



THE LORI FUND

REMEMBERING A SPECIAL PERSON AND HONORING THOSE WHO SERVE

By Joe Passov

When Lori Sullivan passed away from a heart attack on April 11, 2019, the shining light went out in Frank Petruno's life. Understandably, he was devastated at losing his cherished wife. That light, however, wasn't completely extinguished. It flickered. As Frank grieved, his world was newly illuminated by an idea of how to remember Lori in a special way.

"My life changed overnight," said Petruno. "I lost my best friend, my balance, my person. I needed to keep Lori's legacy of love and kindness alive. We were a military family; our son was an Army Ranger and now a Captain in the Green Berets. He has done numerous

tours overseas throughout the Middle East. During each deployment I watched Lori bake and shop, to put together care packages and worry about his safety. Luckily, he returned home safely all seven times."

Amid his grief and his family's strong military connection, Frank Petruno snapped into action. He and Lori had been residents of the Hammock Beach community in Palm Coast, Fla. for six years. Enlisting the aid of their many friends there, he created a charity golf tournament at the Troon-managed, Jack Nicklaus-designed, Ocean Course at Hammock Beach.

The event would keep Lori's memory burning bright and also benefit the Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF), a non-profit organization that provides fully funded education and other benefits to the surviving children of fallen Special Operations personnel, as well as for the children of all Medal of Honor recipients. SOWF also provides financial assistance to severely wounded Special Operations personnel.

"What better way to honor Lori, support our military and those who aren't as lucky?" asked Petruno. "I started the Lori Fund to support the Special Operations Warrior Foundation and other military groups who sacrificed for our country. Taking my personal tragedy and helping others has been instrumental in my healing process."

A highlight of the 2021 event was a concert on the practice range that featured Pryor Baird and Kaleb Lee, contestants on the NBC-TV show, "The Voice," funded by boutique women's clothing company By Alexa Rae, a sponsoring partner with The Lori Fund.

Add in an awards ceremony banquet at the Hammock Beach clubhouse, where speakers include Gold Star families, retired military brass, and U.S. Congressmen, and The Lori Fund event has it all — entertainment, patriotism, and charity. A silent auction at the dinner raised more than \$80,000, thanks to

donated items such as golf rounds at Winged Foot, Butler National, and Michael Jordan's new Grove XXIII.

New for the May 20-21, 2022 event will be enhanced entertainment and more players, necessitating the use of Hammock Beach's second course, the Tom Watson-designed Conservatory.

"We have zero overhead expenses at The Lori Fund," said Petruno, "so all monies raised go directly to helping the families of our fallen Special Warriors. In less than two-and-a-half years, The Lori Fund will have donated over \$365,000 to Special Operations Warrior Foundations and other military groups. I know how proud Lori is of all of us!" ■



For more information and to donate, please go to www.TheLoriFund.com.