



WANT HAPPY
KIDS? FIND
OUT HOW
FAMILIES
IN AUSTIN
VOLUNTEER
AND GROW
TOGETHER.

About 100 Austin
Boy Scouts
stepped up to
help sort food
at Capital Area
Food Bank.

GREAT EVENTS

BY SHELLEY SEALE

6 FACTORS FOR EVENT SUCCESS

Take it from an expert, Larry Kille: Fundraising events are an art.

Barn-Burner

Shoal Crossing Event Center looks to be the next fundraising party hot spot.

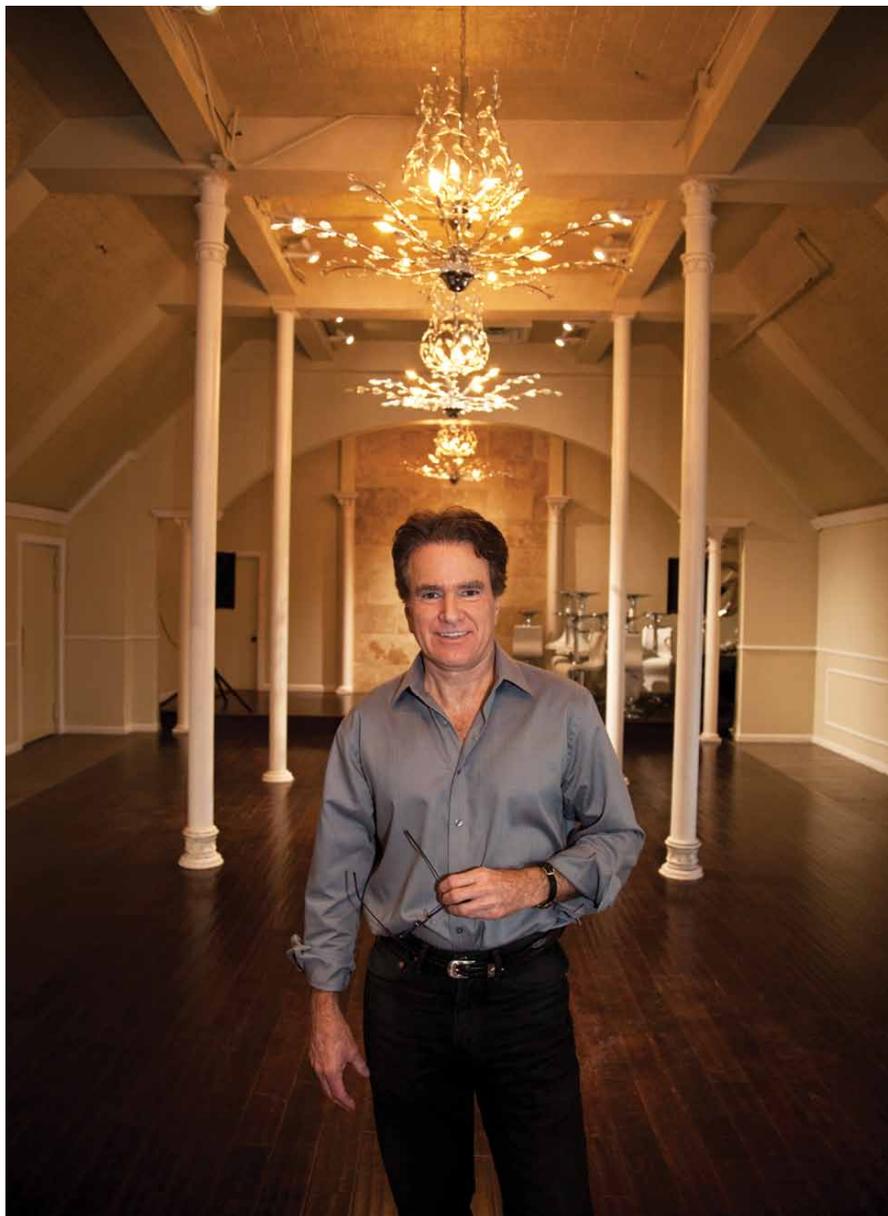
Take a look at The Barn now. That restaurant icon of the 1960s “North Austin” is now a flexible, beautiful event center for up to 700 people, featuring more drama, flair, lighting options and A/V prowess than most hotel ballrooms — and a lot more personality.

Sterling Affairs renovated this space with non-profit fundraisers in mind.

It’s obvious that Larry Kille and his partners put everything they had into making Shoal Crossing. “I’m not sure I have another one of these in me,” says Kille. “But we’re really proud of it.”

— Monica Williams

Learn more ShoalCrossing.com



PHOTOGRAPH BY BETH PERKINS

Larry Kille knows how to throw a party. As the president of Sterling Affairs Catering & Event Planning, Kille has had plenty of experience planning and producing hundreds of events over the years.

In the 1980s he opened several restaurants including Toulouse on 6th Street. “During these years I began to help nonprofits throw events during the midweek because of the exposure and the great locations that we had,” Kille says.

“Over the years we hosted hundreds of events, and made many relationships that last to this day.” Kille eventually rolled that valuable insight into starting Sterling Affairs with partners Jan Brainard and Scott Hillen.

“I have always enjoyed working in the nonprofit world because when you are able to add to a noble cause while doing the things you love the most, you get the best of both worlds.”

He shares his list of the most important factors for a great event with GivingCity Austin:

Location A great site for your event is perhaps the most crucial element.

Date Make sure your date doesn’t conflict with holidays or other major known events around town.

Committee Your event planning team or board of directors is important; make sure you have a hospitality expert on board.

Budget Having a solid budget, and sticking to it, is imperative.

Artistic creativity This isn’t a corporate meeting, it’s a party; make sure there is some artistic leadership and creativity in the planning.

Cohesive direction from year to year If you are organizing an ongoing event such as an annual fundraiser, it’s important to have a constant leadership from year to year.

“Occasionally the leadership, artistic direction and financial leadership can come from the same person, but usually these are different roles,” Kille adds. “Hospitality expertise should be in the picture from the beginning, not added midway through the creative process.”

Starting from Scratch

A known nonprofit leans on volunteer experience to execute its inaugural gala.

By Chantal Rice



On Saturday, May 5, the Austin affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure will host its first-ever gala fundraiser, a celebratory affair dubbed the Perfectly Pink Party. Hosted at Shoal Crossing, the event will include catering by Sterling Affairs, live music from Ruby Jane and Collide, dancing, special surprises, a live auction and, of course, plenty of pink.

Event co-chair Deb Davis Groves, a two-year breast cancer survivor and Komen volunteer, was tickled pink

to provide GivingCity some insight into planning Komen Austin’s inaugural Perfectly Pink Party.

GC: How did you start planning for the gala? How did you define the theme and locate the venue?

Deb Davis Groves: I have done events for a long time, so they are my thing. I’ve been volunteering for Komen since February 2010, and when they were talking about this event, I asked to be involved. We did a lot of brainstorming. Finding the venue was pretty easy because I had worked with Larry Kille of Sterling Affairs, which does catering for Shoal Crossing. He’s very nonprofit-friendly. I give him a budget, he adheres to it and puts on a fabulous party. Figuring out the theme was fun. After you get through cancer to the other side, you never really walk away from it; you start celebrating life. I had been throwing a celebration for myself that was similarly themed, and a Perfectly Pink Party seemed like a good fit for this event.

GC: How do you set a goal for fundraising and attendance?

DDG: We wanted to reach out to a new group of people, in addition to those who are already Komen supporters, and spread awareness about the Austin affiliate. We’re shooting for 300 to 400 attendees. We wanted to diversify who we’re reaching, but it’s also important that we meet our financial needs in the community. I’m cautious about talking numbers, but we certainly want to give back to the cause in our community. Seventy-five percent of what we make will serve the five-county area and 25 percent will go to research.

GC: This is not your first time planning a fundraiser. How do you make it uniquely Komen?

DDG: We start with all the pink! It’s about celebrating life and remembering those who aren’t with us anymore. It’s about those stories and creating awareness. All those things will be part of the event. We’re going to have Pink & Pizzazz giveaways, pink Champagne and our VIPink cocktail reception. The whole evening is going to be filled with tremendous celebration.

Learn more at KomenAustin.org/PerfectlyPinkParty.