

POWAY *Living*

FEBRUARY 2021



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The
Boretto
Family
For the Love of Poway

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The Boretto Family

For the  of Poway



Meet the Boretto's

Parents:

Tod and Abby

Children:

Tabatha – recently graduated from the University of La Verne with a degree in criminology

Lucy – attends Oregon State University

Hugh – attends the California State University Maritime Academy

Neighborhood:

Del Norte

Occupations:

Tod is a composite engineer who runs his own consulting firm, designing products such as golf shafts, arrows, auto parts and military armament. Prior to raising her family, Abby had a successful career in the hospitality industry. She is now a full-time volunteer for three Poway nonprofits and was recently crowned “Mrs. California All-Star United States 2021.”

Pets:

Gizmo, Millie, Glitzzy

Family Philosophy:

“Anybody can help anybody,” states Abby. “No one is at the very bottom.” Tod says the family also lives by a “shop local” philosophy. “It’s so important to support local businesses, especially in the current economic environment.”



By Anita Edmondson | Photos by Michelle Duquette, Soul Light Photography

We would like to thank Dr. James Spalenka, Rancho Bernardo Dentistry for sponsoring this month's Resident Feature.

Anyone who steps foot inside the Boretto residence is immediately struck by a sense of family and a feeling of love. A decorative, three-dimensional “XO” greets you in the entry way. Framed art, the talented work of the three Boretto children, Tabatha, Lucy and Hugh, fills the walls. The word “love” is spelled out in large letters on a giant queen palm in the backyard, just a few steps from the “heart tree” – a potted tree adorned with ornamental hearts. This is a family firmly rooted in love.

Where it began

Tod and Abby Boretto, both single parents, met in 2005 and went on their first date to The Brigantine on Poway Road. They married two years later on New Year’s Eve at the Hotel del Coronado. The couple, along with their blended family, wanted to create a happy place for their family to live, grow and love.

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Dr. James Spalenka



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After living on the coast of Los Angeles for several years with her three young children and dogs before meeting Tod, Abby says, "I was ready for land and a pool! And Poway was my only destination." The family found the perfect place to call home on Indian Trail Road in the Del Norte area of Green Valley – with both land and a pool.

Just like home

Once the Boretos settled into Poway, Abby was pleasantly surprised by how much this North County community paralleled the tight-knit feel of her own hometown of Farmington, CT. "It's a small town outside of Hartford and it was just a great place to grow up. I couldn't believe how much Poway mirrored my hometown." Citing its scenic landscape, friendly residents and diversity, Abby states, "Poway really is a special place."

Tod echoes that sentiment. Originally from Napa, CA, Tod appreciates the slower pace, as well as the amenities and excellent management of the city. "You have well maintained streets, well planned affordable housing, historic places like Old Poway Park, and all the revitalization currently happening on Poway Road," explains Tod. "Poway does a great job of blending of the old and the new. It all makes for a great place to live."

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Abby, who decided to embrace her prematurely graying hair, has turned it into a competitive edge in the realm of pageantry. Named the first "silver" Mrs. California All-Star United States 2021 (her second title in the competition), her reign began January 1st and she will compete for the national title in Savannah, GA in July. Turning 50 this year served as a catalyst to compete for the title one more time. "Most people shy away from turning 50, but I feel like I'm joining a super club!" she exclaims. Not a beauty contest, the pageant promotes civic-minded, patriotic, real women who are eloquent and quick on their feet. "I'm competing with my gray hair because I want to be as authentic as possible," explains Abby. "It is my desire to empower and inspire other women to be as authentic as they can be, too."

Photo Credit: Nicole Barton



Fairy gardens are another small, but visible, way Abby Boretto helps spread joy and love in the Poway community. These magical, miniature outdoor dioramas, often located curbside, feature figurines and accessories arranged with great detail and care much to the delight of residents, young and old. Creating these enchanting scenes began with a few neighbors on the Boretto's street and the magic has spread. Today, you can take a "fairy walk" on Indian Trail Road and see one on nearly every property. Abby has created them at the homes of friends with young children, those who are housebound, or who might need a pick-me-up.

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For the three Boretto offspring, now young adults, growing up in Poway meant living in a safe, friendly community. "Everywhere you go, you run into someone you know," says Tabatha.

The children attended Poway schools and participated in a variety of sports and extracurricular activities, from football, softball and lacrosse to dance and student council. The family often hosted team parties and other school-related gatherings at their home. "Tod and I created this home to spread joy and love," explains Abby. "It's a happy place."

Acts of love

The Boretto's spread that love well beyond their property line, too. A hospitality professional for many years before having children, Abby has made a second career of volunteerism. "I grew up in a very civic-minded family," she explains, "so it was very natural for me to get involved in the Poway community."

Abby currently serves in the ways and means role for three local nonprofits: Soroptimist International of Poway; Cinderella's Attic; and the Poway Senior Center, her passion project at the moment.

With the pandemic restrictions put in place last year, Abby says the Senior Center board of directors had to think fast and get creative with fundraising. That meant shifting from weekly BINGO nights to bimonthly rummage sales held at their temporary location on Pomerado Road. By the end of 2020, the organization raised \$70,000 with just 12 weekend rummage sales.

The work can be physically demanding, but it's a team effort, she notes. And the personal rewards make it all worthwhile. "Because I am able to go out in the community and help others on a daily basis, my life is so enriched. Nothing warms my heart more than seeing someone that we have helped."

Although Abby is the face of volunteer work within the household, all family members get involved behind the scenes. "Whenever I ask for help, I know I can count on them," she notes.

A family that cares together

Raising a family that loves its community as much as its family members can be challenging in today's world. For Tod and Abby Boretto's, it starts with caring about each other. Tod admires and respects Abby's high energy and charisma. "She has the heart of an elephant. She gives, gives, gives without asking for anything," Tod observes. "And she's obviously beautiful," he adds.

Tod is the perfect complement to Abby's energy and ideas. "He is super supportive of everything I get involved in," she observes. "He never questions me."

Sounds like true love.



"Our mom's volunteer work has definitely inspired us to get involved in our own volunteer activities," says Lucy Boretto. "Her connections become our connections," adds her sister Tabatha, which also helps with those endeavors.

Just queening around

The recipient of three pageant titles and crowns, Abby is proudly makeup-free, down-to-earth, and self-deprecating offstage; yet always full of winsome wit and energy, clearly the magical ingredients to her success onstage – and off. "If I had to compete in a talent category, it would be standup comedy," she quips. "But I would have to work on my act."

At home, Abby jokingly refers to her world as The Queendom. How does husband Tod feel about living in The Queendom? "I just go along like a loyal subject," he laughs.

Several years ago, Abby coined the phrase "Just Queening Around" to capture her don't-take-your-fabulous-self-too-seriously philosophy. She is launching a line of "Just Queening Around" merchandise later this year.

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