

# Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation A Day of Giving at the Coral Casino

By **ANDRIA WATSON** / CASA

**A DAY OF GIVING TURNED OUT TO BE A DAY OF RENEWED APPRECIATION FOR THE GIFT OF LIFE** as the Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation and guests

were welcomed by the sun and sea to the Coral Casino for a luncheon and silent auction on Wednesday, October 8th.

“This year at the third annual luncheon, we wanted to honor the Caesar family,” shared TBCF President Rachael Steidl. “This a family that has given their time, resources, and love to our community. They’ve served as board members, Grizzlies, sponsors, and committee members. You can easily see why they’re up here.”

Following a silent auction, TBCF guests were welcomed by executive director Marni Rozet, and Rebecca Solodon, a 21 year-old local cancer survivor, who performed with her band after sharing an inspiring testimony of courage and hope, exemplified in her song, *Through the Fire*. Beverlye Hyman-Fead and her granddaughter, ten-year-old Tessa Mae Hamermesh, spoke about their new book

*Nana, What Is Cancer?*

But it was thirteen-year-old Melinda Marchiano that seemed to stir the hearts and tears of everyone in the room when she delivered her story about her experience with cancer and her struggle to overcome the disease.



**Rebecca Solodon**, cancer survivor, TBCF spokesperson, singer and songwriter

“The Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation has nourished our lives,” shared Lee Marchiano, Melinda’s mother. “We are eternally grateful for all of the angels that helped us with her treatment.” “The foundation allowed me to do something I didn’t think was possible during my treatments – smile,” shared Melinda.

“We didn’t think people had room in their bodies for all that love.”

Founded almost five years ago by Nikki Katz, the TBCF has grown to provide more than ten times more financial assistance than any other national organization that supports children with cancer, and has given over \$277,000 since it’s inception in 2003.

An average of 12,500 children

and adolescents are diagnosed with cancer every year in the United States. One in every 330 children will develop cancer by age 20. TBCF provides parent support groups where childcare and dinner is provided, care packages which include gift certificates and toys, hotel accommodations for the family of a child undergoing treatment, Storytellers, volunteers who visit Cottage hospital three times a week and read stories to children in pediatrics, body and mind strength training, and in cases where the battle is lost, a funeral fund is also available.

For information, call 962-7466 or visit [www.TeddyBearCancerFoundation.org](http://www.TeddyBearCancerFoundation.org)



**Lee Marchiano**, her daughter and cancer survivor **Melinda**, with **Dr. Dan Greensfield**



**Natalie Clifton**, TBCF Development Assistant, and **Marni Rozet**, TBCF Executive Director



**Kira Faye**, **MaryAnne Contreras**, and Committee members **Brandi Hughe**, and **Sheila Hunt**



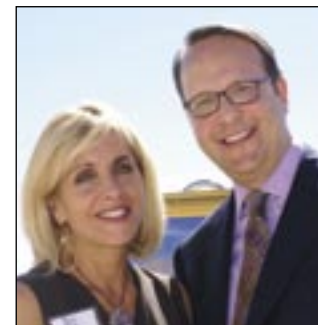
From left– **Susannah Rake**, Board of Directors, **Debra Borden**, and **Alixe Mattingly**



**Carrie Haffner**, Event Committee, and **Alyson Spann** of Village Properties



Guest speakers **Beverlye Hyman-Fead** and granddaughter **Tessa Mae Hamermesh**



**Jodi Fishman-Osti**, Event Committee and **Tad Webster**



**Rachel Stull** and **Mary Ellen Tiffany**, Montecito Bank & Trust