



# SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

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### Over the rainbow

## Artists put their hearts into benefit for Friendship Center

By DAVE MASON, NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

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Look no further, Tin Man.

The Friendship Center has more than 50 hearts for you and all your friends. Created by South Coast artists, many of the hearts depict scenes from the 1939 classic "The Wizard of Oz." One heart's even in a ruby red slipper!

All that and Toto too.

The famous terrier is among the characters on the papier-mâché hearts. "Wizard of Oz" enthusiasts can bid on them during a silent auction at the Festival of Hearts, set for 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort, 633 E. Cabrillo Blvd.

Part of the proceeds from the event, which includes a luncheon, will benefit the Friendship Center's HEART (Help Elders at Risk Today) Program.

The program provides subsidies for low-income and aging clients. The center provides daytime services at Montecito and Goleta sites for adults with cognitive disabilities such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. The center also serves adults who may be socially isolated.

This year's theme is "The Emerald City," chosen because the annual luncheon is in its 20th year and emerald is the gem representing 20th milestones.

Every year, The Friendship Center supplies artists with identical brown craft paper hearts, which you can hold in one hand. The artists enhance the hearts through painting, drawing, decorations and/or

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Artists found different ways of expressing the Emerald City theme in the hearts held by Gabriella Forrester, left, and Sharon Morrow. KENNETH SONG/NEWS-PRESS



"Ruby Red Slipper" by Ginny Speirs HEART IN SHOE

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assemblage.

The News-Press followed the yellow brick road to Charleston Shoe Co., 1017-A State St., where the hearts will hang through Thursday before moving on to the event, and caught up with Sharon Morrow, who's been the heart wrangler for 11 years.

"I can honestly say every year the hearts get better and better and better," Mrs. Morrow said.

"It's like Christmas morning. I can't wait to see what people come up with. It always blows my mind," said Mrs. Morrow, who noted bids will likely start around \$35 or \$40.

Assemblage artist Pali-X-Mano got into the spirit with "Love Tunnel Gate to Emerald City." He added wings to the heart and installed it at the end of the yellow brick road. A futuristic car travels on the road past scenes from "The Wizard of Oz."

Lori Call took some yarn and re-created a furry Toto. She named her heart "And Toto Too."

For "Ruby Red Slipper," Ginny Speirs painted her heart green and put it inside a stiletto covered with sequins.

"She's done hearts for us as long as I can remember," Mrs. Morrow said.

Penelope Gottlieb added papier-mâché elements to turn her creation into the Tin Man. The expressive face in "If I Only Had a Heart" demonstrates the character indeed has one.

"She always does big, wonderful eyes," Mrs. Morrow said, smiling at the heart. "Such personality!"

Susan Tibbles drew an expressive Cowardly Lion on her heart, which she named "Courage." She put pins in it to depict his whiskers.

Two Montecito celebs continued their tradition of creating hearts for The Friendship Center event.

Julia Louis-Dreyfus, the Emmy-winning "Seinfeld" actress who stars in HBO's "Veep," turned her heart into the wizard's balloon, complete with the basket that transported him to Oz. Mrs. Morrow said she expects the "Veep" heart, which is signed in gold by Ms. Louis-Dreyfus and the rest of the TV show's cast, to sell for around \$100.

On his heart, Oscar-winning actor Jeff Bridges drew a maze that's in the shape of a human brain, which is what the Scarecrow needs. His work is called "In."

Artists are free to interpret the theme however they want, or to go completely in their own direction. Judy Nilsen used paint and glitter to re-create the Santa Barbara Mission in "Emerald City?"

"She incorporated local history with the color green," Mrs. Morrow said.

Wendy Brewer put her heart in a cigar box, which has a map as its background, for "Inner Compass."

"It denotes a journey, and Dorothy and the other characters went on a journey," Mrs. Morrow said.

Lynn Whitaker put a silhouette of Dorothy and her friends on a heart and attached



TIN MAN "If I Only Had a Heart" by Penelope Gottlieb



"Courage" by Susan Tibbles  
LION

it to an arch. They look like they're in a carriage in "Off to See the Wizard."

The "Wizard of Oz" theme will prevail at the luncheon, with the Montecito Jazz Project playing songs from the movie and the Broadway twist on the story, "Wicked."

The event is definitely character-driven. Volunteer Carol Metcalf-Roth will portray Glinda, the good witch, and Kona, a terrier owned by event committee member Marianne Meeker, will come as Toto.

Committee member Andy Siegel will play the Wizard.

Those attending the event are encouraged to dress up like the folks from the merry old land of Oz, Gabriella Forrester, the Friendship Center advancement and project manager, said.

"We're expecting about 170 guests and hoping to net \$50,000," Ms. Forrester said.

In addition to the silent auction with the hearts, people can bid during a live auction for luxury, adventure and travel packages, including a trip to — where else? — the Emerald City itself, aka Seattle, and nearby Vancouver, British Columbia.

The "Wizard of Oz" theme works well in a year of milestones, Heidi Holly, executive director of The Friendship Center, noted.

"This year is the 80th year of 'The Wizard of Oz,' and it's the 40th year of Friendship Center being incorporated and the 20th year of the Festival of Hearts," Ms. Holly said. "It's meant to be!

"And a lot of people who come have a big heart."

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#### **IF YOU GO**

The 20th annual Festival of Hearts will take place 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort, 633 E. Cabrillo Blvd. Tickets for the luncheon, which includes local wines, cost \$135. To purchase, call the Friendship Center at 969-0859 or go to [www.friendshipcentersb.org](http://www.friendshipcentersb.org).

Created by South Coast artists, the 50-plus hearts are hanging through Thursday at Charleston Shoe Co., 1017-A State St. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily.

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