

April 11, 2005

Remarks made by Ann Quilter, Co-Chair of Project Senior Center, a \$5.2 million capital, FF&E, endowment campaign to the Hearts of Montage in acknowledging their \$500,000 grant to Laguna Beach Seniors, Inc.

**Thank you Hearts of Montage** for having a heart for our seniors.

Last night as I was thinking about today's wonderful event, I thought, what would I want you to know about Laguna; about the people who live here; about why we are so passionate about this community? And why is it important that this center be built?

The importance of this town lies not in its beautiful surroundings, though we are blessed to live in such beauty. Instead, it lies in the hearts of its citizens. From the overwhelming crises and momentous opportunities we have faced together, we, certainly more than most towns, understand what it means to be in community. We understand what it means to be in service. And for many of us here today, my family included, we understand what it means to receive.

Character is revealed through the causes we champion. Laguna has a history of such causes:

- from the Bluebird Canyon landslide of 1978 that destroyed 24 homes to the building of senior housing at Lang Park;
- from the Laguna fires of 1993 that incinerated 400 homes to the creation of our main beach park; and
- from the deadly El Nino mudslides of 1998 to the preservation of Laguna Canyon.

This town understands the strength, power and importance of community. In times of need, Laguna has mobilized its resources, energized its citizens, and shown its compassionate character.

I heard that you asked among yourselves "Why the seniors?" and answered "because it is the right thing to do." And it is the right thing to do. In this room is the shared history of Laguna. It is here that you will also find its heart. Those of us who are new to this cause are standing on some very broad shoulders.

Finally, their time has come.

*Thank you Hearts of Montage for your spirit of community. Your generous gifts of time, money and talent will ensure that the Susi Q Senior Center will become a reality.*