunteer program for many years. Frank was the organization's right arm in the late '90s when we operated with a staff of one. In honor of him, AAP frequently honors one volunteer who stands out.

Previous Recipients:

2003 Frank Jurczyk (posthumously)

2004 Jim Borba

2005 Vinnie Stoppia

2006 Kenn Kroll

2007 Joseph Talarico

2008 Jim Murdock

2009 Jay Horwitz

2010 Steve Oliver

2011 Arturo Montes & David Erickson, for service to the community and Jeffrey Bach for service to AAP

2012 Dana Adkins, for Service to the community and Bob Crebo for service to AAP

2013 Volunteers recognized at a separate Volunteer Appreciation dinner

2014 no award given

2015 no award given

2016 no award given

2017 no award given

2018 Angela Slater & Denise Haslam

2019 no award given

# Corporate Angel Award

The Corporate Angel Award was inaugurated in 2016 to recognize outstanding corporate partners that have supported AAP – Food Samaritans consistently and with an abundance of heart.

Please note that not every award is bestowed annually.

Previous Recipients:

2016 Walgreens

2017 Eisenhower Medical Center

2018 no award given

2019 no award given



Walgreens Holiday Stockings gift to clients



Eisenhower check presentation, 2014

#### THE ENTERTAINERS

### **Evening Under the Stars Entertainers**

Over the past 27 years since Evening Under the Stars began, it has not only raised funds and increased awareness of AAP's mission, it has also featured many significant and world-renowned performers. Early performances were intimate affairs at private estates in Palm Springs, but over time this fantastic evening of entertainment generated such an overwhelming demand for tickets that the event moved to the spacious grounds of the O'Donnell Golf Club in downtown Palm Springs.

In addition to honoring significant individuals and organizations, Evening Under the Stars has always been a fun experience, attracting new supporters who might go on to become major sponsors. As it began in the garden of a private home, the event has eschewed formal attire and has maintained its flair and fun vibe. Guests wear a variety of imaginative attire, often coordinating with the theme related to the evening's entertainment.

Each year, a dramatic and impressive stage is constructed to provide a focal point for an awards presentation and the entertainment. After the awards ceremony the stage is transformed into a brilliant backdrop where a wide variety of fabulous and famous performers have enchanted the audience, often bringing them to their feet dancing. Traditionally, a fireworks display concludes the evening.

In addition to the stellar performers highlighted below, the Evening Under the Stars stage has featured Pink Martini, The Go-Go's, Nell Carter, Tyne Daly, Melissa Manchester, Jane Oliver, Lorna Luft, Bea Arthur, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, and the iconic Village People, among others.



Lily Tomlin, 2006



Gladys Knight, 2018

# Previous Evening Under the Stars entertainment highlights include:

### **Barry Manilow (multiple years)**

Superstar Barry Manilow has graced the stage multiple times over the years. Manilow, who has a career spanning more than 50 years, recorded and released 51 Top 40 singles on the Adult Contemporary Chart, including 13 that hit number one, 28 appearing in the top ten, and 36 in the top twenty. In a review after his May, 2000 performance, Desert Sun reporter Bruce Fessier wrote: "Barry Manilow may have been a little overcome by the moment when he appeared on a stage Saturday at O'Donnell Golf Club and called the AIDS Assistance Program's outdoor benefit his 'favorite annual event in his favorite city." He highlighted the event's 10th anniversary spectacular with an amazing performance with his orchestra and then in 2006 he returned with his then new Las Vegas Review.



Barry Manilow



Evening Under the Stars stage



## Cyndi Lauper (2013)

Grammy winner, civil rights crusader, and Broadway powerhouse Cyndi Lauper highlighted the 20th annual Evening Under the Stars with a performance that was mesmerizing, joyful, and nostalgic. AAP had longed to engage Lauper as a performer for the event, and their wish was granted when she agreed to headline that year. "I was just blown away that we had somebody of Cyndi's caliber who supported our cause," Mark Anton said. "Like millions of people, I love her music and appreciated her long and impressive history of civil rights advocacy."

Lauper, a longtime, fierce advocate in the battle to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic, was a perfect fit for Evening Under the Stars. In an interview for Palm Springs Life Lauper said: "When I found out it was an AIDS/HIV benefit, I immediately said yes. AIDS is still around. Young kids think they are immune — 'Oh, it's all gone, we can live with the medicine.' Well, I know people living on medicine, and sometimes it's hard for them. Quality of life may not always be so fabulous."

Lauper co-founded the True Colors Fund
— inspired by her mega-hit single 'True
Colors.' The foundation's mission is to engage
individuals, "especially straight people," as its
website notes, "to become active participants
in the advancement of equality for all." One of
its main tasks is to raise awareness about and
eradicate LGBT youth homelessness.

"I had thought straight people were going to say something about the issue, but nobody was opening their mouth," Lauper said about launching the foundation. "What — you're not going to stand up? What about all the brothers and sisters and uncles and what have you? Stand up and say, 'Hey, these people are part of my family. You can't mess with my family!'

The highlight of the stunning evening was when Lauper performed a soulful rendition of 'True Colors.' The crowd collectively held its breath as the music washed over them as they held candles high in the air and gently swayed to the music. "We also held our breath when she spontaneously decided to walk onto the top of one of our major sponsor's tables in the front row!" remembers Anton.

### First Ladies of Disco (2014)

The 21st annual Evening Under the Stars assembled a fantastic group of stellar performers who had everyone on their feet with an amazing night of 70's dance music. The show was dubbed "First Ladies of Disco" and included Linda Clifford, France Joli, Evelyn "Champagne" King, Maxine Nightingale, Pamala Stanley, Anita Ward, Martha Wash, and the ladies formerly of Chic – Alfa Anderson, Luci Martin, and Norma Jean Wright. The event's theme was inspired by the book, "First Ladies of Disco: 32 Stars Discuss the Era and Their Singing Careers," by James Arena.

Attendees wore platform shoes and colorful attire with period-appropriate jewelry as they danced on the green lawns at the foot of the San Jacinto Mountains.

Ms. Wash got it started, appropriately enough, with her call 'Everybody dance now!' as smoke and light filled a stage full of choreographed dancers under a massive disco ball. Ward followed with her hit, 'Ring My Bell.'

As the reunited members of Chic sang, it was back to the 'Good Times.' Two of the vocalists had performed together since Chic broke up in the early 1980s, but this was the first time all three had performed together as a group. They stunned the audience as they sang 'Le Freak'.



The First Ladies of Disco, 2014

Maxine Nightingale intoned 'Right Back Where We Started From' and other classics of the era.

In a musical tribute to the fabulous "Queen of Disco" Sylvester James, three big voices who knew him well, Jeanie Tracy, Charlene Moore, and Martha Wash, performed a medley of his mega-hits 'Dance Disco Heat,' 'Can't Stop Dancing' and '(You Make Me Feel) Mighty Real.'

And just when the audience thought the night couldn't get any better, Martha Wash was joined on stage for a finale with all the famed Divas who had performed that night singing the classic, 'It's Raining Men.' They brought the house down and made the gala a night unlike any other!



# Mary Wilson (2007 & 2009)

Mary Wilson's quiet elegance was on stage at Evening Under the Stars in 2007 and 2009. She entranced the audience with solo renditions of famous hits. Wilson, along with Diana Ross and Florence Ballard, was part of the iconic musical group The Supremes. The trio would record 12 No. 1 hits between 1964 and 1969. "Motown Style" transported the 2009 Evening Under the Stars audience back to a particularly festive era in celebration of Motown's 50th anniversary. Wilson launched a solo career in 1977, and has been an active partner with AAP on many occasions.

In addition to her headline performances, in 2015 she was the special guest performer for the annual Jeannette Rockefeller Angel Program Kickoff Celebration. She has attended the event many times and in 2015 she personally led the evening's fund-raising effort, raising \$60,000 in just one night.

Mary Wilson, 2009



Gladys Knight, 2018

## Gladys Knight (2018)

"Empress of Soul" Gladys Knight was the headline performer for the 25th annual Evening Under the Stars. Very few singers have ever matched her unassailable artistry. She is a seven-time Grammy winner, has enjoyed No. 1 hits in pop, gospel, R&B, and adult contemporary categories, and has triumphed in film, television, and live performances. "Gladys Knight is one of the greatest singers in the world, period," said Mark Anton, CEO/Executive Director of AAP – Food Samaritans.

During the performance she mesmerized the crowd with her incredible vocal range and renditions of some of her most popular hits including 'You're the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me,' 'Neither One of Us (Wants to Be the First to Say Goodbye),' 'I Heard it Through the Grapevine,' and 'If I Were Your Woman.' The audience was captivated by her soulful rendition of her classic 'Midnight Train to Georgia.'



The Cast of Laugh-In, 2006

### The Cast of Laugh-In (2006)

The 2006 gala saw guests wearing miniskirts, go-go boots, and psychedelic colors in a show featuring the entire remaining cast of the popular 1960s-era variety hour, Laugh-In. It was definitely a 'sock it to me' year!

Performers included Lily Tomlin – a staunch longtime supporter of the organization, who has attended the event numerous times and has even been the Mistress of Ceremonies – Arte Johnson, Goldie Hawn, Jo Ann Worley and others.

Laugh-In ran from 1968-1973 and was known for its rapid-fire series of gags and sketches, which often had sexual innuendos or politically charged messages. The performance mimicked the show's format and even included a replica of the show's psychedelically painted "joke wall," which allowed the cast members to open panels and tell rapid-fire hilarious one-liners.



B-52's, 2011

### B-52's (2011)

The iconic 80's New Wave rock group the B-52's headlined the 18th Annual Evening Under the Stars. The B-52's are arguably the world's greatest party band and they elated the guests with their energy and the fun that they brought to the performance. Guests danced the night away to B-52's hits such as 'Love Shack' 'Rock Lobster,' and 'Roam (If You Want To).'

### **Other Notable Performers**

Nancy Wilson headlined the 2004 gala with the Las Vegas Rat Pack & the Dry Martini Orchestra as her opening.

In 2008, Pink Martini gave everyone attending Evening Under the Stars creative license to pull all their fuchsia and hot pink out of their closets as they grooved to the international array of melodies from the popular group. It was a dazzling sight. That year began what is now our tradition of encouraging theme-related/color-coordinated festive attire.



Pinkie Meringue Shimmer, Blake Holiday, and Bella da Ball, 2008

### **ABBA Tributes** (so good we had them twice!)

The music of ABBA is beloved around the world, and the 70's-inspired style of ABBA tribute band Arrival – billed as "the world's greatest ABBA show" - headlined the event in 2010 with a performance featuring some of ABBA's original musicians. They looked and sounded so much like the original ABBA that the audience was over the moon, singing hits such as 'Knowing Me, Knowing You,' 'Dancing Queen' and many more. They included a special version of 'I Believe in Angels' with a local chorus in a moving tribute to members of the Jeannette Rockefeller Angel Program. Arrival from Sweden reprised their performance in 2019 performing the music of ABBA with an encore celebration to a sold-out crowd



Arrival



Evening Under the Stars, 2017

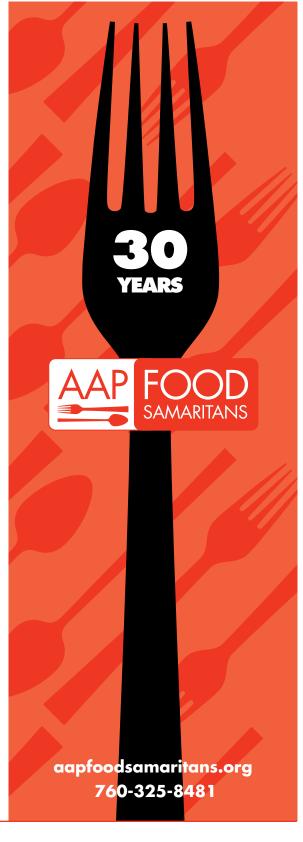
### INTO THE FUTURE

No one can predict what the future holds, as the year 2020 has so clearly shown us, but AAP – Food Samaritans remains committed to helping the most needful among us for as long as we are needed and as long as we have your loving support.

Thank you for being a part of our story.

Mark Anton, C.E.O./Executive Director

Major Corporate Supporters



# **PALM SPRINGS LIFE**















