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# Plugged In

April 2011 • Vol. 18 No. 2

Connecting Santa Barbara County with Essential Developmental DisABILITY News

**alpha**  
RESOURCE CENTER  
OF SANTA BARBARA

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*Serving the Santa Barbara  
Community since 1953.*

## grand opening

**Alpha Thrift Store #3**  
700 N. Milpas at Ortega

Music  
Ribbon  
Cutting  
Door  
Prizes  
Food  
Surprises!



*"You never  
know what  
you're going  
to find!"*

Donation Pick-Up and  
Information  
805 964-1123  
or Visit us at: [www.alphasb.org](http://www.alphasb.org)

**Thursday, April 21, 2011**  
3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

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*Plugged In is a free  
publication that is  
distributed bimonthly  
from Alpha Resource Center.*

### Gadgets and Gizmos A Plenty!

Thanks to the Hutton Parker Foundation, Alpha Thrift is back in Santa Barbara!! It's hard to believe that it has been five years since we left our beloved location on State Street due to the increasingly prohibitive cost of rent. But now we are excited to become an integral part of the bustling Santa Barbara community once again. On April 21st we will celebrate the Grand Opening of our third store at 700 N. Milpas Street, site of the old Salvation Army store. This store will conveniently serve Santa Barbara locals while our two sites on Hollister Ave will continue to serve the Goleta population.

As you may know, Alpha has owned and operated thrift stores since 1967 and 100% of the proceeds go directly to supporting the outstanding services offered by Alpha. Last year Alpha provided services to 1,850 individuals, families and professionals in the county of Santa Barbara; and this year we are projecting to serve 2,650, an increase of over 40%. This is why your donations and patronage to the thrift stores are so very important.

In addition to providing much needed funding for services, Alpha Thrift also helps our local community as donated items are refashioned, reused and recycled on a daily basis. Join us on Thursday, April 21 for our grand opening and maybe you'll find your new favorite pair of jeans, a kitchen gadget you've been longing for, or the perfect toy for a child in your life. Also be sure to complete the crossword puzzle on page 6 and bring it with you to the Grand Opening. There will be prizes for a few lucky winners from a random drawing of all entries. We hope to see you there!

## Plugged In

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Alpha Resource Center is a  
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All donations are tax deductible.

*A Chapter of The Arc of the  
United States.*



Plugged In • April 2011

## FRONT AND CENTER

### Alpha's Triple Play!



Thanks to Mentor, our lead sponsor, we invite you to join Alpha for a day filled with activity and excitement!!! This year we will be hosting our annual Walk & Roll, family BBQ, and our

newest event, Climb the Canyons Cycling Classic all on the same day. It will be an opportunity for us all to come together and spend a day celebrating an inclusive community where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The Cycling Classic is Alpha's newest fundraiser. Riders will be raising much needed funds for Alpha's programs as well as spreading the visibility of Alpha as they ride all over town. Even if you are unable to ride, you are still invited to join in the fundraising. Ask us about setting up your own web page. Riders can choose from a 30 or 70 mile course and enjoy beautiful scenery as they ride with fellow Alpha supporters throughout Goleta and Santa Barbara. The 30 mile ride is designed to be challenging yet welcoming to new riders while the 70 mile ride will give even the most seasoned cyclist a serious workout. Check out the training tips on the next page if you're a beginning rider and want to join in on the adventure!

The Walk & Roll will continue in much the same fashion as past years (with the addition of a slightly longer route choice for those that are interested) and both events will conclude with a joint family BBQ at Girsh Park. There will be entertainment, games, raffle prizes, and much more. This family BBQ will take the place of our annual BBQ here at Alpha. We have outgrown our space and we're excited to move to a bigger venue and combine these exciting events. And don't worry, Kiwanis will still be providing chicken and tri-tip and all the trimmings and we'll still have a watermelon eating contest, water balloon toss, bounce house, and kids' activities.

We need your help to make this a successful event. Some of our needs are listed on the next page. If you'd like to help with any of these or if you have other ideas for ways you'd like to be involved please contact Amy at (805) 683-2145 or [abuesker@alphasb.org](mailto:abuesker@alphasb.org).

Saturday, July 9, 2011  
Girsh Park  
7050 Phelps Rd.

Climb the Canyons 8:00 AM  
\$25 (plus \$125 fundraising min)

Walk & Roll 10:30 AM  
\$20 non-members  
\$15 members

Information & Registration  
[www.alphasb.org/ride](http://www.alphasb.org/ride)

Information coming soon!

BBQ lunch for ALL 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM

**RSVP REQUIRED!**

# FRONT AND CENTER

Whether you're a beginning cyclist or a seasoned rider, here are some tips to keep you safe and help you get the most out of your rides. *As with any exercise routine, be sure to consult a physician before beginning.*

1. Allow time to warm up at the beginning of your ride. Ride at an easy pace for at least 5-10 minutes before increasing your pace.
2. While training for any distance be sure to increase your distance slowly. Your "long" ride lengths should increase by no more than 10% per week.
3. Always be sure to include adequate rest/recovery time into your training program.
4. Use your gears to your advantage. You want to keep your pedal strokes to at least 70 to 90 rpm so adjust your gears accordingly whether climbing hills or on a flat road.
5. Get the proper bike fit. Be sure that your saddle (seat), handlebars, and pedals are all accurately positioned for your height and riding preference. Not sure? Visit a local bike shop for help.
6. Plan your cycling schedule leading up to the ride and try to stick to it as closely as possible. If you need to skip a day or two that's fine, but return to your plan and be as consistent as possible.
7. Try to vary your routes in order to experience different elevations, surfaces, and wind/weather.
8. Wear appropriate safety gear. A helmet is needed at all times; reflective attire and bike reflectors and lights are needed at night. Never wear headphones and be sure to pay attention to your surroundings!
9. Allow time to cool down and stretch at the end of your ride.
10. Make your ride enjoyable! Do you like to ride with others? Do you enjoy beautiful scenery? Do you need a stress-reliever after work? Make your training work for you and plan your rides in a way that will be motivating and fun for you!

*Consider joining a cycling group or finding a seasoned cyclist to become your "mentor" for more tips and tricks of the road. We'll see you on July 9<sup>th</sup>!*

**How can you help us??? Many of our needs and wishes are listed below. Please contact us at (805) 683-2145 if you can help!**

## EVENT NEEDS:

- sponsors
- raffle/fundraising prizes
- committee members
- volunteers
- team captains
- riders
- promotion
- BBQ entertainment/services/supplies

## Program Wish List:

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 3x5 magnetic board                              | Markers            |
| Wii Fit   | Board games        |
| Karaoke Revolution Glee (Wii game)              | Digital camera     |
| Michael Jackson The Experience (Wii game)       | Tennis Rackets     |
| Various \$5-10 gift cards from local businesses | Soccer Ball        |
| Storage containers (various sizes)              | Themed decorations |
| Craft supplies or gift card to craft store      | Storage Shed       |
| Small safety scissors (10 pairs)                | Frisbee            |

## MORE TO KNOW

### Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Students Embrace People with Special Needs

Most people who meet Alpha participants want to be more involved with Alpha. This proved to be true when a group of actors from Alpha's performing arts program went to a local school to talk to students about performing on stage. What they all learned was that they are more alike than different. They had the same taste in movies and screen actors. It was fun for the students and the participants from Alpha; it just wasn't long enough! So the students figured out a way to stay in touch.



A few weeks later, the students from Our Lady of Mt. Carmel came to Alpha to share in community service. Every spring, Mt. Carmel students spend a week sharing in community service, and this year they chose Alpha as a place to get their hands dirty! On a Thursday in February, 60 of these hard-working, respectful future leaders washed windows and cars and worked in the garden and greenhouse alongside people with special needs. It was a day to remember.

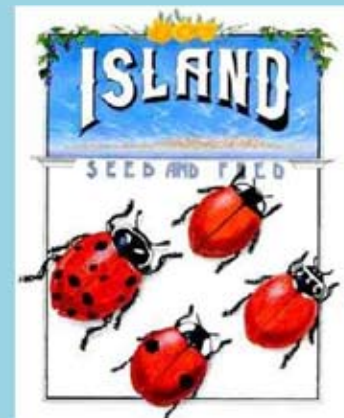
"What struck me about the day was everyone working together," said Maria Nielson, Alpha's Executive Assistant, who also served as photographer that day. "We've had groups out before but never parents, participants and students all working together- and they had so much fun!" Cory Woodruff, who led the greenhouse clean-up, said the same. "These are really hard working students, and they are so receptive to our folks. Seeing them working together is just heartwarming." Bev Jerep, who participates in Alpha's day program worked alongside Thomas, a Mt. Carmel student in the garden. She said, "I made friends with Thomas and his parents. That makes me happy."



In order to be more informed about Alpha's work in the community, a few of the students, along with parents and administration, were guests at Alpha's annual fundraiser, Circle of Life, in March. The students were a bit shy, but also felt special to be included in such an important event.

Alpha is happy to be spreading the word about inclusion to the next generation. We continue to create "a world where all people are treated with dignity and respect." If you are part of an organization or school that would like to have a visit from Alpha, let us know! [mpasquini@alphasb.org](mailto:mpasquini@alphasb.org)

*Alpha's Garden is flourishing!*  
*Thank You,*  
**ISLAND SEED AND FEED**  
*Sponsor of Alpha's Organic Garden!*



# CHILDREN, FAMILY & ADVOCACY SERVICES

## Summer Camp 2011

It's that time of year again when families start thinking ahead to the summer and wonder how we're going to make it fun for the kids because happy kids make happy parents. We also know that the search can have added difficulties when your child has special needs. The good news is that there are some options out there and, in some cases, there is funding available too. We've compiled a list of some of the camps in California that serve children and adults with disabilities.

For more information on scholarships you can contact the Santa Barbara Campership Alliance at 962-5560 [www.santabarbarapal.org](http://www.santabarbarapal.org) , or The Native Daughters of the Golden West Children's Foundation at 1-800-994-6349 [www.ndgw.org](http://www.ndgw.org) .

### Day Camps:

- SB Forester Baseball Camp – June 7-9 (tentative)-this camp is offered in coordination with the DPLL Challengers [www.dpllchallengers.org](http://www.dpllchallengers.org)
- 'Lose the Training Wheels' bike camp – June 13-17 sponsored by the Down Syndrome Association of Santa Barbara County – [www.dsasbc.org](http://www.dsasbc.org) or 681-9165
- Cornerstone House- Happy Adventure Camp- Session 1 Aug.1-5 & Session 2 Aug.8-12. Limit 1 session per camper. [www.cornerstonehouse.org](http://www.cornerstonehouse.org) or 680-2538
- Alpha Extended Summer Program – Tues. & Thurs. afternoons for 6 weeks, dates TBD. Teens and young adults. Contact Amy at 683-2145
- Camp Chit Chat for children with speech and language difficulties - The Scottish Rite Language Center 16 E.Carrillo. Contact 962-8469 for more info.
- Camp Discovery for children with mild to moderate special needs ages 3-10. For more info call 877-943-5747 or email [www.campdiscoveryla.org](http://www.campdiscoveryla.org)
- Santa Barbara Parks & Recreation has adapted summer camp programs. For info call 564-5421 or go to [www.santabarbaraca.gov/summerfun](http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/summerfun)
- Hearts Adaptive Riding – therapeutic horseback riding for adults and children with disabilities. [www.heartsadaptiveriding.org](http://www.heartsadaptiveriding.org) or 964-1519
- Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp at UCSB- dates TBD. Call Rene Van Hoorn at 569-8999 ext.82102

### Overnight Camps:

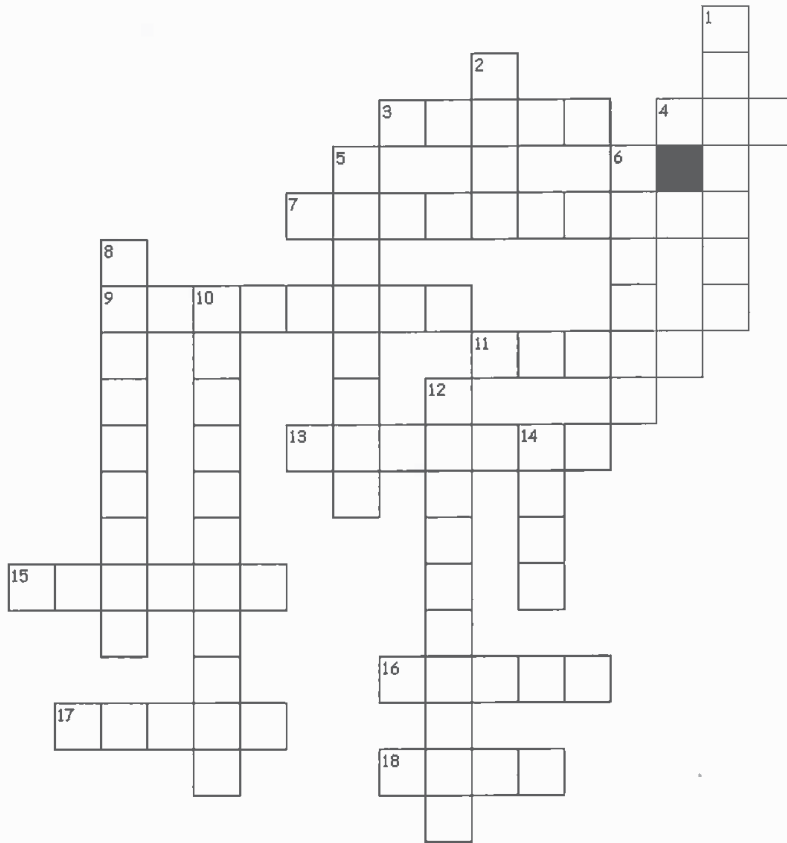
- Easter Seals Camp Harmon for children and adults with disabilities ages 8-65 in Boulder Creek CA. [www.centralcaleasterseals.com](http://www.centralcaleasterseals.com) or call 831-684-2166 ext.107
- Jay Nolan Camp – inclusive camp for children with/without autism [www.jaynolan.org](http://www.jaynolan.org)
- Camp Bloomfield – for children who are blind or visually impaired. They also have a family camp available. [www.juniorblind.org/site/camp-bloomfield](http://www.juniorblind.org/site/camp-bloomfield) or [323-290-6298](http://323-290-6298)
- Camp Coelho at Camp Wawona in Yosemite National Park for children with epilepsy. [www.epilepsynorcal.org](http://www.epilepsynorcal.org) or call 1-800-632-3532
- Camp Grizzly for children who are deaf or hard of hearing ages 7-14 or who have siblings or parents who are DHOH. [www.norcalcenter.org](http://www.norcalcenter.org)
- Camp Paivika for kids, teens and adults with mild to severe developmental disabilities. [www.abilityfirst.org](http://www.abilityfirst.org)

For more camps go to [www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org) or [www.specialcampsforspecialkids.com](http://www.specialcampsforspecialkids.com)

# FUN & GAMES

Complete this crossword puzzle about items found in our thrift stores and bring it to the Milpas Thrift Store GRAND OPENING on April 21 from 3:00-6:00 PM. Drawings for prizes from all entries received will be held at 5:00! Must be present to win.

## Thrift Store Finds



### Across

3. Worn on the feet
4. Warms your head
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Paddy Whack (2 words)
9. Things to eat with
11. Fun and \_\_\_\_\_ (hint: see title above)
13. Rings and bracelets as examples
15. See your reflection in me
16. Levis
17. Tell time with me
18. Flower holder

### Down

1. Warms the bed
2. Read a \_\_\_\_\_
5. Old Things
6. Holds your money
8. Fills the rooms
10. Plug them in
12. Front door greeter (2 words)
14. Floor coverings

Answers: Across: 3. shoes 4. hat 7. knick knack 9. utensils 11. games 13. jewelry 15. mirror 16. jeans 17. clock 18. vase  
Down: 1. blanket 2. book 5. antiques 6. wallet 8. furniture 10. electronics 12. welcome mat 14. rugs

## UPDATE FROM ALPHA



### Volunteers Extraordinaire

Meet Rita Norman and Marie Meng

Marie (right) is a long time donor to Alpha Resource Center. When she found out about volunteer opportunities, she jumped on board and brought her friend, and volunteer cohort, Rita with her. The pair help wherever they are needed and are especially good at event planning. They helped with Alpha's mixer with the Goleta Valley Chamber, and it was a smash!

Thank you, Marie and Rita, we look forward to many more successful events with you!

Become a member and ...

# Make a Difference!

**JOIN NOW. . .**

**... and receive a discount on registration to the Walk & Roll, and Alpha Family BBQ On July 9!**

Alpha Membership enables us to promote fair legislation at the State and National level for people with disabilities. The larger our membership, the louder our voice!

Our membership also directs the future of Alpha by voting on local issues and bylaws.

A family membership is only \$50.00 per year.  
Other membership levels available.

<http://www.alphasb.org/forms.html>

## Katie's FUNd Update

The new year is off to a quick and exciting start! Katie's FUNd participants kicked the year off by attending a few different performances at local theaters. We went to see The Wiz, the Peking Acrobats, a Blues concert, and a Brazilian dance show. They were fantastic shows that we all enjoyed. In February we had the opportunity to tour Wayne Kjar Cakes, a new bakery on the Mesa. We even got to decorate our own cupcakes at the end of the tour! A few participants may



have a cake decorating career in their future (Blair shows off her creation in the picture on the left)! We also had our annual semi-formal dance in February. It was raining cats and dogs that night, but a little rain couldn't keep this group from shaking their groove thing! Umbrellas and towels at the ready, everyone arrived dressed in their best attire and danced and sang the night away! It was certainly a memorable evening. March was filled with more fun events including a trip to Zodos and a sign language class led by one participant who is Hard of Hearing and her mom in an effort to help everyone learn to communicate with her a little better. April and May are shaping up to be just as exciting and the summer program is set to kick off again in June. If you or someone you know are interested in participating or volunteering in the Katie's FUNd programs please contact Amy at (805) 683-2145 x127 or [abuesker@alphasb.org](mailto:abuesker@alphasb.org).

# HAPPENINGS



## Alpha Open House

**Friday, April 29, 2011**  
 4501 Cathedral Oaks Road Santa Barbara  
 805 683-2145 [www.alphasb.org](http://www.alphasb.org)

**10:00 - 11:45 Tour - Meet & Greet**  
**11:45 - 1:15 Lunch and Garden Tour**  
**1:15 - 2:30 Tour - Meet & Greet**

Spend a little time at Alpha and meet the incredible people that participate in Alpha's diverse programs; get a glimpse of what we're all about!

Our open house will include art studio activities, performing arts exercises, music from Alpha's Rock Band and tastings from our kitchen. Take a brief tour of Alpha's organic garden, orchard and the Ugo L. Melchiori Imagine Park. There will be plenty of time for socializing and learning more about Alpha's programs and our bright future of growth and inclusion.



Save the Date



### Top This!

Molly Houston cordially invites you to join women for an exciting day of hair artistry, makeup, massage, dress-up in vintage clothes and more...

September 24, 2011  
 at her Montecito home  
 Please R.S.V.P 805 683-2145  
 women 3-7pm  
 men join party at 7pm

Benefit for Alpha Resource Center

## Alpha Triple Play

Join us for 3 exciting events all rolled into one...

**July 9, 2011**  
**Girsh Park**

Climb the Canyons: 8:00 am group start  
 Walk & Roll: 10:30 am  
 Family BBQ: 11:30 am—3:00 pm



### Ride entry includes:

- ....70/30 mile marked courses
- ....Alpha cycling jersey
- ....Multiple refueling/rest stops
- ....Post ride BBQ lunch & celebration
- ....A chance to support Alpha

Registration: \$25 { \$125 fundraising minimum }

[www.alphasb.org/ride](http://www.alphasb.org/ride)



Join us as we walk around Girsh Park and celebrate people of ALL abilities!

### Registration includes:

- 2 different Walk/Roll course lengths
- Walk & Roll t-shirt
- BBQ lunch with all the fixin's
- Raffle/fundraising prizes
- A chance to support Alpha and all people with disabilities

Registration: \$20 non-members  
 \$15 members  
 Children under 5—FREE

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



### Family Picnic BBQ

Chicken, Tri-tip & All the trimmings

- Music
- Games & Prizes
- Bounce House
- Crafts
- Raffle
- Award presentations
- Walk & Roll participation included

RSVP to Maria: (805) 683-2145

**Registration/RSVP REQUIRED for all events**

Visit [www.alphasb.org](http://www.alphasb.org) and [www.sbsnap.org](http://www.sbsnap.org) for information on upcoming Alpha and community events!

(for parents & children with diverse abilities)

# iPhone apps

**alpha**  
RESOURCE CENTER  
OF SANTA BARBARA

Presenting Guest Speaker  
**SHANE NURNBERG**, Founder of [www.autismepicenter.org](http://www.autismepicenter.org)

## “There’s an App for That!”



**Monday, May 23, 2011**

**6:00—8:00 pm**

**Alpha Resource Center**

**4501 Cathedral Oaks Rd., Santa Barbara**

**Shane** provides a fun & interactive presentation on apps available for Apple iDevices that can benefit [All Kids of All Ages with All Abilities.](#)

He shares his expertise as a Website Designer, Technology Manager, and more importantly as **Dad** to his 8 year old son who has autism. Shane recently presented at the **OSEP** conference in Washington DC and the CA statewide **Family Resources & Supports Institute** in San Francisco.

*Participants say Shane’s presentation is “Fun” “Hands-on” “Great, Very Realistic” “Informative & Practical”*

**Please Register by May 18**

**Toll Free**

**1-877-414-6227**

**or e-mail**

**[mnielson@alphasb.org](mailto:mnielson@alphasb.org)**

**Suggested Donation**

**\$15**



## MORE TO KNOW

### Special Olympics North County - Spring/Summer Sports

The Northern Santa Barbara office invites you to join their Spring/Summer program taking flight in March and running to June. This is a great opportunity for athletes 8 years and older to come and develop their skills in Aquatics, Athletics (Track & Field), Basketball, Bocce, and Golf. All while having a little fun, exercising and meeting new friends. **New athletes wanting to participate must complete a mandatory medical form that must be filled out by your personal physician. Forms are available at the Recreation and Parks Department located at 615 S. McClelland St. or online at [http://www.sosc.org/Northern\\_Santa\\_Barbara\\_Main.htm](http://www.sosc.org/Northern_Santa_Barbara_Main.htm). For more information, contact Matt Nartatez, Sport Coordinator at (805) 925-0951, ext. 135. You can also contact Family First for information at (805) 347-2775**

### Volunteers & Coaches

Special Olympics is a wonderful opportunity to make a lifelong impact on individuals with developmental disabilities. **If you would like to become a coach or volunteer, please give Rudy Gutierrez Operations Coordinator a call at (805) 925-0951, ext.353**



### Imagine A World Award Needs You!

Imagine a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. This is the theme of our Imagine A World Award which is presented to local businesses and organizations that embody this idea. Our most recent recipient was Gavin Roy from SBDJs. He is a local DJ and has been providing his services for Katie's FUNd events for years as well as writing the scripts for the performing arts plays. He truly exemplifies the values of dignity and respect in his daily life and work and we are proud to have him as a member of our extended Alpha family.

An award presentation is also being scheduled for UCSB's Arts & Lectures program for their unwavering support and acceptance of people of all abilities at their events. We have received numerous sets of tickets for a wide array of performances over the past few years. Attending these events is a delight not only because the performances are so wonderful, but also because the staff and volunteers are always courteous, friendly and respectful. We look forward to continuing this wonderful relationship for many years to come!

We know there are many more businesses and organizations in the community that are deserving of this award and we need you to be our eyes and ears in the community to help us find them. Have you had a memorable experience at any local companies? Do you know a business that consistently treats all people with dignity and respect? Would you like to nominate an organization or individual? Please share your story with us. You can fill out the form below and return it by mail or email or even just give us a quick call. We would love to hear from you!

**Nomination** (business/organization/individual):

Reason for nominating (tell your story):

Organization/Business contact information (if known):

Your name:

Your contact information:

# ALPHA SPOTLIGHT

## Circle of Life 2011- Sunshine on a Cloudy Day!



rsthurston photography

Circle of Life, Alpha's annual fundraising luncheon, was another huge success and it provided an opportunity for more people in our community to meet and support the wonderful people who participate in Alpha's programs.

As guests sat down to lunch, Alpha performing artists sang a medley of songs welcoming guests to "Wish Upon A Star," and make dreams come true. Master of Ceremonies, Dennis Miller, greeted guests with his usual humor and heartfelt appreciation for his friends at Alpha. "You people are on the express train to heaven," he said to Alpha staff in the audience. "Thank you because you do God's work."

Kim Olson, Alpha's Executive Director, and Mark Melchiori, an active supporter of Alpha's programs, had a slightly different story to tell. "I was asked a few months ago what keeps me going in my work at Alpha," Kim remarked. She has been with the organization for over 30 years. "Everyday I experience the delightful and unexpected . . . Last week Dennis Subica, who just sang for us, came into my office and proclaimed, 'You are a ravishing beauty in my eyes, but you forgot to put on your earrings!' At Alpha, we nurture and sustain a powerful community of support, and instill a strong sense of belonging." Mark Melchiori had similar sentiments about what he and his family receive by supporting Alpha, "I guess if I had to sum it up in the fewest words possible: the result of our past and continued connection with Alpha is very, very one-sided, from Alpha to us; we receive much more as a family from Alpha than we could ever give to Alpha. Thank you, Alpha." I think these words resonate with all of us. The people participating in our programs, whether they are our family, friends, or people in our care, give to us much more than we provide. We, like Dennis, Kim and Mark, consider ourselves lucky to know them.

We visited with long-time supporters as well as new faces at Circle of Life. Over 450 people attended the luncheon, and over \$100,000 was raised in one short hour. In addition to this valuable money raised, we welcome the opportunity to increase awareness about Alpha's programs and appreciation for the people that are a part of them. Jessica Simon, a new member of the Alpha staff, said "I know what I want to do for the rest of my life because of Alpha. I want to advocate for people with disabilities so that we are treated with dignity and respect!"

There are many ways to support Alpha - with time, advice, resources, and financial support. We welcome your participation with us. We are hosting an **Open House** at Alpha on Friday, April 29. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Alpha's programs, and meet some of the remarkable people who participate in them. Please contact Marisa at [mpasquini@alphasb.org](mailto:mpasquini@alphasb.org) for more information.

Thank you to our Lead Sponsors for helping to make this event possible!



Return Service Requested

## UP CLOSE - OSCAR LOPEZ



Hi my name is Oscar López and I am 13 years old. I live in Lompoc with my parents Mariana and Pastor. I attend Lompoc Valley Middle School (7th grade), and I love school and riding on the school bus with my friends. When I don't go to school I get bored at home. I love music, especially up beat and fun music that makes me dance!

Due to my diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy I can't talk. I need total assistance to do my basic needs like feeding and personal hygiene. I can't walk by myself; I use a walker that provides total support to my upper body which I use to move around the school, to do my daily activities, and also to exercise. Every Saturday my parents take me to the Therapeutic Riding Program in Santa Ynez. I love it! It has helped me to get stronger, make friends, and have fun.

Almost 13 years ago I was born and my brain was damaged due to lack of oxygen. My parents have tried very hard to keep me happy and healthy. Not only that, they have worked hard to access all the resources the systems have to offer. I need special equipment all the time! It is a headache for my mom to get the equipment, but, like she says, I'm her angel and I think that I came to this world with angels of my own that have always helped us. I can't name all of them because I would use the whole newsletter with my list, and there are other important articles too! But my smile in my pictures is the result of the labor of those who have touched my life one way or another. I would like to dedicate this article to a very special person that worked with me and my family when I was little, Mrs. LAURA SOBEL, Infant Specialist. With her knowledge, patience, and dedication, she taught my mom to calm me when I was crying and crying, and also taught my dad how to be part of the team. It was a very hard part of their life, but they're learning how to overcome it. Thanks Laura for all your love; we always pray for you and your health!

I'm the only child in my family. I wish I had brothers or sisters, but it didn't happen. I have all the love and attention just for me and I LOVE IT!