

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Agenda Number:**

**Prepared on:** 3/18/04  
**Department Name:** Social Services  
**Department No.:** 044  
**Agenda Date:** 4/13/04  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimate Time:** 10:00 a.m. Time Certain  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Kathy Gallagher, Director  
Dept. of Social Services

**STAFF CONTACT:** Margarita Olimpio, KIDS Network  
346-8222

**SUBJECT:** 2004 CHILD FRIENDLY AWARDS

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**Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors

1. approve resolution proclaiming April "Month of the Young Child",
2. approve resolution proclaiming April "Child Abuse Prevention Month",
3. present the CHILD FRIENDLY AWARDS to selected individuals from each supervisorial district, and
4. present county-wide CHILD FRIENDLY GROUP AWARDS to selected groups.
5. present the Hedy Damery Service Award.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:** The recommendation(s) are primarily aligned with Goal No. 7: "A community that fosters the safety and well-being of families and children."

**Executive Summary and Discussion:** The Child Friendly Award was established in 1989 to honor individuals and groups who have made substantial and or unusual contributions to children in our county. Winners from each supervisorial district and countywide groups are chosen for this honor each year by a committee of the KIDS Network, which selects winners from nominations received from the community.

The Proclamation for “Month of the Young Child” will be accepted this year by Beth Rizo, President of the Santa Barbara Chapter of the Association for the Education of Young Children. The Proclamation for “Child Abuse Prevention Month” will be accepted this year by Maribel Aguilera, North County Rape Crisis & Child Abuse Protection Center.

**2004 Individual Awards:**

First District: Raquel Vela Mendoza  
Second District: Ann Wood  
Third District: Lynn Kirby  
Fourth District: Manuela Venegas  
Fifth District: Don Middlebrook  
Eddie Galarza

**2004 Group Awards:**

First Place Winner (County-wide): Royal Family Kids Camp & Trinity Baptist Church  
Honorable Mention (County-wide) Santa Barbara Area Council PTA Safety Committee  
Honorable Mention: (North) Kiwanis Club of Santa Maria  
Honorable Mention: (South) Lotusland Outreach Docents  
The Hedy Damery Service Award: Rita Madden

Descriptions of each individual’s and group’s service are attached. The honorees will receive their awards at 10:00 a.m. (time certain). KIDS Network has made arrangements for a Public Reception honoring the Winners and commemorating April as Month of the Young Child and Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Reception will be held in the Board of Supervisors’ Conference Room in Santa Maria immediately following the awards ceremony. Members of the Board, media representatives and the public are invited to attend.

**Mandates and Services Levels:**

No change.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impact:**

None.

**Special Instructions:**

After approval by the Chair of the Board, please return one (1) certified copy of the Minute Order to the KIDS Network, c/o Dept. of Social Services, Santa Maria, Attention: Rachel M. Guzman.

**Attachments:**

1. Resolution, Month of the Young Child
2. Resolution, Child Abuse Prevention Month
3. Award Winner’s Service Descriptions

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF THE PROPOSED ) RESOLUTION NO. 2004-  
RESOLUTION TO PROCLAIM APRIL 2004 ) BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
"MONTH OF THE YOUNG CHILD" ) COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

WHEREAS Santa Barbara County is home to nearly 100,000 children under the age of eighteen, representing one-fourth of the county's total population; and

WHEREAS we acknowledge that children receive their first and most important care and support from their families, who provide for their economic and emotional well-being; and

WHEREAS families with young children increasingly need and deserve the support of the community to carry out their responsibilities; and

WHEREAS in today's world, many parents or caregivers hold outside employment and with their increasing participation in the workforce, the demand for child care will continue to heighten; and

WHEREAS parents, caregivers, child care providers, teachers and volunteers provide a foundation for the values and ethics of each new generation, motivate them to achieve educationally and succeed socially, and provide a sense of belonging that is essential to human growth.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY ORDERED AND RESOLVED that this Board of Supervisors proclaims April 2004 as "THE MONTH OF THE YOUNG CHILD" in Santa Barbara County and urges all members of the community to join in expressing their appreciation to those parents, caregivers, teachers, child care providers and volunteers for their commitment to the care and development of today's young children.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisor of Santa Barbara County, State of California, this 1st day of April 2004 by unanimous vote of all members present.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Centeno  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:  
MICHAEL BROWN  
Clerk of the Board

By \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF THE PROPOSED )RESOLUTION NO. 2004-  
RESOLUTION TO PROCLAIM APRIL 2004 ) BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
"CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH" ) COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

*WHEREAS, there were 4,780 children and youth in Santa Barbara County reported and assessed for child abuse during the past year, down 49% from a historic high of 9,350 in 1996-97: and*

*WHEREAS, Santa Barbara County's placement rate of children and youth into foster and group homes has declined 13% since 1996 and is a third of the Statewide average, and*

*WHEREAS, Santa Barbara County has been successful in lowering our placement rate through community-based prevention and early intervention services such as with the family resource centers, the Multiagency Integrated System of Care (MISC) program, and community initiatives such as with the First 5 Santa Barbara County, and*

*WHEREAS, the harmful effects of child abuse reach beyond the abused child, and adversely affect the well-being of the community at large; and*

*WHEREAS, research now shows us that child abuse, including exposure to domestic violence and emotional deprivation, impairs brain development in specific areas that may lead to an inability to relate to others, a key predictor of aggressive and antisocial behavior; and*

*WHEREAS, research has also clearly shown that child abuse can be prevented and the generational cycle of abuse within families can be interrupted; and*

*WHEREAS, we the public and leaders of Santa Barbara County wish to acknowledge the collaborative efforts of public and private agencies, including staff, volunteers, and foster families who provide a caring foundation in support of children, youth and families and wish to express our support and appreciation for all efforts to prevent child abuse;*

*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY ORDERED AND RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of Santa Barbara County proclaim April 2004 as "Child Abuse Prevention Month" and call upon all individuals, agencies, religious organizations and businesses to increase their participation in efforts to prevent childhood physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional deprivation and exposure to family violence.*

*PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California, this 13th day of April 2004 by a unanimous vote of all members present.*

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Centeno  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:  
MICHAEL BROWN  
Clerk of the Board

By \_\_\_\_\_

## **2004 Child Friendly Awards – Winners’ Description of Service**

**1<sup>st</sup> DISTRICT: Raquel Vela Mendoza (962-5618)**  
**Santa Barbara**

Raquel Vela Mendoza has been a volunteer in Santa Barbara since 1968. She began her volunteer work at the Wilson School Annex, The Santa Barbara State Free School where for fifteen years she chaperoned children on field trips to the museum and other educational projects. She has served the Migrant Education program, providing snacks for after school projects for 10 years and remains available, as needed. Over the years, Raquel has become known to the Latino community and social services as a resource for emergency child care. Even when offered payment, she has refused. Raquel, a native of Mexico City, is married and having no children of her own, can claim surrogate motherhood to hundreds of Santa Barbara youth. Her enthusiasm on behalf of youth has led her much involvement and promotion of higher education opportunities via programs at Santa Barbara City College and UCSB. Raquel has received numerous recognitions such as Woman of the Year from the Commission on the Status of Women. Raquel Vela Mendoza is among the few locals, whose commitment to their ideals and values merits recognition and who remains a “Friend of Children”.

**2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT: Ann Wood (964-2045)**  
**Santa Barbara**

Ann Wood has worked with children and their families for over 30 years. Ann is past director of St. Michael’s Nursery School in Isla Vista and past coordinator at the Orfalea Family (UCSB) Child Care Center. Ann was instrumental in the formation of the Children’s Network and the Child Care Planning Council. She has been an advocate for children and quality child care locally, and at the state and national levels. Ann championed for the accreditation of National Association for the Education of Young Children in schools to insure quality for children. She has been instrumental in developing a network for teacher substitutes and has served as a mentor to many teachers as well as many programs in the county. Now retired, she works tirelessly toward the effectiveness in the goals of the Child Care Planning Council and advocates for funding to provide teacher training and making programs successful. She has been a resource for young Early Care professionals and devoted to nurturing parent participation in advocacy for young children. We are pleased to honor Ann’s service to our community who care for its most special children.

**3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT: Lynn Kirby (964-3356)**  
**Goleta**

Lynn Kirby has a long and varied history of volunteerism in the Santa Barbara community beginning with her experience 31 years ago. From taking photographs of babies at Goleta Valley Hospital to being a “big sister” in the Big Brother Program, her propensity for nurturing extends to being the caretaker of the butterfly garden at Lotusland. For the past six years, Lynn has guided elementary school children through a monarch butterfly nursery and demonstration garden. Lynn spends a great deal of time raising milkweed at home to attract monarchs in order to supplement Lotusland’s butterfly garden to use as hands-on experiences for visiting school children. Lynn has created wonderful “Family Day” exhibits and activities in the butterfly garden creating interactive, enjoyable activities and with the children. She volunteers in several local schools helping children create butterfly gardens, teaching children about the butterfly life cycle while sharing her strong message urging children to protect the habitat of the butterfly. For the incredible learning experiences that she provides for the children of Santa Barbara we honor Lynn Kirby for her efforts to relay to children, the wonder of nature.

**4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT: Manuela Venegas (735-7571)**  
**Lompoc**

Manuela is best known in Lompoc for her involvement with the Folkloric dance group “El Sabor de Mexico” that she formed about 12 years ago and which has had an impact with hundreds of students in the Lompoc community. Her part-time employment with the Lompoc Unified School District is great match for her personality. Not only does Manuela provide free dance classes to the students, but she takes them to performances and helps them with family issues. Manuela also formed a group of 18 students to assist with the creation of a mural project known as Expresión Latina. She has inspired many students to continue their education; some of the success stories include an engineer, physicians and a model. Last Christmas, Manuela had the wonderful idea of having all staff members at Hapgood Elementary School adopt a homeless or foster child and their siblings and providing them with a gift that they would enjoy during the holiday. She is a strong advocate for children and their families and is not afraid to do what it takes to help out. One time she cleaned a homeless child’s lice-infected head when the child’s mother, who had just gotten a job, could not take the time for fear of losing her new job. Manuela has been described as an “unsung Hero” in the Lompoc community for giving of her heart. Her philosophy is, “I may not be able to reach them all, but I want to reach one child at a time”. Manuela Venegas exemplifies the spirit of the Child Friendly Award.

**5<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT: Eddie Galarza (925-3193)**  
**Santa Maria**

Recently in 2003 the Boys and Girls club of Santa Maria Valley opened a new center at Evans Park located in the northwest side of town. Selected as the director for the center, Eddie Galarza was chosen due in part to his dedication, hard work and experience of working with teens. Eddie has taken a volunteer leadership role in working with the Keystone club, a club which promotes positive teen involvement in the community. As a club leader Eddie often organizes, weekend barbeques in which he involves teens to help make and sell the food while teaching them how to take initiative. The Keystone Club raises money throughout the year in order to take a small group of selected teens to the National Leadership Conference in which teens learn leadership skills and how to deal with local issues while having the opportunity to network with their peers from throughout the United States. Teens naturally gravitate to Eddie and the teens really look up to him and admire his strengths. Eddie understands the plight of many of the teens who come from one parent families, have parents and siblings incarcerated, and have often witnesses first hand the effect that violence and drugs have on families. His own life experiences have allowed him true insight into the lives of troubled youth. Recently Eddie was approached by a teen who seemed down and out. When Eddie asked “What-up?” the teen replied “Today is my Birthday and my Parents forgot.” Eddie’s simple reply was to invite the teen to come back as soon as the club closed and Eddie promised to take him to dinner at the restaurant of his choice.

Eddie Galarza is a talented, courageous and supportive person who cares about the youth in our community. It is an honor to present Eddie Galarza with the Child Friendly Award.

**5<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT**  
**Santa Maria**

**Don Middlebrook (938-0500)**

Don Middlebrook is a senior volunteer who meets regularly with about 60 second graders and “to-be-identified” gifted and talented students at Redmond Taylor School in the Santa Maria Bonita School District. As a senior adult volunteer for the Gen-Span Foundation, he is helping to bring different generations together in lifelong learning by helping out at local schools in the Santa Maria Valley. First, and foremost, the teachers state that students can’t wait to see him; Don gets the students excited about learning. He takes time to listen to the students and he remembers to ask them questions about things that are important to them. Don makes use of the CD ROMs from the science curriculum to teach reading, critical thinking skills, and technology skills. He believes in a “hands-on” learning experience and enjoys making science experiments come alive for students. He has been so effective with students that other teachers have asked if they could bring in her students when he does presentations. As a volunteer, hugs and enthusiasm are his compensation. We are pleased to recognize Don Middlebrook as a true friend of students and teachers in our community.



## **GROUP AWARD (COUNTYWIDE):**

**Royal Family Kids Camp of Santa  
Barbara and Trinity Baptist Church  
Karen Terry & Cheri Diaz (564-8155)  
1002 Cieneguitas Rd., Santa Barbara, 93110**

With the help of over 100 volunteers, many of which take vacation time from their regular jobs, Royal Kids Camp of Santa Barbara and Trinity Baptist Church have donated over 7000 hours of their time and raised almost \$23,000 to provide free camping trips to abused and neglected children of Santa Barbara County. All of the volunteers are carefully screened and/or trained to work with children in the dependency system, as well as the required fingerprinting. Some of the volunteers serve as a Camp Grandma and Grandpa for those who need hugs. In 2003, only its second year in Santa Barbara County, 35 children were made to feel like 'royalty' for six days at San Marcos Camp near Lake Cachuma. The children enjoyed swimming, music, drama, sports and lots more. Each child received a memory bag containing t-shirts, a music tape, photo album, a hand made quilt and many other items that were their very own to take. Since children in out-of-home care rarely celebrate their birthdays, there is an Everybody's Birthday Day and each child receives a birthday box filled with surprises as well as a birthday cake with their name on it. The Royal Family Kids Camp of Santa Barbara and Trinity Baptist Church exemplifies the kind of organization to be honor with a Child Friendly Award!

**GROUP HONORABLE MENTION (North):**

**Kiwanis Club of Santa Maria**

**Marty Mariscal (934-**

**1488)**

**P.O. Box 85**

**Santa Maria, CA 93456**

Kiwanis Club of Santa Maria is a service organization consisting of over 80 members, ranging in ages from late 20s to late 80s and is composed of businessmen and women, local and state politicians, doctors and healthcare professionals, educators and retirees. Kiwanis Club of Santa Maria is recognized for their support and commitment to the students of Santa Maria. In 1994, Kiwanis sponsored a school choir at Arellanes School. They paid for the entire vocal program right down to the matching vests that the students wore at all of their performances. In 1996, they chartered a Builders Club at the same school. Builders Club is for 6th-8th graders and is a service-based club. At the time, it was the only club we had for students on the campus. The Kiwanis Club has not only donated money but their time and talents as well. It is not unusual to see 4-8 Kiwanis members at the monthly meetings and many times, they are the speakers for the program. In addition to their undying support at Arellanes, they also support a K-Kids Club for 4th-6th graders at Fairlawn Elementary School and a Key Club at Santa Maria High School. They have sponsored such programs as Leaders of the Pack at El Camino Junior High School which honors students with excellent behavior records and they have sponsored a program which rewards students who have improved their standards-based test results from one year to the next. We are proud to honor the Kiwanis Club of Santa Maria the Child Friendly Award for their community service to the children and youth in the Santa Maria Valley.

## **GROUP HONORABLE MENTION (South):**

### **Lotusland**

#### **Outreach Docents**

**Connie Buxton 969-3767 ext 107  
Santa Barbara 93108**

A priceless asset to the community, Lotusland is a world renowned botanical garden with plant collections consisting of many endangered species. Lotusland Educational Outreach program started in the spring of 1998 and engages 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in each of the 13 elementary schools in the Santa Barbara School District as well as other local public schools in learning about the important role plants play in sustaining the conservation of life. The Outreach Docents complete a rigorous 16-week course to learn the estate history and plant collections. All volunteers put an incredible amount of time and effort into guiding hundreds of students per year through a botanical wonderland while engaging them in an interactive experience. The Lotusland's Outreach program would not be possible without these docents' commitment, expertise, and professionalism. We honor the Lotusland Docents for their creative service to students, teachers and parents in our community.

## **GROUP HONORABLE MENTION (Countywide):**

**Santa Barbara Area Council PTA  
Safety Committee  
Norene Nims (937-3346)**

Formed by a couple of parents who were concerned about the dangers of traffic in school zones, this special group of PTA volunteers has been advocating for stronger laws to protect our children near schools. They began conducting safety assessment surveys, asked for improved safety signs and formed the committee to address the issue through PTA channels. They documented that many schools in our county had already seen children or crossing guards being hit in front of their schools. The Safety Committee concluded that speeding or inattentive drivers caused most of these collisions. They began reaching out across the State to other communities that were concerned for the safety of children. At the 2001 California PTA Convention, a School Zone Safety Resolution was passed. Since then, the committee has worked hard to implement AB 1886, the School Zone Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Act in Santa Barbara County, authored by Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson. The safety of our children walking or riding bikes to schools has become a better reality in our county through this law, AB 1886; it has taken the "village" to pull it all together. We honor the Santa Barbara Area

PTA Safety Committee for their concern, work and perseverance for the children of our county.

**HEDY DAMERY SERVICE AWARD:** to an individual who serves children, youth and families as part of their employment/profession and demonstrates compassion and commitment to the children, youth and families of Santa Barbara County beyond the scope of their employment.

## **RITA MADDEN**

Rita Madden is the executive director of Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County, which operates many important programs including Head Start, Senior Programs, Nutritional Services, Environmental Services and Family and Youth Programs in our county where she oversees an operating budget of approximately \$20 million. Rita has served on the county's First Five Commission since its formation where she is currently the Vice-Chair and has served on its Leadership Team and Fiscal Committee. She was as an active member of the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council since its inception in the summer of 1991 until her resignation in 2001 due to her ever expanding workload. Rita was a member of the committee that created Santa Barbara County's first Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education. As part of the original work team, Rita helped develop the first set of county priorities to access the new Federal Child Care Block Grant Funds resulting from passage of the Federal Omnibus Budget Act in 1990. She was one of the key people from the private non-profit sector involved in the creation of the KIDS Network in 1991 and became a "charter" member of the KIDS Advisory Committee. She has also served several terms as one of the six elected non-profit representatives on the Policy Council, where her perspective as an executive director of the county's largest non-profit human service agency has been very valuable. Rita was involved in the very earliest planning for our county's first school-linked services program at Ruth School in Lompoc, which won a grant in 1992 to become the county's first Healthy Start program. Since then she has been involved in the planning and implementation of all of the county's school-linked services programs. At the state level, Rita has advocated for low-income children and families as the President of the California/Nevada Community Action Commission. For this work, she has received a certificate from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. A strong collaborator, Rita has been successful in creating and strengthening partnerships between key partners in Santa Barbara County and statewide. For her extensive accomplishments, Rita has earned the distinguished recognition as Administrator of the year by the National Head Start Association. Rita is dedicated and embodies the values and ideals of her profession. She has been a devoted advocate for quality early care and educational services for all children throughout her career. Rita is most deserving of the Hedy Damery Service Award and truly a friend to the children in our county.

