

Tess Frana and Friends Strike a Blow for Hope

by Mary Foster

Colorful balloons floated up toward the ceiling. The crack of dozens of bowling balls whacking pins reverberated throughout Airport Lanes Bowling Alley in Sanford. And while Tess's birthday party may have looked like just another birthday celebration, nothing could be further from the truth.

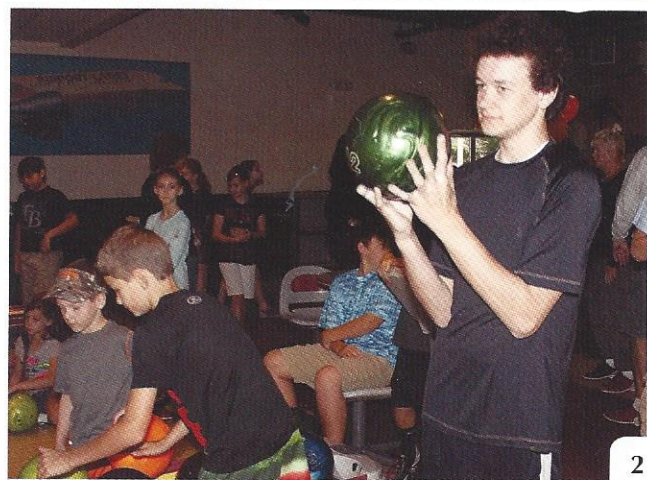
Several weeks before her 10th birthday, Tess Frana came home from school and told her mother, Terri, that instead of receiving presents at her upcoming birthday party, she wanted her classmates at All Souls Catholic School to donate to the Brian Christopher Lanier Wings of Hope Foundation. Her mother was not at all surprised.

"Tess is just like that... all heart for others!" beams Terri. "As a member of student council, she had just heard one of her teachers make a presentation about what wonderful work the organization is doing."

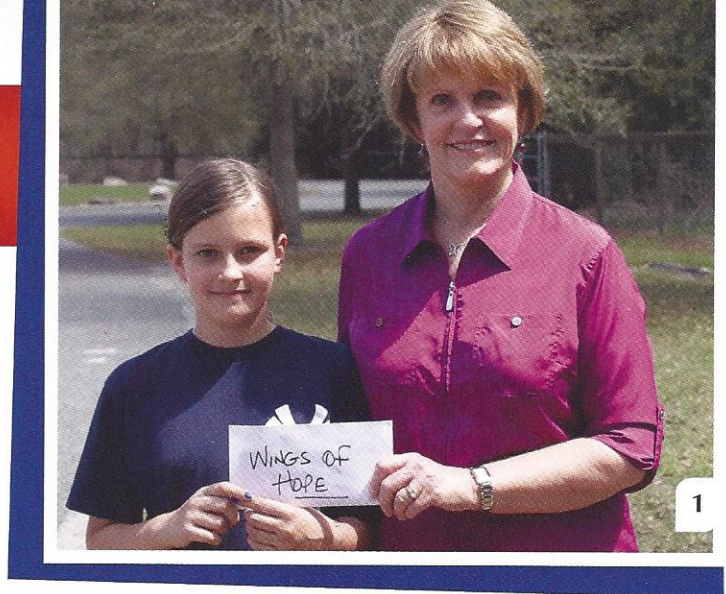
"When I first heard about Wings of Hope, it made me feel sad to learn that kids aren't allowed to stay in foster care after they turn 18, when they don't have anyplace to go," says Tess. "I just wanted to do something to help."

The response to Tess's generosity was immediate. Many of her classmates' parents emailed Terri, expressing their admiration for her daughter's altruism. Her classmates were also quick to speak up, expressing how very special they thought it was for her to think about and put other people first.

Tess hopes her story will encourage others to take the initiative in doing something for those less fortunate. "I want them to think about helping other people, too," Tess says, adding, "Many people don't think they can do that much, but one person can do a lot."



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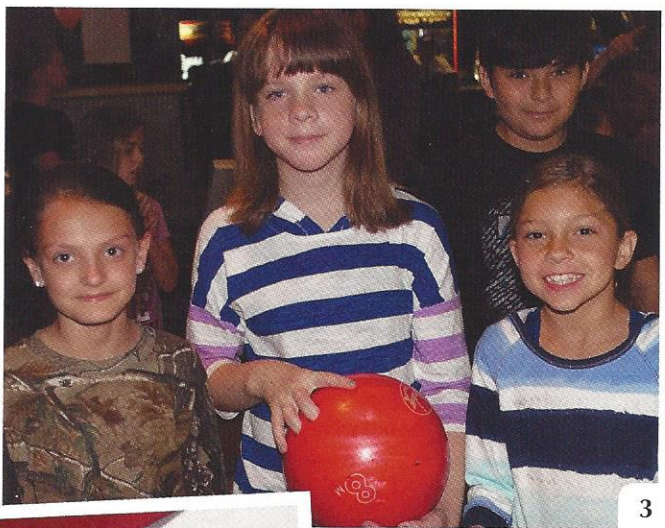
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And, in fact, that was the case. By the end of the party, Tess had raised \$350, which she presented to Kathy Gautsch, the founder of Wings of Hope, and her husband, Tony, the next day!

In 1996, Kathy started Wings of Hope after the tragic death of her son, Brian, as a way to commemorate his care and concern for at-risk young people.

"It's amazing to me that someone Tess's age already gets it," says Kathy. "Tess cares about the same young people my son Brian cared about – and that touches my heart."

For more information about Wings of Hope, contact Kathy at 407-312-0884 or check the website at www.WingsOfHope.net.



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1. Tess presents Wings of Hope founder Kathy Gautsch with an envelope containing the \$350 she raised.
2. Tess's older brother Drew aims his ball before scoring a strike. The family is all about giving and winning... in life as well as sports.
3. Tess's friends, Kristan Reynolds, Eliza Reynolds, Diego Reyes, and Emma Bellars, are all on board when it comes to the Wings of Hope!
4. Three generations of compassionate women know how wonderful it is to give. From the left: Tess's grandmother Helen Leive, mother Terri Frana, and Tess.