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On the Town



ERIN GRAFFY/NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS

Beautiful dresses and hats blossomed in the garden event at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara during the "Al Fresco Afternoon on the Riviera" luncheon for Angels Foster Care. From left, Diane Brown, Event Committee member, Kathy Nicholson, Lisa Moore and Elizabeth McGovern.



Lovely ladies in lace! Event Committee members, from left, Shannon Neels, Gina Andrews (one of the 20 special marketplace exhibitors), Sheela Hunt and Laura Dinning. Ms. Neels created the pretty floral arrangements, and is also an Angels mom.

Angels Foster Care is heaven for foster babies

It seems the greatest gift a man could have on this day is knowing that he has made a difference in the life of somebody for whom he has been a "daddy." So on Father's Day, it seems fitting to highlight Angels Foster Care and its recent luncheon.

The "Al Fresco Afternoon on the Riviera" was held at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara to raise funds for the nonprofit organization that rescues abused, abandoned or neglected infants and toddlers in Santa Barbara.

In standard foster care arrangement, there may be as many as six babies in one household, or babies will be shifted to other foster families every several weeks. Angels Foster Care works with the courts to place each of these toddlers in only one safe, stable and loving home until reunification with their biological parents or families, or adoption (often by the Angels family).

The crowd, including Colleen Beall, Rhonda Fallon, Margot Clarke, Wendy Fehre, Susan Jordano and Judy Murphy, listened intently to founder/director Meichelle Arntz. She observed that two brothers ages 2 and 5 in foster care were continually uprooted and moved from foster home to foster home. They could never form any emotional bonds and the result later was two very troubled kids.

"Our focus is to prevent attachment disorders by having special 'Angel' families take these babies and then love them, teach them and treat them like family for

six to 12 months," explained Ms. Arntz. The babies stay with one Angel family the entire time instead of moving every 30 days to another foster home. "Babies must learn attachment before the age of 2," she continued. "They need to be loved and cuddled and kissed and put to bed."

The emcee, **Jim Scarborough**, an Angels dad, movingly highlighted the ways his family was blessed to care for an infant, and what his two daughters learned while caring for the baby boy. "He has enriched our lives in so many ways," he concluded.

The Event Committee, including **Monica Babich, Karen Chin, Debra Borden, Alixe Mattingly, Kathleen Cooper, Sara Donen, Dina Landi, Sherri Nelson, Margie Niehaus, Susannah Rake, Maria Stave, Daryl Stegall, Lizzie Tobias, Patty Vignolo and Annie Williams**, honored Montecito Bank & Trust for its early and significant support.

Volunteer of the Year honors went to **Angel and Frankie Martinez**. Among the very first foster parents to provide respite emergency care, they have cared for five babies throughout the years and have been generous donors. Mrs. Martinez joined the staff to supervise visits with the biological mothers, even driving weekly to Santa Maria for one year to enable these visits.

"Their dedication and devotion to children of this community means they get the best start in life," Mr. Scarborough said.

Mr. Martinez concurred: "It's so great to see children being able to thrive in healthy families."



Erin Graffy



"Flats and Hats" were the order of the day, according to the 2013 event chairs, from left, Holly Murphy (who brought in Juliska and Vietri dinnerware to donate the table settings and decor); Sue Bickett (whose family foundation was the Diamond Angel Patron of the luncheon); and Michele White and Marsha Kotliar, who co-chaired fundraising for the special event.



From left, director and founder Meichelle Arntz with Angels parents Frankie and Angel Martinez (Frankie is also on staff as supervisor and her husband is president and CEO of Deckers Outdoor Corp.).