

celebrity



daring, sharing

& making a difference

What began three years ago as a social gathering of neighbors in one Georgia community has transformed into a nonprofit organization responsible for raising more than \$500,000. In the beginning, it was about raising money to purchase much-needed bulletproof vests for police officers in the area. With that goal surpassed, today it's about helping children have brighter futures. With the continued devotion and leadership of one Braselton woman, a special group of celebs, and a supportive community and board, Dare to Share is making a difference.

This month marks three years since three Braselton women set out on a journey that would subsequently impact hundreds of children's lives for the better. "It was myself, Linda Griffiths and Elise Cotter," Francine Boudewijn says. "We wanted to bring the people of the Château Élan community together. People who lived in different sections of the

community didn't really know each other, and we thought we'd do a social event to bring everyone together." After beginning the planning

process, it became clear to the women that a great task lay ahead. "When people opted not to help and told us we would not pull it off, I said, 'I am going to go all out, and I want it to mean something,'"

Boudewijn says. With doubt serving as their inspiration to prevail, Boudewijn, Griffiths and Cotter (who remains on the board today) proceeded onward. "We spoke to [Braselton] Mayor Pat Graham and asked her what we could do for the community, without being embarrassed if we raised only \$500 or \$1,000," Boudewijn explains. "She suggested the idea of police vests. The time was right after Sept. 11, and there was a shortage of bulletproof vests for area police. So we said 'Police vests it is.'" In spite of their naysayers, these three determined women led the way to a successful event, raising enough money to purchase the needed vests and then some.

Realizing that they were on to something, neighbors started to come out and get to know one another. The community was one step closer

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