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Transition House Auxiliary tips its hat for luncheon

Transition House Auxiliary takes its job seriously. It helps support the programs at Transition House, it brings attention to its services, and it raises funds for all of the above.

However, Transition House Auxiliary members do not take themselves too seriously — and that is why their annual Mad Hatter's Luncheon is so much fun. First, there are the hats ... cute, crazy, clever. Second, the entertainment every year is bound to be a hoot. And third, the ladies are just so full of happiness. They are organized and thorough, and think of all kinds of crazy details — and get people to give and give because they are doing the same.

These Auxiliary members were enthusiastically out in force at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara, checking folks in, selling raffle tickets, showing people to their seats and highlighting the silent auction for "A Vintage Affair." The members included **Becky Adams, Lorna Applefield, Wendy Clapp, Barbara Cunningham, Cleo Fisher, Ellie Freese, Mary Anne Harrison, Felicie Hartoff, Diana Kruse, Lana Marme, Soosan Marshall, Rachel McKeone, Gail McLaren, Florence Michel, Amie Parrish, Nancy Potter, Gail Shannon, Elizabeth Smith, Mimi Veyna, Gayla Visalli, Diana White and Beverly Zaleski.**

The flowers in the room were sooooo pretty. Every event I attend usually has lovely flowers, but these really were the prettiest array. **Diane White** told me, "Those are done by one of the auxiliary members: **Irene Chambers.**" A volunteer? "She's just very, very creative," added **Anna Ylvisaker**, Auxiliary treasurer. Executive Director **Kathleen**

Baushke acknowledged all the luncheon patrons: "Thanks to your compassionate support, there is a safe haven shelter and support services to directly benefit children Mad Hatter donors included **Network Hardware Resale, Missy and Chuck Sheldon, Kathryn and Jeff Dinkin,** and the **James V. and Beverly R. Zaleski Foundation.**

Board president **Jim Buckley** reminded the crowd that Transition House is the county's largest organization working with homeless families. The staff provide quality child care, one-on-one homework help, and gets teens to think about college goals.

One client highlighted her experience, grateful that the staff wasn't judgmental and instead encouraging. The employees kept her focused, providing programs for her girls ages 4, 8 and 12. She was able to move to transitional housing and is saving for an apartment — working full time while pursuing a degree. Her exemplary success story was appreciated by luncheon attendees, including **Lois Abbott, Leslie Storr, Mimi Veyna, Sue Ziliotto, Bert Curtain, Chris Curtain, Barbara Hill, Lynn Kirst, Mary Lou Kravetz, Joanne Samuelson and Fran Adams.**

What's a hat luncheon without a hat contest? Auxiliary member **Monique Littlejohn** and **Calla Gold** sifted through the sombreros, sun bonnets and skimmers and selected Best Vintage hat, worn by **Kerri Kilpatrick-Weinberg**, and Most Original Design, crafted by talented Disney artist **Sue DiCiccio.**

The luncheon ended with a stunning show by **Greg Schreiner** featuring Hollywood gowns and costumes worn by singers performing songs of the period.



From left, Kerri Kilpatrick-Weinberg, sporting the Best Vintage hat; Jo Lindros, giving a whimsical nod to Chaplin to match the luncheon theme, "A Vintage Affair"; and Karen Borick, who went for Hollywood glam.



From left, Auxiliary members Darlene Amundsen and Judy Cresap with Jane Litchfield, enjoying the successful "A Vintage Affair" luncheon at the Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara. Transition House provides strong support services and rigorous case management for families. As a result, the program has had remarkable results: On average, 60 percent of clients return to permanent housing with the economic means to sustain it.



Erin Graffy