

From: Ramón Badell- fustinifundraiser@yahoo.com
Subject: Fustini Fundraiser

Dear friends:

I met Andrés here in Kansas City about 20 years ago. Around that time, a group of Venezuelan friends got together in an organized manner, under the name of Venezuelan Club of Kansas City. The main purpose of that club was to promote Venezuelan culture in this part of the world. We put together festivals, where we would typically serve Venezuelan food, and sing Venezuelan music with Folklore Venezuela, the predecessor to the popular local salsa band Son Venezuela.

Andrés was one of the main contributors to the cause of the Venezuelan Club and one of the hardest working members, as well. In many ways, this group of friends that are helping with the Fustini Fund Raiser now reminds me of the Venezuelan Club of that era.

In those days, Andrés was married to Dina and they had a daughter, Rachel, who is now 20-years-old. Nine years ago, Andrés re-married. Alicia, from Chihuahua, Mexico, and Andrés have a daughter, Gina, who is now three-years-old.

Two years ago, Andrés had a stroke, which left him paralyzed. He has been a quadriplegic in bed ever since, unable to move but only his eyes. He has a tracheotomy, a feeding tube and other life-support equipment and personnel around him round-the-clock, in a rehabilitation center in Spring Hill, South of Olathe, Kansas. This, of course, represents a very difficult situation for him and for his family. They have had to sell most of their belongings in order to pay for expensive medical bills.

We are organizing a fundraiser in the form of a benefit party for the Fustinis. The party will feature the salsa band Son Venezuela, and will be on April 14 from 8:00 PM to 11:30 PM at the Shawnee Civic Centre on Johnson County and Pflumm. In addition to live music, we will have catered food and cash bar drinks for sale.

We hope to raise enough money to help the Fustini family cope with some of their expenses, especially overdue medical bills. Our goal is to sell about 500 tickets.

The response of the Kansas City community to help in this worthy cause has been superb. I am pleased to inform you that the main components for this fundraiser have been secured, such as: date and time of the event, place, entertainment, food and drinks.

Date and Time of the Event: Friday, April 14, 2006, from 8:00 PM to 11:30 PM

Place: Shawnee Civic Centre located at Johnson Drive and Pflumm (behind the Shawnee Library)

Entertainment: Live music with Son Venezuela salsa band

Food and Drinks: Catered by two very well recognized chefs in the KC area:

Cuban-Spanish Peter Castillo of Great Plains Catering and Venezuelan José García of Café Venezuela. Pedro and José will prepare a couple of delicious Latin American menus with emphasis on Venezuelan and Cuban food for that evening. Food and drinks will be sold separately at the event as part of the fundraiser. The menus will be defined and distributed to you within the next few days.

Tickets are being sold at \$20.00 per person. We need to continue efforts to sell tickets, as we are trying to reach the 500-person maximum capacity of the Gym at the Shawnee Civic Centre.

Those of you who would like to buy tickets, or better, those who would like to help us sell tickets please e-mail us at fustinifundraiser@yahoo.com

In addition to ticket sales, we would welcome any kind of donations that may be offered for the Fustini fund. All proceeds will be donated to the Fustini family, who will use most of the money to pay for overdue medical bills.

Please spread the word to help us make this event a successful team effort.

Thank you for your help and interest in the community.

Best regards and God bless you,
Ramón Badell

Andrés is the one on the left, with a friend and Andrés' wife. This picture was taken a few months before the stroke.

