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Nonprofits honor 47 residents at Philanthropy Day

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10:32 AM By Kristine Keezer

Many people might agree that what makes San Benito County a great place to live is the people, and that was personified at a recent gathering to honor the community's abundance of volunteers.

On Nov. 15, nearly 300 people gathered at the 11th annual National Philanthropy Day Awards Dinner at San Juan Oaks Golf Club to celebrate the efforts of the many San Benito County nonprofit organizations and individuals that give their time to make this a better place to live.

Hosted by Community Foundation for San Benito County, the evening spotlighted education in San Benito County. Every year, the county's nonprofit organizations nominate one person who stands out for their individual contribution. This year, 47 individuals were honored as "Philanthropist of the Year."

"Education is what we all have in common ... and serves as the cornerstone of who we are today," San Benito County Superintendent Mike Sanchez said in his opening statement.

The dinner was a success due to the "good hearts and good intentions (of individuals) to volunteer for the sake of their fellow community members that are disadvantaged," said David Huboi of Huboi Architecture, who was honored during the event as a Philanthropist of the Year for the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce.

Huboi was honored for his contributions to the chamber's "Going Green" program, a monthly taping hosted by Community Media Access Partnership in Gilroy. Though he stressed that it's the collaborative effort of everyone on the chamber's green committee that makes the program successful.

Stephanie Hicks at Community Foundation for San Benito County said the need for community support has increased significantly compared with previous years. Organizations that provide basic human services, such as food and shelter, are in need the most, she underscored.

Hicks pointed out that philanthropy is not just about monetary donations. Often, the donation of time is the greatest gift a person can bestow, she said.

The honorees included the following:



Among the honorees was Jane Rekedal, chosen by the arts council. Photo by: Free Lance file photo

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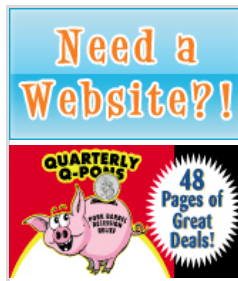
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Sacred Heart Parish School

Maria Donati

Saint Francis Retreat Center

Stella Herrera

San Benito County Arts Council

Jane Rekedal

San Benito County Chamber of Commerce

David Huboi

San Benito County Free Library

Melinda Rowe

San Benito County Historical Society

Don and Deana Pidd

San Benito Oriana Chorale

Folene Henn

San Benito Stage Company

Greg Santos

San Juan Bautista Library Auxiliary

Carmen Rodriguez

San Juan Bautista Rotary Club

Donna Holmes

United Way Serving San Benito County

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Wells Fargo

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Enrique and Olga Arreola

Other Nonprofits/Organizations in attendance:

Baler Education Foundation

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Pet Friends

Kristine Keezer

Kristine Keezer is a staff writer for the Free Lance and Pinnacle.

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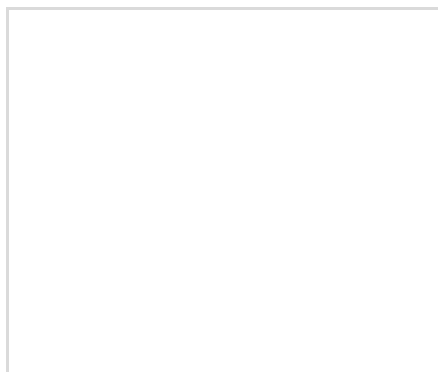
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4/2/1921 - 11/22/2011
- Ralph (Jackie) Nava
12/2/1954 - 11/8/2011
- Albina (Callen) McEwan
5/13/1927 - 11/21/2011
- Donato A. Ortega
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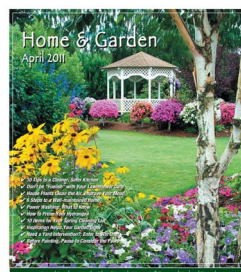


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