

# Friendship Center Festival of Hearts

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

**IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF ALOHA**, the Friendship Center recently celebrated the 11th Annual Festival of Hearts to raise funds toward the H.E.A.R.T. (Help Elders at Risk Today) program, which enables elders and dependent adults with limited incomes to receive services.

“It’s a pleasure to be here again,” said Catherine Remak, who emceed the event. “There is nothing that truly touches my heart more than the work done here at the Friendship Center. It’s not just the people who come here that are affected, but those that work and volunteer here.”

Over 150 guests were transported to the islands with a luau buffet luncheon by Lorraine Lim Catering, hula dancing with dancers from Hula Anyone?, live Hawaiian music by Kaleo Na’ea, and a special tropical

cocktail dubbed Friendship Potion #9.

Led by the infectiously funny Gail Rappaport, the live auction included a five-night vacation for two on Kauai and a Palm Springs getaway, as well as fun events to share with friends, such as the Murder Mystery Dinner Party and a Montecito Fire Truck Party.

Known affectionately as the “Heart Wrangler,” Sharon



**Susan Jorgensen**, Program Manager, and **Shyama Osborne**, Volunteer



**Dana VanderMey**, **Carolyn Tulloh**, **Inge Gatz**, **Ken Jewesson**, and **Francie Jewesson**



**Susan Johnson**, Board Vice President & Events Committee Chair; **Justine Sutton**, Grants/Development Coordinator; **Gail Rappaport**, Auctioneer; **Heidi Holly**, Executive Director; and **Penny Mathison**, Board President



**Dave Raber**, **Toni Simons**, and **Dr. Madison Richardson**

Morrow organized a silent auction of around 75 unique heart-art by local artists and celebrities, including a “Crazy” heart created by Jeff Bridges. Guests were also invited to select a hand-decorated papier-mâché heart created by students from local high school art classes to take home as a party favor – just in time for Valentine’s Day.

“We have such a dedicated staff who are amazing dispensers of love. I often get to witness the miracles that happen here at the Friendship

Center,” said Heidi Holly, Executive Director. “Many of the adults that visit with us have lost the ability to formulate the words they have in their heart. But a touch on the arm can say it all.”

Friendship Center is located at 89 Eucalyptus Lane in Montecito. Hours are 10am to 6pm, Mon through Sat. For more information, call 969-0859 or visit [www.friendshipcentersb.org](http://www.friendshipcentersb.org).



**Kelsey Gruel**, **Angelita Eller**, **Stephanie Aoki**, and **Cami Vignoe** of Hula Anyone?



Back: **Priscilla**, **Dr. Joesph Bartolomeo**, **Carolina Montgomery**, **Parker Montgomery**. Front: **A.C. Moore**, **Lorraine Wilson**, and **Andy Granatelli**