

### Audrey S. Geisel: Great Friend Gives Great Gift

A magnificent and generous surprise arrived from Audrey S. Geisel and the Dr. Seuss Fund of the San Diego Foundation: a gift of \$250,000 which put Vista Hill over the top for our fund raising goal (\$1,012,000) for fiscal year 2008-09. We haven't stopped cheering. Special thanks to our dear friend Audrey S. Geisel who has made many Vista Hill programs and projects possible through her big-hearted support over the years.

Economic problems and governmental cutbacks have resounded throughout Vista Hill as they have with many non-profit organizations in San Diego County. Sometimes, fund raising is the key. For 52 years, the combination of public monies and private contributions has steadfastly kept Vista Hill on target. We fully intend to stay this path with a positive attitude and deepest thanks to all of our friends and donors.

Community leaders, foundations, organizations, and corporations in San Diego continue to support Vista Hill. Their leadership means so much to us because others who might not have given see these names and realize that Vista Hill is an important cause, worthy of their own personal attention and philanthropic dollar.



### New Program Helps Reunite Foster Children and Parents

There are few situations more heartbreaking than when children are taken away from their parents and placed in foster care. Beyond the sadness and tears, this tragic turn of events can destroy families and threaten the future well being of the child. It is also enormously costly to society.

Thanks to Vista Hill's new Incredible Families program (funded through a contract with County of San Diego Children's Mental Health Services), that is all about to change for more than 150 East County children and families in the County's Child Welfare Services (CWS). They are now receiving therapeutic services and learning parenting skills that will speed reunification and help ensure the families remain intact.

"This is one of the most exciting programs we've ever created at Vista Hill because it's going to have such a powerful and positive impact on families who otherwise might struggle for years to reunite," says Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean. "It's also extremely important because it could well be a model for CWS to use throughout San Diego County, potentially transforming thousands of lives and saving countless taxpayer dollars."

Incredible Families began July 1 under a \$350,000 contract that utilizes funding from the Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) that was approved by California voters in 2004.

The 13-week program uses the award-winning Incredible Years curriculum, an innovative, evidence-based intervention training program headquartered in Seattle that focuses

*(continued on page 3)*

Several thousand children, adolescents, families and seniors in the rural areas of North Inland San Diego County will soon have access to a much-needed array of mental health services, thanks to a new contract awarded to Vista Hill by the County of San Diego's Mental Health Services (see page 3).

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## To Our Supporters:

Like so many other non-profits in our community, Vista Hill is in the midst of one of the most challenging periods in recent memory.

We too are feeling the effects of declining resources, whether it's cutbacks in state and federal funding, a reduction in student referrals from area school districts or a decrease in philanthropic giving.

Fortunately, we're weathering this difficult environment, which has enabled us to maintain the services that are so critical to our Vista Hill clients. We've tightened our belt wherever possible, and while we were already operating at a highly efficient level, we've found some creative ways to streamline our programs even further. That, combined with holding off new hiring and allowing attrition to reduce staffing, has enabled us to restrict layoffs to just a few positions.

The silver lining is that the discipline of addressing and adapting to turbulent times has led Vista Hill to discovering better ways to do things and generated a number of innovative ideas for new programs and services. Just one example is our recently launched autism pilot program ASERT (Autism Services, Resources, & Training) that we believe is going to make a significant improvement in the lives of children with autism and their families (see page 6).

As we look forward to 2010, we're optimistic because we believe the current conditions are in many ways cyclical and that an upswing is inevitable. We're also encouraged because we've recently been awarded several three-to-five year mental health contracts from the County of San Diego to provide new services to people in need. Our new programs, Incredible Families (see page 1) and Mental Health Services in North Inland County (see page 3) are good examples of a growing and increasingly important partnership we have built with the County.

Philanthropy continues to play a crucial role in how much money we can invest in services. While we've seen some decline in giving, the majority of our wonderful donors have maintained their generous contributions even as they face their own financial challenges. We thank all of them for their unwavering support and commitment to this great organization that is responsible for transforming so many lives in our community.



Cecil H. Steppe, Chair



Robert E. Dean, President/CEO

### Combined Statement of Financial Position

At September 30, 2008

	(in 000s)
<b>Assets</b>	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,022
Investments	8,510
Accounts Receivable	2,421
Other Current Assets	591
Total Current Assets	13,544
Property, Plant and Equipment, Net	7,605
Endowment and Deferred Giving Assets	1,413
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 22,562</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 485
Accrued Expenses	858
Total Current Liabilities	1,343
Mortgage Payable	1,073
Total Liabilities	2,416
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	17,367
Temporary Restricted	1,548
Permanent Restricted	1,231
Total Net Assets	20,146
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 22,562</b>

The financial information in this report represents a condensed version of fiscal year 2007-2008 audited financial statements. A complete set of audited financial statements, with accompanying notes and report from AKT LLP is available at Vista Hill's main office.

# Mental Health Services Needed in North Inland County

**Several thousand children**, adolescents, families and seniors in the rural areas of North Inland San Diego County will soon have access to a much-needed array of mental health services, thanks to a new contract awarded to Vista Hill by the County of San Diego's Mental Health Services.

The County announced in October that it will contract with Vista Hill for \$1.4 million per year in state Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) funds to provide mental health services to the residents of Ramona, Julian, Pauma Valley, Pala, Ranchita, Santa Ysabel, Valley Center, Warner Springs and Mount Palomar.

The new program, which will be among Vista Hill's largest, "is one of the most exciting, ambitious and important efforts we've ever undertaken," said Dave Taylor, Ph.D., director of Vista Hill's Learning Assistance Center, who will

oversee the new program.

"Up until now, residents in this outlying region have suffered the same kinds of mental health problems those in urban areas do, but had little or no access to the kind of critical services needed to address them—and prevent them becoming more severe," Taylor said. "With these new services, Vista Hill has an opportunity to dramatically improve thousands of lives over the next few years."

Most of the new services—which will be free to low income residents—will be provided at three community health clinics already operating in the region. Vista Hill will partner with the North County Health Services clinic in Ramona, the Borrego Community Health Foundation clinic in Julian, and the Neighborhood Health Care clinic in Pauma Valley.

## Incredible Families (continued from page 1)

on strengthening parenting competencies to promote family bonding and improvement in the child's social, emotional and behavioral well-being.

"We were fortunate because we had already been using this curriculum with one of our other Parent Care programs, and we could see how effective the program was in helping parents and their children completely change the way they interact," says Angela Rowe, ParentCare Director and Incredible Families program manager. "It's also important that it's a true evidence-based program, which means the curriculum has been proven scientifically to generate a level of success that has previously been difficult to achieve with this population."

The core of Incredible Families is a weekly gathering of children and their parents which combines a much more

therapeutic version of the standard weekly "supervised parent visitation" with parenting skills training for the parents. In the first hour, children and



parents gather around individual "family" tables and enjoy games, crafts and other activities that allow them to bond more closely. During the second hour, the parents and children enjoy a nutritious family-style dinner which they have helped prepare. After the meal, the children return to their foster homes, and the parents remain and spend two hours in a parenting skills class.

During the following week's gathering, the parents have a chance to put into practice what they learned. CWS staff and Vista Hill counselors observe the interaction of parents and children to monitor their progress and provide feedback on how to further improve their parenting techniques. Another important

phase of the program provides the children with weekly therapy sessions to help them deal with stress, grief, loss and behavioral issues that are common for children in foster care.

"Many of these parents were neglected and abused themselves as children. They never really had a concept of what it means to be a good parent. Now they're learning that proper parenting is a blend of spending quality time, showing empathy and applying discipline in appropriate but measured doses," says Rowe.



"The great thing about Incredible Families is knowing that the hard work the parents are doing every week is going to have an incredible payoff. It will help them regain custody of their children much sooner and give them the skills to create a much stronger and durable family environment."



## Joanne Tsurudome Garcia ... Providing Meaning for the Developmentally Disabled

"I'm so proud of my work here at Vista Hill because we're giving developmentally disabled adults the opportunity for a great life. We owe this to them because they are human beings who are a part of us and who have the same right to feel what they do is meaningful. This is how a community shows it truly cares."

Those are the words of Joanne Tsurudome Garcia, another dedicated Vista Hill staff member who is devoting her life to helping those with special needs through her job as Vista Hill's Director of Adult Services at the Sam and Rose Stein Education Centers (SEC).

Over the years, Joanne's titles have changed. When she arrived in the mid-90s after attending the University of San Diego and teaching English for two years in Japan, she started as a community training specialist. Then she was promoted to site coordinator, program supervisor and eight years ago to her current position.

The core of SEC's adult efforts is the Behavior Management Day Program, which serves developmentally disabled individuals 18 and older who struggle with serious behavioral issues that require an intense level of support. About 150 adults are served annually at four different sites. At SEC, they receive training to increase socially acceptable behavior as well as employment skills training and placement in part-time jobs at companies within the community.

One challenge Joanne and her dedicated staff continually face is ignorance about those with developmental disabilities. That's why educating the public is one of her primary missions.

"People are afraid of things they don't understand. All of our staff are well

trained to deal with the negative responses our clients sometimes receive out in the community. We always explain what developmental disabilities are and emphasize that it's not just something that begins at birth but can also be the result of an accident or medical event later in life.

"With all the attention on children with autism and other developmental disabilities, most people never stop to think that all of these children eventually become adults who still require assistance. They don't just disappear after they turn 18. What we're trying to show is that not only are they here, but that they can become contributing members of the community."

That's why Joanne is never happier than when she can take a client who comes to SEC with severe challenges, assess their needs, design a treatment program and then help them begin to become a part of the community, whether it's working at Petco or Einstein Bros. Bagels or volunteering at a non-profit agency.



Joanne with two constituents from the SEC Adult Services Programs.

"I love seeing our clients change and grow and learn to become more independent. People often make the mistake of treating them like children, but they're grown adults who want to take care of themselves. They don't want a 'free ride.' They want to work and earn their own money, enjoy a meaningful life and give back in any way they can."

Opening soon in  
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(Supporting Adolescents  
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Call Marie Miehls  
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### U.S. Will Refer Clients to Bridges for Substance Abuse Counseling

U.S. probation officials approved a contract in October with Vista Hill's Bridges Adult Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) to provide substance abuse counseling services to individuals who are on parole.

The government will refer clients to Bridges on a fee-for-service basis. The contract will help the three-year-old Bridges program remain self-sufficient following the end of a two-year grant from the Alliance Healthcare Foundation that assisted in launching and operating the program.

The Bridges Adult IOP is designed for adults seeking to make the personal changes necessary to live a clean and sober productive life.

## Vista Hill Sample 2008 Outcomes

At Vista Hill ParentCare Family Recovery Center (intensive substance abuse treatment and parenting skills training for low-income mothers):

- »»» Less than 1% of the mothers had recent CPS (child protective services) actions after 6 months in the program, compared to 50% at program entry.
- »»» 100% of babies born to ParentCare moms were drug-free at birth.
- »»» 97% of the mothers had no new criminal convictions after entering the ParentCare program (compared to county contract expectation of 90%).
  - 100% of the mothers were employed or involved in a job
  - »»» preparation activity upon completion of the ParentCare program (compared to county contract expectation of 55%).

At Vista Hill (TLC) Therapeutic Learning Center (on-site specialized pre-school for “high risk” children of ParentCare clients):

- »»» Children improved, on average, from the 45th percentile to the 60th percentile on the SCBE (Social Competence & Behavior Evaluation) developmental assessment after 15 months in the program.

At Vista Hill (LAC) Learning Assistance Center (school based mental health services for students in north inland San Diego)...

- »»» Services were provided to students with serious emotional and behavioral challenges across eight school districts, and on over 50 school campuses, throughout the North Inland Region of San Diego County.
  - »»» The 661 youth enrolled showed, on average: a 45% decrease in unexcused absences; a 26% improvement in their GPA.
  - »»» According to the Parent Child and Adolescent Measurement System (CAMS), 80% of LAC students achieved significant improvement in their overall behavior as a result of services provided.
- »»» Positive growth was also recorded in several key areas of student mental health such as depression, anxiety, hyperactivity, and substance abuse.

Goals measured at (SEC) Stein Education Center (special education and training for children with autism and other developmental disabilities).

- »»» Achievement of or progress made toward Academic Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals: 93.6 percent of academic goals were met or showed progress.
  - »»» Achievement of or progress made toward Behavioral IEP goals: 89.2 percent of behavioral goals were met or showed progress.

### Matching Gift Will Bring \$120,000 to Vista Hill. Thank You, Elaine!

At the May Friends of Vista Hill Board Meeting, Elaine Lipinsky announced a generous Matching Gift opportunity of \$50,000 from the Elaine Lipinsky Family Foundation. She later raised this to \$60,000! The following donors have helped us get closer to this goal; and their funds were matched dollar for dollar:

Peggy Matthews; Diane Hollingsworth; Oillie Baer; Linda and Ed Canada, M.D.; Alana Asmussen; Chris and Missy Tresse; Gillispie School; Chalyce Murray; Jerry and Sharon Stein; Judy and Alan Robbins, M.D.; Jim and Marilyn Brown; CUBIC; Alicia and Charles Foster; Valerie and Harry Cooper; Cherie Halladay; Charles Delgado; Carol and Phil Powers; Emma and Leo Zuckerman; Mary Sue Allen; Barbara J. Brown; Samuel I. and John Henry Fox Foundation; Karen Wroan; Mickey Stern; Julie Jones; Jon and Janine Miller; Jill Allen; Country Friends and Karlene Bergold.

Grateful thanks to everyone and all future “matchmakers.”

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[www.vistahill.org](http://www.vistahill.org)

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(877) 537-5277 or  
www.vistahill.org**

## Cuts in After-School Program Devastating for Families

**State budget cutbacks** have eliminated funding for the after-school program at Vista Hill Stein Education Center, leaving more than 50 families without critical services for their children with autism and other developmental disabilities.

“It is devastating to the families because there are so few local resources of this kind,” says Chayo Chavez, director of the 30-year-old program. “Our special group truly needs a structured after-school format, and parents are very worried that their children will begin to regress. Many are trying hard to keep their child at home and avoid group-home placement. The SEC after-school program has always helped make this possible.”

State funding ended on Sept. 30 for more than half of the 95 families with children participating in the program. Fortunately, other families were able to maintain their services, under a different state funding category. But the loss is overwhelming for those whose services were eliminated—all of whom have unique reasons for relying on the SEC after-school program.

Christine Skurnac, a recreation assistant in the after-school Special Care

**Chayo Chavez (l) and Christine Skurnac (r) with students from SEC after-school program.**

Services program, says the program is not a luxury or a form of afternoon babysitting.

Instead, it offers highly specialized assistance which has helped many of the children achieve significant progress for 10 to 15 years or longer.

“These services are crucial to growth and well-being; and it’s really sad, because both the children and their parents will suffer tremendously,” Skurnac says. “We provide exceptional services that help children and youth address their severe disabilities as well as community integration services that encourage social skills development and independence. We also offer recreational activities, like horseback riding, that help them gain motor and confidence-building skills that they would otherwise never have the opportunity to develop.

Vista Hill is reaching out to friends in hopes of funding scholarships that will enable some, and hopefully many of the families, to return to the program. The scholarships will be distributed on the basis of need, including those who had more than one child in the program and those with the most severe disabilities.



**Dean and Marcia Jones and son Ruben, who loves the Stein After-School Program.**



## New Autism Program Will Improve Therapies

Vista Hill has created a new autism intervention resource that should dramatically increase the effectiveness of therapies by involving parents much more intensely in the process.

ASERT (Autism Services, Resources & Training), a fee-for-service program, has begun a pilot project that should lead to the first clients being accepted into the program just after the first of the year, according to CEO Robert Dean. The approach of the new program is counter to some traditional and current therapies, which focus treatment

most intently on the child with autism and invest very little in helping the parents become involved in the therapy. As a result, those vast amounts of time when parents are with their children at home, and are unable or unequipped to help them, represent a critical lost opportunity, Dean says. “We’re going to change that dynamic by leveraging the very rich and deep clinical resources that Vista Hill has developed over the years and applying them to specifically training parents to help their children with therapies in the home environment.”

“We have some of the most experienced and talented speech and occupational therapists, counselors, psychiatrists and special education teachers in the county. When they begin working closely with parents to assess their situations, formulate achievable goals and then equip them with the right techniques to help their children, we have a real opportunity to increase the chances for more positive outcomes,” Dean adds.

For more information on the new program, contact Deborah Ferrante, Speech Supervisor (619) 281-5511, ext 224.



## Sweaters Will Warm Hearts of Vista Hill Families

To encourage charitable acts and in honor of the 44th President of the United States Barack Obama, forty-four beautiful children's sweaters have been knitted by women in the community. These works of art have been donated to Vista Hill for the babies and toddlers in the programs at ParentCare. Special thanks go to Stacy Smith (pictured left) and friends for making this happen.

See [www.44sweaters.blogspot.com](http://www.44sweaters.blogspot.com).

## Don't Know What to Do with Your Old Cell Phone? Donate It to a Worthy Cause

**Stein Special Care Services** (formerly known as the Stein Recreation Program) is kicking off a collection drive of old cell phones. We are recycling them and making a little money in the process. Bring yours to the Vista Hill main office or to Stein Education Center.

If the phones cannot be fixed and resold, they will be turned into 9-1-1 phones for domestic violence needs or recycled. For information, call Chayo Chavez, 619.281.5511, x221.

## Parents Night Out

Chayo Chavez and her excellent staff have established a monthly "Evening Out for SEC Parents." Students come at 6 p.m. and spend the evening there with activities, food, socializing and fun while their parents are out relaxing, knowing their children are being well taken care of.

Cost is \$25 for the evening per child, and parents tell Chayo that they love and appreciate having this worry-free night out.



## Annual Helping Hand Award at Stein Education Center

**Special kudos went to the Helping Hand Award winners whose work with children and adults at Stein Education Center (SEC) is outstanding: (pictured l to r) Valerie Stroup, Teacher Assistant, Transition Program; Laura Casas-Griggs, Program Supervisor, Chula Vista Adult Program; SEC parent Sallie Brownlow, honored for her generous volunteerism; Mary McIntosh, Supervisor, Chula Vista; and Christine Skurnac, Recreation Assistant, Special Care Services Program.**

**In addition, plaques went to Workability Employers: Petco, Friars Road; Petco, Sports Arena; and El Pollo Loco, Mission Gorge; and to Adult Services Employers: Einstein Bros. Bagels, Friars Road; Sports Authority: Mission Valley; and Knight & Carver.**

# 20th Annual Gala Gets into Gear! Best Attendance Ever!

**Ingrid Hibben and Victor La Magna rode the HOG.**



**Haute Rods & Harleys** was a roaring success with many theme-inspired touches by a creative committee co-chaired by Liz Copley and Patti Holmes. Three hundred forty bikers and cocktail-attired guests had their photo taken on a Hog while mingling and enjoying delicious hors d'oeuvres. When the doors of the Legends Ballroom at the Hard Rock Hotel opened, the room was aglow in bright blue, red and grey. It was the perfect setting. Comfort food included meatloaf and mashed potatoes with red velvet and chocolate cake and goodies from the “take-away” candy bar for dessert. Silent and live auction items were swept up quickly. Clark Anthony donated his services as auctioneer for the evening and was assisted by our own Rachel Peniche from the Friends of Vista Hill staff. Energetic guests danced the night away to the music of Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels.

**Barbara and Dick Krumvieda cut a rug!**



**Vicki Hamilton, IMBY Award Winner, and CEO Robert Dean.**

Current Friends of Vista Hill Board Chair Vicki Hamilton, owner of Crown Point Catering, received the IMBY (In My Back Yard) Award for her many years of service and dedication to Vista Hill and other worthwhile causes in the local community. The amount raised at press time was \$175,000 and counting—all to benefit a variety of Vista Hill programs. Parent speaker Marcia Jones focused the audience’s attention on scholarships for after-school Special Care Services at Stein Education Center (see page 6).

Dedicated Honorary Chairs were mother-daughter duo Jan Mullin and Rachel Mullin Ficara. Our generous underwriters were Audrey S. Geisel – Dr. Seuss Fund; Darlene and Donald Shiley; the Holmes Family; The Jeffrey & Sheila Lipinsky Family Foundation; Thomas J. and Theodora Lynch Fleming Foundation; Virginia Napierskie; the John M. & Sally B. Thornton Foundation; Vista Hill Board of Directors; Ingrid B. Hibben; US Trust – Lisa Behun; Chandler Asset Management; San Diego County Credit Union; and Synergy Electric.

Special thanks to Haute Rods VIP Table Hosts Mary Alice & Ron Brady; Dorothy & Anthony Dain; Darlyn & Chuck Davenport; Alberta & Charles Feurzeig; First American Trust – Carol Powers; Anne Graves-Forren; Vicki Hamilton – Crown Point Catering; Elaine Lipinsky; Diane Martin; Jan & David Mullin; Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP.

**Brenda Chilvers and Rand Willard enjoyed the music!**



**Honorary Chairs Rachel Ficara and Jan Mullin with Co-Chairs Liz Copley and Patti Holmes.**



**Magician Kevin Viner amazed Jim and Claudia Prescott, Don Cook and Carole Sachs.**

# Barbie Doll's 50th Birthday Celebration

**Barbie: Fifty & Fabulous!** was Vista Hill's 18th Annual Fashion Show. With Barbie Spinazzola as Chair; Barbara Brown (Friends of Vista Hill Advisory Board member) as Honorary Chair; and a terrific committee including Dee Ammon, Gretchen Bergman, Laura Applegate, Connie Conard, Debbie Giaquinta, Nicole Hamilton, Vicki Hamilton, Debra McGinty-Poteet, Marie Miehl, Bev Minor, Ann Mound, Diane Mushet, Rachel Peniche, Maureen Sage, Valerie Dawn Smith, Dee Van Horne, and Beckie Van Houten...we couldn't miss! Silent Auction, Opportunity Drawing, and Boutique Shopping (fourteen vendors this year) kept our 450 guests busy and having fun starting at 10 a.m.; and the Fashion Show by Gretchen Productions was great with many special "Barbie" touches. Lunch was topped off by Chocolate Barbie Birthday Cupcakes with Pink Strawberry Frosting. Special thanks to Carol LeBeau, Vista Hill's own Friends of Vista Hill Advisory Board member, who emceed and added words of wisdom for the group. Total raised: \$60,000 for Vista Hill programs.

We were thrilled!

Special kudos to our lead underwriters Virginia Napierskie and Dan and Barbie Spinazzola/Diversified Restaurant Systems, Inc. Thanks also to our generous underwriters: San Diego National Bank; Audrey S. Geisel – Dr. Seuss Fund 🐼; Linda Marteeny; San Diego County Credit Union – Shaun Copans; Valerie & Harry Cooper Fund 🐼; and the John M. and Sally B. Thornton Foundation.



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1 FVH Board Member Maggie Watkins, all decked out with Barbie wig, make-up bag and spectacles, surprised Carol LeBeau, Fashion Show Emcee and FVH Advisory Board Member.

2 Four generations are dear friends and great supporters of Vista Hill: (l to r) Ginna Robinson, Madison Robinson, Virginia Napierskie and Connie Conard, Friends of Vista Hill Board Member.

3 Michael Drobek strutted his stuff accompanied by lots of applause.

6 Debra McGinty-Poteet, Mary Alice Brady, Lael Kovtun, Connie Conard, Virginia Napierskie, Barbara Brown, Barbie Spinazzola, Diane York, Denise Hug, Karen Yingling, Dee Ammon, Maggie Watkins, Sally Thornton, and Linda Marteeny—past chairs and honorary chairs of the Vista Hill Fashion Show.



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4 Barbie Spinazzola, Barbara Brown, and Vicki Hamilton, Chair of the Friends of Vista Hill Board.

5 Susan Fielder, Diane Martin, Carole Sachs, Sandra Dodge, and Carolyn Nelson enjoyed shopping, lunch and fashion show at the April 2009 event.

7 Robert Dean and Sharon Stein enjoyed the fashion show festivities.



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## Mother-Daughter Authors Inspire Women's Council on Mental Health Audience



**Mia and Claire Fontaine, speakers for WCMH.**

**Claire and Mia Fontaine**, mother-daughter authors, inspired us all on Wednesday, March 4 at the Women's Council on Mental Health (WCMH) Luncheon and program at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine. Their story, *ComeBack: A Mother and Daughter's Journey through Hell and Back*, is an acclaimed memoir chronicling Mia's transformative journey from addiction through a controversial behavior modification school, first in Eastern Europe, and finally in Montana. Claire's story is a parent's worst nightmare: having to save three-year-old Mia first from an abusive father, then a decade later from herself.

Audrey S. Geisel served as Honorary Chair; and mother-daughter Co-chairs Susan Straub and Lynn Nelles led a hard-working committee: Tamara Alter, Renée Bannasch, Judy Belinsky, Janet Coulon, Nicole Hamilton, Kimberly Heller, Joni Laura, Lynne Lurie, Diane Mendlen, Ann Mound, Rachel Peniche, Judith Perry, Karenlee Robinson, Angela Rowe, Susan Tschirn, and Beckie Van Houten.

Grateful thanks to our underwriters who were Lynn Hart Muto, Kimberly Heller, Virginia Napierskie, Carol Powers, Craig Ramseyer and Wendi Santino, and Susan Straub. VIP Table Sponsors were Jane McCarthy and Carole Sachs.

### New hours for the Windmill Thrift Shops

11 a.m. - 7 p.m. daily  
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San Diego 92104 and  
4611 University Avenue,  
San Diego 92105  
(805 south;  
exit University)

## Father-Son Authors David and Nic Sheff Hold Audience's Complete Attention

**Vista Hill's WCMH featured David and Nic Sheff**, father and son, whose topic was "Alive Today: A Father and Son's Experience with Addiction and Mental Illness" on Wednesday, July 29 at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine. The audience was completely absorbed.

Partnering with Vista Hill was the California Bipolar Foundation, whose mission is to eliminate Bipolar Disorder through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support services for all affected; and to erase the associated stigma through public education.

David Sheff, renowned journalist and author of *Beautiful Boy: A Father's Journey through his Son's Addiction*, opened the program telling their story from his point of view. He then introduced son Nic, author of *Tweak: Growing up on Methamphetamines*, who gave a first person account of his years with pot, cocaine, ecstasy, meth, and heroin. Nic has recently been diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder.

Special thanks to Event Sponsors Elaine and Murray Galinson and the John M. Sachs Family. Also thanks to Gold Sponsors Lynn Hart Muto, Price Galinson Collaborative Fund, and Karen Foster Silberman & the Foster Family Foundation of the Jewish Community Foundation.

Laura Galinson served as Honorary chair, and Lynn Hart Muto was chair. Committee members were Lauren Abrams, Mark Chenven, M.D., Phyllis Epstein, Mark Evans, Patricia Hart Franco, Nicole Hamilton, Thomas Kelly, Barbara Kubarych, Ann Mound, Jim Mulvaney, Jr., Herman Peniche, Rachel Peniche, Sue Schulte Karen Silberman, Cecil Steppe Beckie Van Houten, and Muffy Walker.



**Nic Sheff and David Sheff presented summer program for WCMH.**

Photographs by Jon Clark

## Special Thanks to Patron Reception Hosts

Vista Hill Patron Receptions are social/ educational gatherings held to celebrate our four annual events: the Vista Hill Gala, the Vista Hill Fashion Show, and the two Women's Council on Mental Health (WCMH) luncheons. If an author, celebrity, or behavioral health professional is speaking at one of our WCMH



**(l to r) Lynn Nelles, Jill Allen, Susan Straub, and Robert Dean, Vista Hill CEO, enjoy the view at the home of Hanna and Mark Gleiberman. Patron Reception was in honor of speakers Claire and Mia Fontaine; Lynn and Susan were event co-chairs, and Jill Allen was in town to help celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center.**

luncheons, they are honored at this occasion.

Our special friends are invited including event under-writers, sponsors, board members, and committee members. Many think of these Patron

Receptions as mini reunions, and all of our guests give enthusiastic reviews. And why not? We meet in beautiful spots throughout San Diego County, and the wonderful repast is catered by Vicki Hamilton's Crown Point Catering. The combination is fantastic!

Special thanks to our friends who have opened their doors to us over the years: Elaine Lipinsky, Darlyn and Chuck Davenport, Laura and Fred Applegate, Barbie and Dan Spinazzola, Connie and Phil Conard, Linda Ardell, Lael and Jay Kovtun, Carol and John Landis, Cherie Halladay, Margaret Jackson and Neil Hadfield, Stefanie Dawn Strauss, Susan and Darryl Tschirn, Laurie Black and Robert Lawrence, Hanna and Mark Gleiberman, Lynn and Fred Muto, Debra McGinty-Poteet and Larry Poteet, Sammantha and Jerry McDonald, Gayle and Phil Tauber, Patti and Doug Holmes, Robin and Larry Gitman, Carol and Tom Dillon, Kimberly Heller, Paul and Vicki Nenner, Mary Alice and Ron Brady, Jennifer and Greg Carpenter, and Symbolic Motors.

## Las Patronas Gift Provides Vitally Needed Wheelchair-Accessible Van

The Vista Hill Stein Education Center (SEC) was a proud beneficiary of proceeds from the Las Patronas 2008 Jewel Ball! With this wonderful gift from Las Patronas, SEC acquired a much-needed, wheelchair-accessible (lift-equipped) van.

Before this van was available, some of our wheelchair-bound constituents could only attend the enriching community activities offered at SEC with great difficulty, inconvenience, and, at times, lack of dignity (needing to be lifted in and out of their wheelchair numerous times to be transported). Others, who do not have collapsible wheelchairs that can fold into the trunk of a car, required transportation by their parent (creating difficulties for working parents).

The new "Las Patronas Van" has literally opened doors for SEC clients—ensuring that no one is excluded from community outings, volunteer and job training sites, and social events. Recently, all of the developmentally disabled adults in our SEC Adult Programs throughout San Diego were able to get together for a festive day-long picnic at Admiral Baker Park, sponsored by the Tippett Foundation. Says Joanne Tsurudome Garcia, Adult Services Programs Director, "The new van made it possible for everyone to attend this wonderful event, which is always a highlight of the year. It also made it much easier for the staff to organize the picnic. We are putting this terrific gift to good use!"



# Dear Friends,

There isn't too much Vista Hill can do to reward steadfast donors like you except to continue doing the best job we can. We know you are not seeking accolades or applause; still, we want to express how much we value your friendship and support. Listing your names and thanking you by phone, by mail, or in person are small ways in which we can show our appreciation.

We know you have a variety of choices among many worthwhile non-profit organizations; and we thank you for including Vista Hill among your charitable endeavors. Without your gifts, our programs could not flourish, and thousands of children and families would not receive the services they so desperately need.

## Thank you from all of us at Vista Hill

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Cumulative Giving

*Making an impact...leading the way...for over 50 years.*

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*This year was particularly difficult in the fund raising arena. The generosity of the following individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations who came through for Vista Hill was outstanding. We salute you!*

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*"I kept waiting  
for someone to make  
a difference,  
and then realized  
I am someone."*

*(author unknown)*

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*Not all tragedies make the front page. Some, like a lifetime of poverty, abuse, addiction, or disability, happen quietly. Vista Hill is listening and taking action to help. Your support makes it possible.*

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**In town to mark the 20th Anniversary of the Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center (pictured l to r) were friends and Allen family members: Kim Jones, Shelby Waldecker, Mary Sue Allen, Robert Dean, Charlotte Allen, Jill Allen, and Liz Dean.**

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**Joseph Minick, M.D., provides psychiatric care, an important part of the array of services offered to ParentCare clients in La Mesa.**

*(continued on page 14)*

*Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better. It's not. —Dr. Seuss*

Julie A. Jones  
Julie and Tom Karlo  
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**A presentation at Vista Hill Juvenile Drug Court was given by student who helped write *The Freedom Writers*. Authored by youth from Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, Calif. and their teacher Erin Gruwell, it is the basis of the 2007 movie starring Hilary Swank. Programs such as this one are held to inspire Juvenile Drug Court participants, to help them keep moving forward and on the right path.**

**Ambassadors (\$100 +)**

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Tamarah Allen  
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Virginia Ball  
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**As the smile suggests, Imaini is proud of himself as he sits tall in the saddle during Equestrian Therapy (ET) at Stein Education Center. Balance, coordination, self-esteem, and fun are all part of ET.**

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*We honor and thank our volunteers who give so generously of their time and expertise.*

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Please Note: Space limitations do not allow us to name all donors, but we hope you know that we appreciate each of you as well as every contribution, large or small.

If you notice errors, please accept our sincere apology and call 858.514.5151 to let us know. Thank you.

\* Indicates donor is deceased.

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858.514.5151 (phone)  
858.514.5193 (fax)  
www.vistahill.org



**Fern Siegel, long-time member of Stein Education Center's Circle of Friends (COF), shows the cake honoring the 2009 Helping Hand Awardees. Fern was COF Chair for 10 years and continues to be a great supporter.**

**Will you?**

We respectfully request that you consider including Vista Hill in your estate plan. Here is wording which may be helpful for your next attorney appointment:

*I bequeath \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Vista Hill, a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization, located at 8787 Complex Drive, #200, San Diego, CA 92123, for the board and senior management thereof to use in such a manner as they deem most useful for the organization's purpose.*



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## UPCOMING EVENTS 2010

### Women's Council on Mental Health Spring Program

*"Overcommitted, Overwhelmed and Over It!"*

*Thursday, February 18, 2010, Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa*

Guest speaker Juliet Funt is delightful. Her presentation relates to one of the most requested topics from Women's Council on Mental Health surveys: Stress Management: Work/Life Balance. Juliet is the daughter of Allen Funt, creator of the Candid Camera television show. Co-chairs are Carlee Harmonson & Susan Christopher.

### Vista Hill 19th Annual Fashion Show

*"¡Viva La Moda!"*

*Friday, April 9, 2010*

Co-chairs are Laura Applegate and Tania Luviano; Honorary Chair is Diane Keltner. Shopping, lunch, fashion show by Gretchen Productions, silent auction, fun!

Please contact Events Coordinator Rachel Peniche 858-514-5153 or [rpeniche@vistahill.org](mailto:rpeniche@vistahill.org) for additional information.

**Kudos to Bloomingdale's**  
for sponsoring a day of shopping  
and celebration on October 29  
in support of  
**local charitable organizations:**  
**Vista Hill,**  
**Alzheimer's Association,**  
**Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation,**  
**La Jolla Playhouse,**  
**UCSD Medical Center**  
**Bannister Family House,**  
**and**  
**Voices for Children.**

**Vista Hill was thrilled to be included  
and sends special thanks to  
Rhonda Brown, Public Relations  
Manager, and all the wonderful folks  
at Bloomingdale's who helped make  
the event so terrific!**

*If you are receiving more than one copy of New Vistas, please call Beckie Van Houten, database manager/development associate. This will help us save postage and better serve you. Call 858-514-5152. Thank you!*